Culture EFL Textbooks

by Akmal Saiful

Classifying "Culture" in Indonesian Secondary Public Education EFL Textbooks

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ABSTRACT

Culture and language are intrinsically intertwined. Understanding the cultures may be necessary for acquiring communication skills. It is not difficult to argue that textbooks hold a central role in English language education, allowing them to be employed successfully for educating pupils about cultural elements. This study investigates the categorization of cultural materials and the sense of culture of two "Bahasa Inggris 2017 updated edition" English textbooks for grades X and XI in senior high school of Indonesian secondary education. This study examines which cultures are exemplified in the textbooks and how they are characterized in textbooks. The design of the study follows the qualitative descriptive design by the use of content analysis. Both the "categories of culture" approach of Cortazzi and Jin (1999) and the "sense of culture" approach of Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990) were used in the present study. The data showed that *Bahasa Inggris* tenth-grade textbook focused more on source culture, instead of target culture and international culture. Nonetheless, the *Bahasa Inggris* eleventh-grade textbook, target culture is more dominant compared to the source and international culture. In both books, pragmatic sense predominated over aesthetic sense, semantic sense, and social sense. This study also uncovered an imbalance in the number of exhibited cultural categories. This study proposes that writers of EFL textbooks should accommodate a balanced representation of source culture, target culture, and international culture as well as provide a reasonable four cultural sense in the textbooks.

Key Words: EFL textbooks; Indonesian secondary public education; cultural categorization; senses of culture.

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INTRODUCTION

Language is the cultural mirror (Kadarisman, 2005); thus, it is obvious that culture and language are intricately linked. Brown (2000) affirms that language and culture are inextricably linked; if they are separated, it will be impossible to determine their core qualities. Risager and Chapelle (2012) also said that it unthinkable to detach language and culture because the practices of language are connected to further public routines in the actual realm. Typically, a particular language indicates a certain group of individuals. When people communicate in a different language, they also deal with the culture that speaks that language. Arslan (2016) stated that being proficient in communication means that the users of the language should culturally be prepared. Culture cannot be understood without direct access to a language. Without addressing cultural norms and practices, language instruction cannot succeed (Alptekin, 1993). Mukundan (2005) also agrees that cultural teachings and activities must be prepared and integrated with the same attention as language activities. Therefore, if the cultural feature is absent in language education, students cannot understand the language entrenched in the culture.

In addition, the link between a language and culture is distinct and varied. According to scholars, culture is a description of the language, and without languages, cultures would perish (Kaikkonen, Kannus, & Järvinen, 1994; Lappalainen, 2011). As language echoes culture and culture also reflects language, Fantini (1995) and Moran (2001) agree that there is a reciprocal relationship between the two. Jiang (2000, p.328) further illustrates the connection between language and culture by analogy with an iceberg. Language is the obvious building block, but the most substantial part of apparent cultural differences lies beneath the surface.

Some teachers and researchers have pointed out the central role of culture in language teaching and study because of the inherent connection between the two. McKay (2002), for example, concludes that including cultural components into language instruction can boost EFL students' motivation. Similarly, teaching students to value their own distinctive culture benefits from exposure to other cultures. As Edmonstone (2019), puts it, "culture bound" refers to the amount to which a person's cultural norms shape their worldview and, by extension, their learning. This can be problematic when they interact with people of other cultures.

Yet, Brown (2000) considers that to be able to connect with the new language, students have to learn the language and the culture. Considering language teaching and cultural teaching are meticulously linked, integrating culture into EFL textbooks has turn out to be a broadly established fact. Thus, teaching language learners about cultural factors could well be accomplished via textbooks, as textbooks play an important part in EFL classrooms. Doró (2013) and Khanadi, et al. (2022) argue that textbook selection is central as it lays the groundwork for understanding and interpreting culture. In addition, McKay (2002) emphasizes that the cultural elements variation insertion in EFL materials will assist students in developing an interest in language learning and increases their motivation.

Faris (2014) found that secondary school students in West-Java were primarily exposed to positive portrayals of the target culture in textbooks. Indonesia and the aesthetic parts commonly exemplified the cultural aspects. Ekawati and Hamdani (2012) further specified that EFL textbooks and methods exercised mirror the target culture, the source culture and international culture. In addition, there have been some important studies into how cultures are depicted in English textbooks. Arslan (2016) discovered the cultural content and occurrence of features associated to

source culture, target culture, and international culture in EFL textbooks. The results found that there was disharmony between cultural matters, meaning that the target and international cultures were found more than the source cultures.

