
INDONESIAN CULTURAL DIMENSION IN *LET'S TALK* TEXTBOOK FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Nurlayli Yanti

Institut Seni Budaya Indonesia Aceh

nurlayliyanti@isbiaceh.ac.id

Abstract	Article Information
<p><i>The importance of culture and identity to the curriculum has gradually started to emerge in some schools. As a result, it has developed into a valuable research tool that is indispensable to the study of English language teaching. Many Indonesian English textbooks have been published to fulfill the need of teaching-learning process. Unfortunately, some textbooks are not responsive students' cultural backgrounds which frequently makes it difficult for them to understand the content. There are several textbooks that are used in every school in Banda Aceh, one of them is Let's Talk textbook. The purpose of this research is to investigate the extend of the cultural dimension of Let's Talk textbook used for the second level of junior high school students accommodates the culture of Indonesian students. The data of this research are the contents of Let's Talk textbook. After the data were put based on their classification, they were analyzed qualitatively. The content of Let's Talk textbook is analyzed by using checklist which is formulated from category of all cultural items. The result of the research can be drawn that from five items of cultural dimension, there is only four items of instrument of cultural dimension category that accommodate the culture of Indonesian students. There are product, practice, perspective, and person. Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that the Let's Talk textbook presents product higher than other categories of cultural dimension which mostly appears on place of Indonesia.</i></p> <p>Keywords: content analysis, culture, textbook</p>	<p><i>Received:</i> 12/02/2024</p> <p><i>Revised:</i> 23/02/2023</p> <p><i>Accepted:</i> 24/02/2023</p>

INTRODUCTION

Learning material is one of the important things in running the teaching learning process. Textbook becomes the primary media in instruction due to inadequate sources. Most teachers in Indonesia use textbook materials as the main source in teaching learning process.

In today's educational environment, textbooks are crucial because they are the primary instrument used by the majority of teachers (Luukka, 2019)(Luukka, 2019). Since textbooks are the primary source of knowledge used in the classroom, they are extremely important for students. When a learner uses a qualified textbook that provides and supports the necessary materials, they can improve their language skills. Besides, the textbook should also relate to students' cultural background. Learning from the textbook which is oriented in students' culture will lead students easier to comprehend the textbook. Cunningsworth (1995) stated that textbooks are regarded as the primary tool for forming students' knowledge, behavior, and discipline, yet occasionally certain textbooks may be less successful in attracting students' interests. This might occur if the textbook being utilized is less accommodate the demands of both teachers and students.

Textbooks are educational resources created with the intention of expanding students' knowledge and experience. An essential component of ELT textbooks is culture. According to Kramsch (1993), language and culture are intrinsically linked, it is a component of communicative proficiency, which also includes knowledge of target society norms and values, conversational patterns, and cultural understanding. According to Cunningsworth, the textbook is seen as a tool for accomplishing goals and objectives that have been set in terms of learners needs. This case is the same as contextual learning project which engages students in academic word which is applied to the context related to their lives, communities, word places or wider world. It is called as culturally responsive teaching. According to Gay (2018), culturally responsive teaching is utilizing the varied cultural backgrounds, life experiences, and learning preferences of the students to tailor the curriculum and increase student engagement.. Therefore, textbook that responsive to students' culture and includes student's culture is consider importance since the culture value may help students learn better based on the daily context. Cultural background of students should serve as the departure point for planning for how students learn.

Nowadays, a lot of Indonesian English textbooks have been published to fulfil the need of teaching-learning process. Unfortunately, some textbooks are not compatible or responsive to students' culture or background. Many textbooks do not explicitly cover cultural content. Hermawan & Noerkhasanah (2012) conducted an analysis of several primary school textbooks and discovered that, despite being written with the Indonesian context, they contained little information about local culture and made a lot of implicit assumptions about English language users. It often makes students difficult to comprehend the materials.

