



Cultural Content Analysis in The Textbook “*Bahasa Inggris Life Today*” for Senior High School Grade XII

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Abstract

The research examines the cultural content in the Bahasa Inggris Life Today textbook for twelfth-grade students, focusing on cultural categories and dimensions. Utilizing a qualitative content analysis approach and applying the frameworks of Cortazzi and Jin’s cultural categories and Yuen’s cultural dimensions, the study reveals that the textbook predominantly emphasizes source culture, with moderate representation of target culture and minimal inclusion of international culture. It highlights a strong focus on the Products dimension and a notable presence of diverse Perspectives, while the Persons dimension is notably underrepresented. The research underscores the need for a more balanced portrayal of cultural categories and dimensions to provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of global diversity and to enhance their intercultural competence. Addressing these gaps will help in developing a richer educational resource that better prepares students for interacting in a diverse world..

Keywords: Cultural Content, Textbook Analysis, Bahasa Inggris Life Today

Introduction

English language teaching plays a crucial role in today’s globalized world. According to Pennycook (2017)), English has become the dominant global language for communication and cultural exchange. As a result, developing students’ English proficiency is essential for their participation in international contexts. Fang (2018) also emphasizes that English language teaching facilitates not only linguistic competence but also intercultural communication and understanding. Integrating cultural elements into English teaching enhances students’ ability to navigate diverse global scenarios.

Infusing cultural content into English language teaching is a powerful pedagogical approach that recognizes the inherent link between language and culture. The global use of English complicates the role of culture in teaching English as an international language (Baleghizadeh & Aghazadeh,2020). Procel (2023) states that incorporating cultural content fosters critical thinking skills and promotes intercultural awareness. Irmayani (2016) further notes that cultural competence helps students comprehend textbook content more easily, a sentiment echoed by Khulel (2016), who states that culture significantly influences students’ learning processes. Sofeny (2018) adds that students actively engage with diverse cultural aspects during English learning. Thus, integrating language and culture in English education enriches students’ learning experiences.

Textbooks are crucial for introducing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in Indonesia to diverse cultural perspectives. According to Cortazzi & Jin (1999), textbooks serve as a key resource for acquiring both linguistic and cultural knowledge. Cerino (2023) highlights the extensive role of textbooks in English Language Teaching (ELT) by providing necessary input and activities. Thus, the careful selection of appropriate textbooks is integral to enhancing learners' educational experiences and ensuring effective classroom instruction.

This study aims to analyze the cultural content in the new version of the textbook *Bahasa Inggris: Life Today* for 12th Grade Students, published in 2022 as part of the latest curriculum. Damayanti & Zahro (2022) emphasize that good teaching material should meet course standards, be crafted for a specific course, authored by experts, and legally published by reputable publishers. This textbook, published by the Ministry of Education and Culture, is likely to be widely used by teachers implementing the Merdeka curriculum and is publicly available on the Kemendikbud website.

Previous studies have focused on the cultural content in English textbooks. Rahmawati (2020) explored culture representation in the “*Bahasa Inggris*” textbook for Grade X Senior High School, finding that the textbook includes all categories and dimensions of culture, although some are represented less frequently. Jismulatif & Putri (2023) investigated cultural content in Indonesian English textbooks for high school students, showing source culture dominance over target culture and international aspects. Romdania (2022) analyzed cultural content in the textbook *English Alive 3*, revealing an emphasis on international culture with less attention to source and target cultures.

This study integrates frameworks from Cortazzi & Jin (1999) and Yuen (2011) to provide a comprehensive understanding of cultural dynamics in the *Bahasa Inggris: Life Today* textbook. Jin and Cortazzi identify three cultural categories: source culture, target culture, and international culture, while Yuen conceptualizes cultural dimensions as systems of code (products), signifying thoughts (perspectives), communication (practices), and people (persons). The study collects data through textual and visual elements from units 1 to 4 in the textbook.

Given this background, the researcher is interested in conducting a study titled “Cultural Content Analysis in the English Textbook Entitled *Bahasa Inggris: Life Today* for Senior High School Grade XII.” This study aims to analyze the cultural content in the new version of the textbook *Bahasa Inggris: Life Today* for 12th Grade Students, published in 2022 as part of the latest curriculum. The study will investigate the dominant culture categories represented in the textbook as proposed by Cortazzi and Jin (1999) and the dominant cultural dimensions represented in the textbook as proposed by Yuen (2011).

Research Methods

The research employs a qualitative approach, as described by Miles & Huberman (1994), which provides a framework connecting research questions with practical implementation. This study utilizes qualitative content analysis to explore cultural content in the English textbook *Bahasa Inggris: Life Today* for twelfth-grade students. The analysis is based on the frameworks of Cortazzi and Jin (1999) for cultural categories and Yuen (2011) for cultural dimensions, aiming to identify dominant cultural aspects as defined by these frameworks. Content analysis categorizes and evaluates both textual and visual elements to assess the frequency and significance of these cultural elements (Mayring, 2014).