Silvia (2015) argues Indonesian high school English textbooks emphasize "surface culture" over "deep culture." Famous names, foodstuff, locations, traditional dances, and language formulate the represented cultures. Cultural values, thoughts, and standpoints remain forgotten.

Matsuda (2012), Yuen (2011), and Martono (2016) discovered that target cultures were prevalent in English textbooks. These data demonstrate that, while some modern theories advocate a balanced blend of local and global cultures, materials developers have their views on cultural content integration. Because cultural content is accordingly important in ELT, it should be carefully evaluated. In this light, Rashidi and Meihami (2016) researched the ELT textbooks cultural substance in inner, outer, and expanding group of nation states. The outcomes unveiled changes between those EFL textbooks. The inner circle confined more sources and target culture. While the expanding circle characterized more universal culture, the outer circle presented a leaning to have all types of cultural groupings altogether.

Cultural content in the textbook

According to Cunningsworth (1995), textbooks are essential in the ELT teaching space since educators use them to organize and deliver programs, and learners depend on them for language content and reproductions. In addition, textbooks supply the course's main content, acting as the source for students' language involvement and classroom language exercise (Tomlinson, 2005). For teachers, textbooks are a map that sets the direction of the topic being learnt in the classroom. It contains substances like principles, and actions that educate the students on particular cultures (Ekawati & Hamdani, 2012).

EFL textbooks customarily transport direct or indirect collection of cultural ideals discussed in the texts as the "hidden curriculum". Cunningsworth (1995) believes that "hidden curriculum" is regularly starker compared to the recommended curriculum, will affect learners' cultural awareness, perceptions, and knowledge after they are exposed at length to it. In this light, cultural aspects of a textbook are classified into three groups by Cortazzi and Jin (1999): the source culture, the target culture, and the international culture.

Elements of the source culture indicate the materials from which students can have access to a specific culture. Instead of teaching students how to engage with people from different cultures, these resources aim to assist them to speak with foreign visitors about their own culture. It is intended to make learners acquainted with the indigenous culture and promote it to be more prevalent among them. The cultures of the British, the American, the Canadian, and the Australian are presented in EFL textbooks that include the target culture. Non-English-speaking communities and places where English is not the primary means of communication but is used as the international language in Asian, African countries are instances of multinational cultures.

Moreover, Adaskou, Britten and Farsi (1990, p. 4) propose the four senses of cultural agenda in the textbook: the aesthetic, the sociological, the pragmatics and the semantic sense. These four senses of cultural agenda shelter the broad classifications of culture: the totalist interpretation and the mentalist vision, the big C culture and the small c culture. The big C culture talks about the films, songs and supplementary literary facets. At the same time, the culture with small c denotes the society and natural surroundings of family, friends, and organizations.

The aesthetic sense of culture talks about the films, songs, and literature.

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The sociological sense of culture discusses the society, friends, family, personal relation, physical condition, labor and leisureliness, tradition, and organization (Hermawan & Lia, 2012). The semantic sense of culture mentions the theoretical arrangement exemplified in the semantic use of language and preparing all our insights and assumed practices. For instance, many vocabularies (e.g., diet, garments, and organizations) are unique as they recount to a certain cultural behavior. The most recent, the pragmatic sense (or sociolinguistic) talk about the contextual information, societal expertise, and paralinguistic abilities that, plus mastery of the language code, make effective communication (Tajeddin, Alemi, & Pashmforoosh, 2018).

To summarize, earlier studies have revealed that textbook selection, the adoption of "hidden curriculum" of cultural ideals, and learning culture all important in language education. Teachers and students rely on their world view of the new foreign language they are teaching and learning. Cultural immersion in EFL textbook selection has an impact on student's enthusiasm to study the language and encourage teachers to engage more with the students in the classroom (Alshenqeeti, 2019).

However, despite the increasing tendency between researchers to study on the significance of language and culture in EFL textbooks, Özdemir (2013) mentions that research on textbooks is currently still limited and further research on cultural elements are needed. In fact, the analysis of the cultural content and the way it presented in the textbooks, especially with regard to the enforcement of certain curriculum is relatively dearth and understudied. To this end, the purpose of this study is to investigate the cultural content and its presentation of the 2017 revised edition of English textbooks for tenth- and eleventh-grade EFL students in Indonesian secondary school system.