In relation to the circumstances in Indonesia, certain research has shown that certain regional EFL textbook products primarily represent the source culture of the specific nation rather than the global target cultures. (Hermawan & Noerkhasanah, 2012) analyzed English textbooks for primary school published by Erlangga "Grow with English 4, 5, and 6. As a result, compared to local culture, the target culture remained more prominent and widely distributed in the textbooks. The second study was also carried out by (Sugirim, 2011). They looked into seven junior high school EFL textbooks used in Jogjakarta. As a result, there

were 739 Indonesian and 409 Western cultural elements, but there were insufficient explanations to prevent misunderstanding. Furthermore, a study by (Huang, 2019) examined English textbooks to determine whether or not they are sufficiently contextualized to support students' acquisition and communication of the language. This is accomplished by examining a collection of Project English secondary English textbooks used in China and learning about the actual experiences of textbook users with English language learning and textbook use. The findings demonstrate how textbook topics, texts, and tasks are decontextualized in terms of authenticity, communication styles, diversity, and cultural representation.

This research is focused on cultural value of the *Let's Talk* textbook for junior high school student year 2. There are many textbooks used in every junior high school in Banda Aceh. One of them is *Let's Talk* textbook that is chosen to be analyzed because some junior high schools use this textbook in teaching learning process. Considering the problem above, this research was intended to analyze the extend of cultural element in *Let's Talk* textbook in accommodating the culture of Indonesian students. In order to better understand and explain Indonesian cultural content as the source culture, this study will employ qualitative content analysis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Element of Culture

Culture is too complex and varied to be adequately described. (Kultsum, 2022) stated that there exist diverse interpretations of culture, and it influences individuals' beliefs, morals, and expected behavioral patterns, among other actions within their community. According to Kramsch in (Bradley, 2014), there are two ways to categorize culture. The first term, which is related to the humanities, is culture can be divided into two categories. The first term, humanities-related, is about how a social circle uses its material artifacts including artwork, literature, social institutions, and everyday objects to present itself and others. According to the second definition, which is derived from the social sciences, members of that group share attitudes and ideas, methods of thinking, acting, and remembering.

Culture is defined by (Hinkel, 1999) as fields of study into human societies, groups, systems, behaviors, and activities. Brown defined it as the ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools that define a specific group of individuals within a specific time period (Brown, 2000). (Moran & Lu, 2001) defines culture as a community's changing way of life, characterized by common behaviors linked to common products, rooted in common worldviews, and situated in particular social contexts. This study revealed culture as the interplay of products, practices, perspectives, communities and persons (Moran & Lu, 2001) The five dimensions were adapted in this study to analyze how cultural elements were reflected in each chapter of *Let's Talk 2* textbooks for junior high schools. The five dimensions of culture that Moran & Lu (2001) proposed are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. The Dimensions of culture

No	Dimensions	Explanation
1	Products are described as a set of guidelines that assess a cultural dimension in four major areas.	Artefacts : food, documents, language, money, tools Places : buildings, cities, houses Institutions: family, law, economy, religion, education, politics Art forms : music, clothes, dancing, painting, movie, architecture
2	Practices define a different cultural dimension that assesses different facets of cultural practices.	Operations: manipulation of cultural products Acts : ritualized communicative practices Scenarios : extended communicative practices Lives : stories of members of the future
3	Perspectives include cultural materials that transmit particular impressions	They represent beliefs, values and attitudes that underlie the products and guide people’s behavior in the practice of culture. They can be explicit but often they are implicit, outside conscious awareness.
4	Communities are used to characterize the particular social settings, conditions, and organizations that allow people to participate in cultural activities.	They include the specific social contexts (e.g. national cultures), circumstances (e.g. religious ceremonies), and groups (e.g. different social clubs) in which members carry out cultural practices.
5	Persons are the specific individuals who belong to a given culture or community.	They refer to individual members who embody the culture and its communities in unique ways. Personal identity and life history play key roles in the development of a cultural person