The study focuses on the *Bahasa Inggris: Life Today* textbook, published in 2022 by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia and authored by Susanti Retno Hardini, Achdi Merdianto, and Marjenny. As a key component of the latest educational curriculum, the textbook is extensively utilized by educators across Indonesia who are implementing the Merdeka curriculum. The widespread use of this textbook makes it a significant subject for analyzing cultural content, as it reflects the current educational standards and practices.

Data collection involved a systematic review of the textual and visual content from units 1 to 4 of the textbook, extracting passages, images, and other relevant materials that reflect cultural content. A coding scheme based on Cortazzi and Jin's (1999) cultural categories (source culture, target culture, and international culture) and Yuen's (2011) cultural dimensions (products, perspectives, practices, and persons) was used to ensure consistency and reliability in identifying and categorizing cultural elements.

Data analysis included organizing and coding the collected data according to the predefined scheme, calculating the frequency of each cultural category and dimension to identify dominant themes, and conducting an inductive evaluation to interpret the findings and understand the significance of the cultural representations.

The final report provides a structured analysis of the textual and visual content from the textbook, offering insights into how cultural content is represented in *Bahasa Inggris: Life Today*. The analysis highlights dominant cultural categories and dimensions, with detailed methods provided to ensure replicability and transparency.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

This section presents the findings from the analysis of the Bahasa Inggris: Life Today textbook, focusing on the dominant cultural categories and dimensions represented.

The first aspect analyzed is the cultural categories in the textbook. The analysis revealed that over 55.67% of the content is dominated by the Source Culture category. For instance, the textbook features an illustration of the Gunung Mali community in Kalimantan working on a micro hydropower plant, showcasing a significant local practice in Indonesian culture. This finding aligns with Rahayu's (2022) study, which reported that Source Culture comprised 50% of the content in the Think Globally Act Locally textbook for ninth-grade students. Harper (2023) emphasizes that Source Culture material is crucial for enhancing intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in the classroom, aiming to increase learners' awareness of their own culture.

In contrast, the Target Culture category is represented by 28.95% of the textbook's content. This finding is consistent with Adi (2023), which utilized the cultural categories proposed by Cortazzi & Jin (1999) and the dimensions outlined by Moran (2001). Adi's research highlights the significant role of Target Culture in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, emphasizing the need for diverse cultural content in educational materials. García (2005) identifies several benefits of familiarizing learners with Target Culture, such as enhancing global knowledge, introducing prominent behaviors of the target community, improving understanding and presentation of one's own culture, fostering respect and tolerance, and boosting intercultural communication competence by challenging cultural assumptions.

Additionally, the International Culture category constitutes 15.79% of the textbook's content, aligning with Aulia (2020) research, which found that international culture made up 8% of the content in English textbooks for grade X Senior High School. Alptekin (2005) suggests that integrating international target culture materials into lessons is crucial for emphasizing global diversity and developing international competence, including fostering positive attitudes towards other cultures.

In summary, the Bahasa Inggris: Life Today textbook predominantly emphasizes Source Culture, followed by Target Culture and International Culture. This distribution highlights a strong focus on familiarizing students with their own culture and broader global perspectives. However, the limited representation of International Culture indicates a need for more diverse content to enhance learners' understanding of cultural diversity and intercultural competence.

The second category analyzed is the dimensions of culture as defined by Yuen (2011). The findings reveal varying levels of representation across different cultural dimensions in the textbook. The Products dimension is the most prominently featured, comprising 34.67% of the content. This dimension includes tangible artifacts and symbolic representations that reflect cultural identities and practices. Examples from the textbook include comics on energy conservation, depictions of Rupiah currency, and symbols from various countries, illustrating how cultural values and beliefs are communicated through both tangible and intangible products. Karimah (2022) study similarly found that Products dominated, constituting 77% of instances. This alignment highlights the strong emphasis on tangible cultural artifacts and symbolic representations in both the Bahasa Inggris: Life Today textbook and Karimah's research, underscoring the importance of Products in conveying cultural identities and practices.

In contrast, the Practices dimension represents 24.00% of the content, focusing on cultural rituals, activities, and societal norms. Examples in the textbook highlight digital and cash transactions, podcasting activities, and dietary preferences such as meat consumption, reflecting contemporary cultural practices. This contrasts with Noorfauzi (2023) findings, which showed that the Persons dimension was the most predominant. Noorfauzi's study emphasized notable figures, whereas the Bahasa Inggris: Life Today textbook places greater emphasis on tangible cultural products and practices.

The Persons dimension is the least represented, at 9.33%, featuring notable figures and cultural icons such as Ricky Elson, Killion Manggara, and Laszlo Hanyecz. This contrasts sharply with Bening (2023) study, which highlighted a dominant focus on individual cultural figures, constituting 82% of the content. Jingga's research emphasized the importance of notable figures, whereas the Bahasa Inggris: Life Today textbook provides less emphasis on individual persons and more on other cultural dimensions.