METHODS

Research design

This study was designed to use content analysis to describe the English textbook's cultural contents. Nomnian (2013) and Wallen and Fraenkel (2001) stated that content analysis is a research method that investigates selected sources' specific written words, texts, or visual contents. This qualitative study attempted to describe the cultural content of the textbook.

As stated previously, English textbooks utilized by senior high school students in grade 10th and 11th titled "Bahasa Inggris" revised edition served as the primary data source for this study. These revised editions of textbooks were published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in 2017 in response to changes

made to the country's national curriculum in 2013. Widiati, Rohmah, and Furaidah authored the first edition of the textbooks, an updated edition for the tenth grade. The second textbook is written by Mahrukh Bashir and aimed at providing fresh materials for the eleventh-graders.

There are some explanations why the textbook is chosen. First, the textbooks are appropriate for the existing core national curriculum. Subsequently, the textbooks are used nationally for English instructional media to EFL students at Indonesian secondary schools. Then, the textbooks are sanctioned by The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture to deal with the need for accommodating the 2013 curriculum revision. Afterward, the textbooks are unlike the foregoing version of the textbooks. The latest changes of content signify the avowal of character building and incorporated High Order Thinking Skill (HOTS).

Data collection and analysis

In this study, the data was collected by choosing the construing paths, discussions, images and actions offered in every unit of the textbooks. One of the methods used in this study to analyze the data is by creating a checklist; 1) To unlock the cultural content exemplified in these textbooks

from Cortazzi and Jin (1999); 2) The categorization from Adaskou, Britten and Farsi (1990) are applied to disclose how values are embodied in those textbooks.

This study applied the open coding which embraces marking conceptions centered on their particular characteristics within texts (Saldaña, 2012). We gave the codes for each cultural element by referring to the framework proposed earlier. Thus, the data was converted into categorizations and percentages. It was associated and examined to scrutinize what cultures arose most often and how they were exemplified in the textbooks in the form of tables and charts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

A. **Cultural content in English textbook "Bahasa Inggris" for the tenth grade**

This textbook covers fifteen units/chapters with diverse themes and therefore it is a theme-based textbook. The theme ranges from talking about self, congratulation, intentions, tourist destinations, announcement, idol, Indonesian culture, Japanese, the Wring Brothers, Strong Wind, and making friend.

Types of Cultures exemplified in the Bahasa Inggris revised textbook for the tenth grade EFL Students

Chart 1. Types of culture in textbook *Bahasa Inggris* for the tenth grade
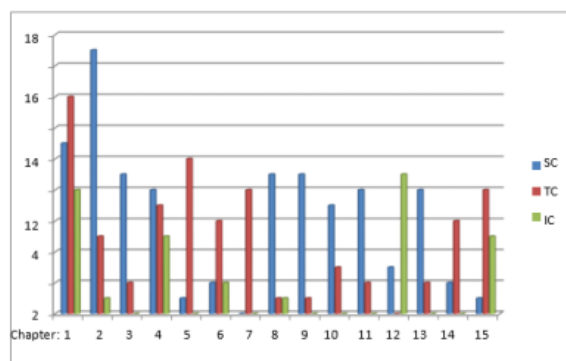
The chart above mentions that not all parts of the textbook enclosed a cause of Indonesian values as the source culture. The utmost rate of recurrence of source culture was found in unit 2 (17 occasions). Oppositely, unit 7 provided none of the source culture. The source culture was typically obtainable by people names such as Siti, Edo, Sinta, Alif, Deni, Wayan, Rahmi, Firda, Riza, Santi, Rina, Bayu, Afgan, B.J Habibie, dan Cut Nyak Dhien. It was also visibly detected by names of cities and provinces, such as Surabaya, Padang (cities), and Papua, Aceh, West Sumatra; images of Indonesian schoolchildren, venues, and other pictorial exemplifications. Furthermore, text types such as descriptive, recount, and narrative posing Indonesian cultures were straightforwardly bring into being in the textbook, for example the recount text that described about Cut Nyak Dhien, a war heroine that battled the Dutch colonialist found on

pages 145 to 146, and a different story around Malin Kundang on page 172.


Picture.1 Cut Nyak Dhien (Acehnese Heroine)

In the picture below, the source culture was characterized by interchanges between Indonesian speakers as those can be seen on page 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 32, and 41. The two talkers greeted and talked about where do they come from and what do they do for a living as displayed below.