Culture in English Textbook

Numerous studies emphasize how crucial textbooks in foreign language instruction. Some argue that the process of teaching English language benefits from the incorporation of cultural elements (Kultsum, 2022). According to (Marlina, 2017), a variety of cultural elements should be included in language learning resources because it can boost students’ motivation and spark their interest in learning a language. The inclusion of cultural materials in English language teaching (ELT) materials aims to achieve three main objectives: first, to introduce the source culture (L1 Culture); second, to introduce the target culture (L2 Culture); and third, to introduce other cultures that are not part of L1 or L2 Culture (LO Culture) (Garton & Graves, 2014; Messekher, 2014). Students learn to share meanings and communicate through language instruction. Learning a foreign language through cultural content will make it easier for students to understand the language itself, in order to avoid miscommunication. According to (McKay, 2000), the role of culture in the materials is to attract learners’ curiosity about language and increase their motivation to learn since it is more directly related to their needs. Therefore, cultural value in textbook is essential to language achievement.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

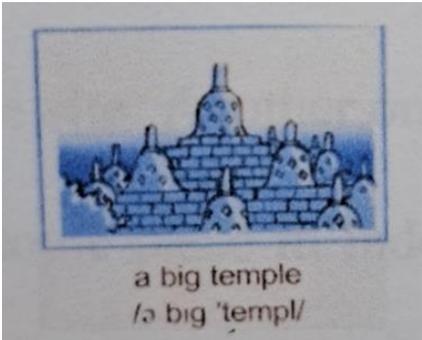
This study is a qualitative content analysis that use a qualitative approach, which means the data will be analyzed qualitatively. Qualitative research is regarded as an effective analytical technique that enables the methodical and context-dependent subjective interpretation of the contents of qualitative data (Schreier et al., 2019). Qualitative research explores the meaning patterns that emerge from the data and these are often expressed in the researchers' own word. It collects data, analyzes them and draws a conclusion based on the cultural value listed in the *Let's Talk* textbook that is used for the second level of junior high school. The data is in the form of complete description and identification of the content in the textbook. The technique used is content analysis or evaluation methods that evaluate *Let's Talk* textbook whether the content provided accommodate the Indonesian culture. The focuses of this study are all of the contents of the textbook, all the cultural content available from eight chapters in the textbook is taken as the data.

The procedures of analyzing the data in this study involved several steps, those are classifying and explaining. The content of the textbook is classified based on Indonesian culture of each chapter, the researcher used checklist instrument of cultural value with its elements. Then, the data inserted to the checklist which is included to cultural value, analyzed the cultural value checklist, and marked those items which accommodate to the textbook. The writer formulated the checklist with the criterion of cultural element adapted from (Moran & Lu, 2001) which is stated in the literature review. Furthermore, the data explained descriptively and the conclusions drawn based on the result of analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the findings from content analysis Indonesian English textbook "Let's Talk" for grade VIII students. Specifically, the patterns of representing culture-related contents were investigated using the five dimensions of culture put forth by (Moran & Lu, 2001). There were found only four dimensions of culture in the textbook, those are product, practice, perspective, and person. They can be seen in the following table.

Table 2. Products

Sample	Illustration/Text	Explanation
1 (Pg. 37)	Exercise Before Keong Emas accompanied Mbok Rondo, Mbok Rondo was _____	The text shows the representation of cultural product related to Indonesian folklore. It well known as indigenous Indonesia stories that comes from Java and dates to golden era of <i>Majapahit</i> Kingdom.
2 (Pg. 52)	Picture 	Food is now acknowledged as a means of expressing culture and identity. The diverse regional culinary customs that emerged in the archipelagic nation of Indonesia are compiled into Indonesian cuisine. There are many different cuisines and recipes. The illustration is fried rice as the representation of one of Indonesia cuisine. Fried rice has long been considered an important staple of Indonesian cuisine.
3 (Pg. 174)	Picture  <p>Letter “On my holiday, I went to Borobudur. Over there, I could feel the hugeness of the temple. How could our ancertors build such a big temple? It was amazing!”</p>	The diverse cultures of Indonesia’s tribes also serve as a talking point for examining the country’s personality. One way to demonstrate each traditional house or building is to display an illustration of its representation. <i>Borobudur</i> is the Indonesian artefact located in Magelang. Central Java. Nowadays, <i>Borobudur</i> is a World Heritage site.