The Perspectives dimension is notably represented at 32%, emphasizing diverse viewpoints and values. Examples include discussions on physical currency preferences and opinions on meat consumption, illustrating how cultural perspectives shape individuals' understanding and interactions. This finding contrasts with Riadini (2018) research, which showed Perspectives at 14% in various English textbooks.

In summary, the Bahasa Inggris: Life Today textbook demonstrates a strong emphasis on the Products and Perspectives dimensions, contributing to a comprehensive cultural education. However, the limited representation of the Persons dimension suggests an area for improvement. A more balanced portrayal of all cultural dimensions is essential for a holistic understanding of culture. Enhancing the depiction of notable figures and cultural icons could significantly improve students' connection to individual contributions within their cultural

context. Overall, these insights reflect varied approaches to cultural representation in educational materials and underscore the importance of integrating diverse cultural dimensions to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. A comprehensive representation of different cultural aspects will enrich students' educational experiences and better prepare them for interacting with diverse global perspectives.

Discussion

The analysis reveals that the textbook predominantly emphasizes Source Culture, comprising over 55.67% of its content. This strong focus on Source Culture highlights the textbook's intent to enhance students' awareness of their own culture and its practices. This aligns with previous studies emphasizing the importance of integrating Source Culture to foster intercultural communicative competence (Lee, 2023).

In comparison, the representation of Target Culture is 28.95%, indicating a significant, yet secondary emphasis on foreign cultures. This proportion reflects an effort to provide students with a global perspective, though it is less emphasized than Source Culture. García (2005) notes that introducing language learners to the target culture is beneficial for enhancing their knowledge of global and foreign societies, promoting respect and tolerance, and improving their intercultural communication competence. This finding supports the notion that while it is important to introduce students to other cultures, a substantial focus remains on their own.

International Culture is represented by only 15.79% of the content, suggesting a limited inclusion of global cultural elements. This indicates a gap in presenting a broader range of cultural perspectives, which could be crucial for developing a more comprehensive understanding of global diversity. Hernandez (2021) suggests that international target culture materials should be integrated into lessons as they emphasize global diversity and aid learners in developing intercultural communicative competence (ICC), including fostering positive attitudes towards other cultures.

Regarding cultural dimensions, the Products dimension is the most prominent, accounting for 34.67% of the content. This indicates a strong emphasis on tangible artifacts and symbolic representations of culture. Yuen (2011) emphasizes that incorporating dimensions such as Products, Practices, Perspectives, and Persons in textbooks is crucial for shaping students' intercultural competence. Conversely, the Practices dimension constitutes 24.00%, reflecting a moderate focus on cultural rituals and societal norms. This suggests that while contemporary practices are covered, they are less emphasized compared to tangible cultural products.

The Persons dimension is the least represented, at 9.33%, highlighting a notable lack of focus on individual cultural figures. This contrasts with other studies that have emphasized the importance of featuring notable figures to provide a personal connection to cultural contexts (Yuen, 2011).

The Perspectives dimension, represented at 32%, underscores the textbook's effort to present diverse viewpoints and values. This significant representation reflects an intention to expose students to various cultural perspectives and enhance their understanding of different cultural viewpoints.

In conclusion, the Bahasa Inggris: Life Today textbook demonstrates a strong focus on Source Culture and Products, with a significant but secondary emphasis on Target Culture and Perspectives. However, the limited representation of International Culture and the Persons dimension suggests areas for improvement. A more balanced representation of all cultural dimensions would provide a more holistic cultural education, enriching students' learning experiences and better preparing them for interactions in a diverse global context.

Conclusion

This research investigates the representation of culture in the Bahasa Inggris: Life Today textbook through the frameworks of cultural categories by Cortazzi and Jin (1999) and cultural dimensions by Yuen (2011). The study aims to identify the dominant cultural categories and dimensions presented in the textbook and to evaluate their implications for cultural education.

The analysis reveals that the textbook predominantly emphasizes Source Culture, highlighting the intention to present learners with their own cultural context. This focus is complemented by a notable representation of Target Culture, reflecting efforts to introduce students to global perspectives. However, the limited representation of International Culture indicates a significant gap, suggesting a need for broader inclusion of global perspectives to better reflect world diversity and enhance learners' intercultural communication skills.

In terms of cultural dimensions, the textbook prominently features the Products dimension, which underscores tangible artifacts and symbols of cultural identity. This is followed by the Perspectives dimension, which presents diverse viewpoints and values, helping students appreciate different ways of thinking. The Practices dimension illustrates cultural rituals and norms, offering insights into daily life and traditions. Conversely, the Persons dimension, which focuses on influential figures, is the least represented, revealing a gap in showcasing the roles and contributions of cultural icons.

Overall, the research highlights the need for a more balanced representation of cultural categories and dimensions. Enhancing the inclusion of global perspectives and influential figures would provide a richer portrayal of world

cultures and strengthen the textbook's role in developing students' intercultural competence.

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