Picture 2. Dialogue between Raja and Slamet

The appearance of the target culture (English speaking countries culture) in this textbook was relatively limited. However, it was present for all content categories like names, pictures, grammar, speech acts, reading passages, interchanges, songs, and

quotes from the world-famous individuals. The chart also described that every unit enclosed a target culture, and the uppermost occurrence of target culture is located in unit 1 (14 occurrences). The example of target culture is exemplified by the individual names, for example Steve Job, Mark Zuckerberg, and Oprah Winfrey. In addition, the talk about target culture was displayed on pages 97 to 98 on the Wright Brothers form the United States who developed the aircraft."
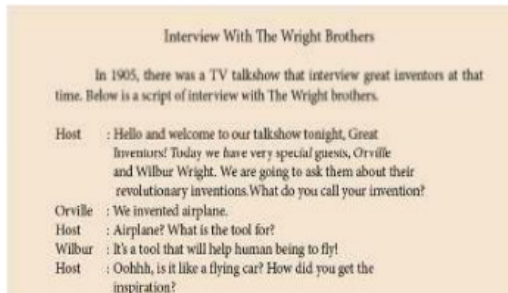
Picture 3. Conversation about the Wright Brothers representing the U.S target culture

Based on the chart displayed earlier, the international culture was the least cultural content found in the textbook. The main appearance of international culture's presence was only found in unit 12 (9 occurrences). It appeared in the names of persons; Lionel Messi, Shinto Altar, and countries; India, Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan. Thus, some cultural texts are also found, such as the descriptive text of the Taj Mahal on page 58 and the narrative text of a Japanese fairy tale

entitled "Issumboshi" on page 155. Those passages represent the type of international culture.

Picture 5. The Taj Mahal in India representing international culture

Presentation of Culture in English textbooks for grade 10th

Table 2 The sense of culture occurrences in English textbooks for the tenth grade

Type of Culture	Aesthetic Sense	Semantic sense	Pragmatic Sense	Sociological Sense	Aggregate
Source Culture	12	21	45	17	96 (48.97%)
Target Culture	6	5	54	11	75 (38.26%)
International Culture	1	4	12	9	26 (13.26%)
Total	19	30	111	37	
	(9.69%)	(15.30%)	(56.63%)	(18.87%)	100 %

It can be evidently described from the table that the cultural content was strongly accessible in a pragmatic aspect. It materialized 111 occurrences (56.63 %) in the forms of grammar, vocabularies, pronunciation, reading and writing exercises as well as speech acts.

Furthermore, the social component emerged 37 occurrences (18.87 %) that

represent the entire category of culture: source, target and international aspect of the culture. This was regularly shown in interactions concerning relations, groups, and organizations. Moreover, the semantic element presented 30 occurrences (15.30 %). This type of cultural sense was circumscribed only to fashions. To sum up, the aesthetic element was the smallest portion of culture discovered in this textbook, appearing 19 occurrences (9.69%) of moving pictures such as Harry Potter and Twilight, and songs.

Rahmi : Hello. How are things going on, Sinta?
Sinta : Hi. Good, and you?
Rahmi : I'm feeling great today. How was your weekend with your family in Batu?
Sinta : Excellent! We had a lovely time there. You should have gone there with us.
Rahmi : Really? Hey, what a beautiful skirt you are wearing. It matches your blouse.
Sinta : Thanks a lot. My sister bought it for me last month.
Rahmi : Wow! That's wonderful.
Sinta : Oh, Rahmi, can I ask you something?
Rahmi : Oh, sure. Please.
Sinta : Have you finished writing the book we discussed two months ago?
Rahmi : Yes. Come to my room. Look at this. What do you think?
Sinta : Terrific. I like the cover. Let me see the contents. This book is excellent. You really did a great job.
Rahmi : Thanks a lot. You've inspired me to do this.

Picture 7. Interface between two friends is representing sociological sense

B. Cultural Content Found in English Textbook "Bahasa Inggris" for the eleventh grade

This textbook is typically grammar based, unlike the textbook made for the X grade earlier. It has eight units/chapters including an enrichment unit/chapter which offered some reading comprehensions with various subjects ranging from offers and suggestions, opinions and thoughts, party, natural disasters, letter writing, cause and effect, music, and explanation.