4 (Pg. 164)	Conversation “We had an amazing experience on Mount <i>Bromo</i> ”	The text representation cultural product of Indonesia. One of Indonesia’s most famous tourist destinations is Mount Bromo, particularly in the East Java Region. For the Hindu population of Tenggerese, Mount Bromo is very important because the caldera is seen by many as a deity and a key cultural symbol
-------------	---	---

Table 3. *Practice*

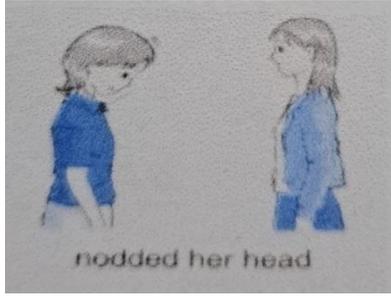
Sample	Illustration/Text	Explanation
1 (Pg. 27)	Picture 	Shaking hands is one of the ways Indonesians greet each other and is used in all major religions. When engaging with others, this practice is used to demonstrate civility and respect. These constitute a portion of the social behavior and etiquette that is considered part of Indonesian culture.
2 (Pg. 27)	Picture 	The sample of these activity shows the politeness of Indonesian people in social relations and reflects the richness of traditional values in society. Nodding the head is a familiar practice that is not just an act of courtesy, but also reflects respect for others, a group’s identity, and a valuable cultural heritage.

Table 4. *Perspective*

Sample	Illustration/Text	Explanation
1 (Pg. 28)	Picture 	The picture represents one of Indonesian perspective in socialization. In Indonesian culture holding another person’s head is not a form of politeness. Actually, one

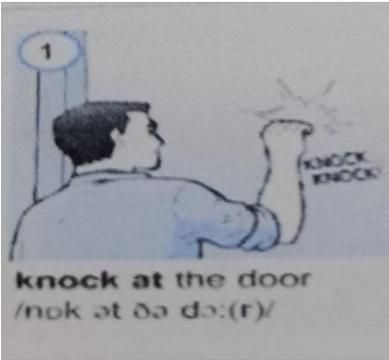
		could argue that this behavior is rude. Unauthorized hand movements over someone else's head can be interpreted as disruptive and impolite towards the other person.
2 (Pg. 27)	Exercise When you speak to your parents, do it with soft voice. Don't ever ___ their feelings.	The text represents Indonesian perspective in respecting parent. In Indonesia, respect for parents and elders is a value that is highly upheld. This can be seen in daily interactions, where children honor their parents to show an act of devotion.
3 (Pg. 61)	Picture 	The character shown in the picture is one of Indonesian culture in visiting guests. This kind of behavior is to make sure the owner of the house will appraise the visitor as a polite person.

Table 5. *Person*

Sample	Illustration/Text	Explanation
1 (Pg. 96)	Reading Announcement Monday, April 21, is the Kartini's Day.	R.A. Kartini, one of the famous person in Indonesia, is presented in this textbook as the cultural representative. R.A. Kartini has dedicated her life to defending the rights of women. It inspires readers to keep pursuing their goals and to always strive toward independence.

2 (Pg. 157) Picture



In this textbook, a person's cultural dimension is also depicted by another national hero that is presented by a historical patriotic monument located in Surabaya. He is Bung Tomo that give a big impact in the community that drives the spirit of youth resistance of Surabaya .

DISCUSSION

According to the results, Indonesian cultural information is conveyed in the textbook through both text and images. Four aspects of culture are analyzed: product, practice, perspective, and person. In terms of those four cultural dimensions, product is the predominant category presented in *Let's Talk* textbooks. The most frequent occurrence of the product appears on place and folklore. The location that is considered to Indonesian place is found ten times, distributed across eight textbook chapters. Then the Indonesian folklores appear six times in the reading section and exercises given in the textbook. In line with study, According to Kramsch's (1993) survey, "the four Fs"—food, fairs, folklore, and statistical facts—are often used to summarize culture in language classes. It is supported study from (Setiadi, 2020) and (Obaid et al., 2019) in which the majority of the items are cultural products, which are made up of tangible items from the students' culture, like food, clothing, and places. It can be indicated that the authors of textbooks are more attention on product instead of person, practice and perspective. Besides, the other cultural products are also found in the textbook like food and building. There are some tasks that is asked students to find the information about Indonesian food like fried rice. Meanwhile, building appears in the *Borobudur* temple and student is asked to answer the question about that Indonesian artefact.