Types of Culture represented in the textbook Bahasa Inggris for grade 11th

Chart 2. Types of Culture in *Bahasa Inggris* for the eleventh grade
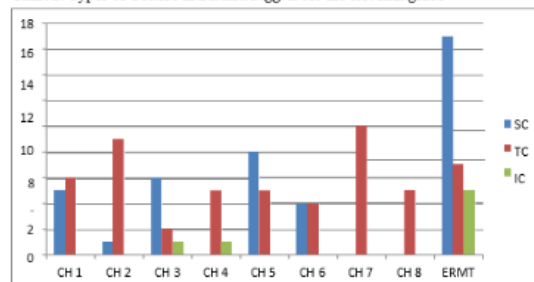
The visualization implied that not every textbook chapter contained the source culture. The highest occurrence of source cultures was surprisingly found in the Enrichment Unit (17 occurrences). In reverse, some chapters did not provide the discussion about the source culture such as in chapters 4, 7, and 8. Similarly like the previous textbook for grade 10th, the source culture mostly existed through the person names for instance Soekarno, Rahmad, Joko, Budi, Riadi, Yanti, Soeharto, and R.A. Kartini.

Next, it is also emerged in the names of Indonesian cities, such as Ciputat, Tangerang Selatan, and Lombok. Also, in the last part of the textbook, there was a special unit on reading comprehension comprising two reading texts associated to source cultures. For instance, on page 130, the

reading passage describes the biography of the first Indonesian President Soekarno. An extra reading on page 161 provides a text about the life story of Ki Hajar Dewantara with his three well-known statements on education and the Wayang art image representing famous Javanese tradition in Indonesia.

Picture 8. Picture of Indonesian Wayang arts from Java representing source culture

Since this textbook is very much in a grammar-based mode, thus the target culture was primarily offered in grammar, names of people (i.e. Johnson, etc.), and places (i.e. Brooklyn, etc.). All book units offered target culture, and the maximum portion of the target culture was found in unit 7. Unit 7 contains a topic about the importance of songs and poetries from the target cultures. Moreover, it also provides supplementary material associated with the target cultures, such as word pronunciation. In addition, in the last chapter, a text representing the target culture entitled "The last leaf" by O Henry, an American short story write is also found in the texbook.

In the remaining units, merely three of them address topics related to international culture. It was constrained only to the people names like Gandhi (India) and Mandela (South Africa). In addition, there were also found three texts that represent international culture. First is a text entitled "Vanity and Pride" about Monsieur and Madame Loisel. Second, the reading titled "The Enchanted Fish" was adjusted from Grimm Brothers story (Germany), 1812" The Fisherman and his wife." The last text is named "Letter to God" about Rancho Lucas from Argentina who sent the letter to God to listen to his appeal.
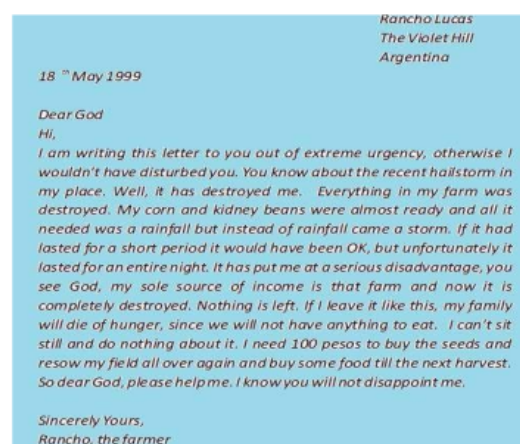
Picture 10. Letter to God from Rancho in Argentina representing International Culture

Presentation of Culture in English textbooks for the tenth grade

Type of Culture	Aesthetic Sense	Semantic Sense	Pragmatic Sense	Sociological Sense	Aggregate
Source Culture	4	7	15	15	41 36.28%
Target Culture	12	1	36	4	53 46.90%
International	2	0	4	13	19
Culture	18	8	55	32	16.81%
Total	15.92%	7.07%	48.67%	28.31%	100%

The table shows that pragmatics sense was heavily obtainable in the textbook and found as much as 55 occurrences throughout the textbook (48.67%) in the form of condensed grammar and speech acts themes.

Picture 11. Speech acts of disagreement representing pragmatic sense.

Then, the sociological aspect emerged 32 occurrences (28.31%) in the forms of dialogue, readings, or information about family, friends, and institutions. Furthermore, the aesthetic component came into view 18 times (15.92%), obtainable through songs and poems. Finally, the existence of semantic element only discovered eight times (7.07%) in the forms of clothes and its wears.

Discussion

The findings of this present study imply that Cortazzi and Jin's framework of cultural features were represented differently in the two selected textbooks. In addition, the textbooks' representation of culture was grounded on the four elements differed slightly from the framework proposed by Adaskou, Britten, and Farsi (1990). The cultural representations in each book were presented by visual illustrations, reading comprehensions, declarations, people names, places, conversations, and other activities. In addition, the findings revealed that there was an imbalance appearance in the textbook between the cultural elements, whereby the source culture and the target culture were presented more compared to international culture.

In Bahasa Inggris for the tenth grade textbook, the Indonesian culture as the source culture was frequently easy to get to. This finding was similar to the one found by Rashidi and Meihami (2016). They found that the source culture proportion is exceeding other type of cultural senses. The finding also revealed that second most frequently offered type of culture was the target culture, with a percentage of 38.26%, surpassing international culture, with 13.26%. Thus, the first textbook can advocate students' own cultures in English teaching and education.

The second textbook, Bahasa Inggris for 11th grade, featured different results. This textbook discussed more about the target culture

compared to the other two categories of culture. The largest presence of the target culture was comparable to the English textbooks cultural content examined by Faris (2014) and Arslan (2016). The total proportion of the target culture originated in this present study is 46.90% (53 occurrences), the highest among other types. In contrast to the first textbook, this textbook promotes the target culture more in English teaching and education for senior high school EFL students.

Both textbooks have also been analysed by using the four senses of culture: the aesthetic sense, the semantic sense, the pragmatic sense, and the social sense (Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990). The pragmatic sense materializes more frequently in these two textbooks. It was offered purely in the form of grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, reading, and speech act. The semantic sense, however, was addressed insignificantly in the first textbook. The second textbook, yet, ranked the second last significant cultural sense before aesthetic cultural sense whereby it was restricted to clothing images and fashion-related content. Accordingly, it can be inferred that both textbooks offer comparatively less semantic sense than the other three categories of sense.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

The examination on cultural content of these two textbooks has exposed some interesting findings. In the textbook for the tenth grade, the dominant presence was about the source culture. In contrast, the textbook for the eleventh grade is mainly discussed about the target culture and not the source culture and international culture. The cultures are offered by visual artworks, people, places, grammar, speech acts, songs, and poems.

However, this study did not provide a close and meticulous cultural content comparison to the selected textbooks, but rather, decided to focus on the cultural content analysis of solely these two textbooks. Also, this present study did not include the textbooks used for the twelfth-grade students, something that can be counted as the limitation. Although, the exclusion of the twelfth-grade students' textbook is because most of their time spent on preparing for the national final examination, still, it is very far from a complete analysis on the EFL textbooks for student in tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade at higher secondary schools.

As a result, this study seems to suggest the policy makers for curriculum changes in language

education to re-enact the criterion for textbook assessment by requiring the cultural materials integration and to improve a culturally more appropriate local content for the Indonesian students with a balanced portion of the target and international culture too. On top of that, another key statement from the finding of this present study has revealed an ample data about the presence of culture in English textbooks for Indonesian higher secondary school EFL students. Thus, tutors can identify the most appropriate type of cultural elements to nurture learners' cultural mindfulness.

This study also attests that in the selected textbooks, the existence of international cultural content is lacking. Therefore, future studies and textbooks authors are suggested that this content should be taken into serious consideration. At this moment, the presentation of international culture is inevitable as it can raise EFL student's external awareness of the competing and existing cultures across the globe. The cultural knowledge of international culture other than the target culture can widen the paradigm and way of viewing the world.

Another pivotal statement that can be taken from this study is that the representation of various sense of culture should be equally considered. In contrast to the sociological, artistic, and semantic senses, the pragmatic sense has been the primary focus of the

textbooks under examination so far. Accordingly, the students are accustomed with one particular and even unilateral understanding of cultural sense and very much unaware of the others. Further research can expand the analysis to unlock some other potentials research gaps resulting from the limitation of this study. Future researchers can make it possible to conduct other similar studies on the same topic with lower secondary school students, different textbooks publishers endorsed by the government or textbooks used by EFL learners' comparison at state and private schools.

Despite the fact that the selected textbooks are sanctioned by the Indonesian Ministry of National Education for the senior high school students, their respective cultural contents are notably unalike. The early English textbooks tend to be more tolerant of indigenous cultures. This is beneficial for increasing EFL students' awareness of their own cultures. In contrast, the second textbook focuses primarily on the target culture, raising students' awareness of the cultural surroundings of native English speakers. Unfortunately, those textbooks both offer trivial content regarding the international culture despite the point that English is currently exercised by many non-native/foreign language speakers internationally. In addition, the analyzed textbooks also represent

cultures primarily from a pragmatic perspective rather than from a sociological, aesthetic, or semantic perspective. This may affect students' capability to understand cultures in different circumstances.

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