Other cultural dimensions are also presented in the textbook. Two cultural dimensions of person and practice were discovered. Practice is about treating people with respect, and person is about Indonesian national heroes. It demonstrates how the emphasis on product takes precedence over other cultural dimension categories in the textbook. In addition, the cultural perspective on behavior during socialization has a greater influence than practice and person. It is found three time in the textbook of how to behave as Indonesian people when socializing in society. Yuen (2011) defined perspective as a group of people's viewpoints on various aspects of life, including politics, ideas about money and time, equality, and many other things, from any culture. The *Let's Talk* textbook appears to overlook the cultural dimension of community, as it is not included in any of the textbook's chapters. Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that the *Let's Talk* textbook presents product higher than other categories of cultural dimension which mostly appears on place of Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Based on the previous explanations and analysis, some conclusions related to the cultural dimension of *Let's Talk* textbook that accommodate the Indonesian culture. It can be drawn that from five items of the category, there are four items of cultural dimension found in the textbook content. Those are product, practice, perspective, and person. Cultural dimensions indicate the proportion of imbalance, with product culture being the most prevalent in textbooks. It is clear that the author prioritizes the product over practice, person, and perspective. Consequently, the study's conclusion makes the following recommendation: more integration of cultural categories and elements into instructional and instructional resources is needed in order to improve understanding of culture. Furthermore, there are significant ramifications that might be the matters to be thought about. Students are encouraged to think critically because of their cultures.

REFERENCES

- Bradley, L. (2014). Peer-reviewing in an intercultural wiki environment-student interaction and reflections. *Computers and Composition*, 34, 80–95.
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (Vol. 4). longman New York.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. Macmillan.
- Garton, S., & Graves, K. (2014). Materials in ELT: Current issues. In *International perspectives on materials in ELT* (pp. 1–15). Springer.
- Gay, G. (2018). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. teachers college press.
- Hermawan, B., & Noerkhasanah, L. (2012). Traces of cultures in English textbooks for primary education. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1(2), 49–61.
- Hinkel, E. (1999). *Culture in second language teaching and learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Huang, P. (2019). Textbook interaction: A study of the language and cultural contextualisation of English learning textbooks. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, 21, 87–99.
- Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and culture in language teaching*. Oxford university press.
- Kultsum, U. (2022). *Investigating Cultural Contents and National Identities In EFL Textbook For Junior High School*. Jakarta: FITK UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.
- Luukka, E. (2019). Selection, frequency, and functions of literary texts in Finnish general upper-secondary EFL education. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 63(2), 198–213.

- Marlina, R. (2017). *Teaching English as an International Language: Implementing, reviewing, and re-envisioning World Englishes in language education*. Routledge.
- McKay, S. L. (2000). Teaching English as an International Language: Implications for Cultural Materials in the Classroom. *TESOL Journal*, 9(4), 7–11.
- Messekher, H. (2014). Cultural representations in Algerian English textbooks. In *International perspectives on materials in ELT* (pp. 69–86). Springer.
- Moran, P. R., & Lu, Z. (2001). *Teaching culture: Perspectives in practice*. Heinle & Heinle Boston.
- Obaid, A. A., Ismail, L., Razali, A. B. M., Mansor, N. S., Othman, M., & Aralas, D. (2019). A Descriptive Analysis of Cultural Content of “English for Iraq” Textbooks Used in the Intermediate Schools in Iraq. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 8(4), 88–99.
- Schreier, M., Stamann, C., Janssen, M., Dahl, T., & Whittal, A. (2019). Qualitative content analysis: Conceptualizations and challenges in research practice.
- Setiadi, R. M. A. (2020). *Cultural Contents Of A Junior High School English Textbook*. Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia.
- Sugirim, S. (2011). A study on cultural integration in the English textbooks for junior high schools. *Litera*, 10(2).
- Yuen, K.-M. (2011). The representation of foreign cultures in English textbooks. *ELT Journal*, 65(4), 458–466.