

## **Analyzing English As A Foreign Language (EFL) Textbooks From The Perspective of Indonesian Culture**

**Yuvi Sri Widia**  
[yuvisriwidia07@gmail.com](mailto:yuvisriwidia07@gmail.com)

**Mansyur Sri Sudarso**  
[mansyur.srisudarso@staff.unsika.ac.id](mailto:mansyur.srisudarso@staff.unsika.ac.id)

**Sidik Indra Nugraha**  
[sidik.indranugraha@staff.unsika.ac.id](mailto:sidik.indranugraha@staff.unsika.ac.id)

Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang

### **ABSTRACT**

Textbooks play a critical part in the teaching and learning processes. They are generally used as the basic foundations of courses in classrooms by both teachers and students. Textbooks may not be able to meet all of the demands of the teaching and learning process, but their continued existence as a teaching source is critical. They become one of the most powerful sources of learning in the teaching and learning process, as well as a reflection of a person's or nation's beliefs and views. Culture may be supported by thorough and comprehensive textbooks. This research report examines certain textbooks utilized in one of Indonesia's Junior High Schools. The writer studied the textbooks from a cultural standpoint. This is primarily because, when studying English, Indonesian students should focus on talking about and debating Indonesian culture in English rather than the culture of English-speaking nations. The writer used Bryam's criteria to study and examine the cultural components of English textbooks. Byram's criteria is deemed adequate and complete. This series of checklists is inspired by the concept of cultural learning and teaching as an intrinsic aspect of language instruction. The findings indicate that the textbooks under consideration included local or Indonesian culture. These findings highlight the need of revising English teaching materials in order to contribute to the improvement of English textbooks in Indonesia.

**Key words:** Textbooks; Analysis; Indonesian Culture

### **INTRODUCTION**

Textbook are critical components of learning for both students and teachers. Textbooks are regarded as the fundamental pillars of courses in the teaching and learning process. Textbooks may not include all of the information required for the teaching and learning process, but their availability as a teaching resource is critical. They served as excellent tools in the teaching and learning process, as well as a reflection of a person's or nation's beliefs and views (Hinkel, 2005).

Culture may be supported by thorough and comprehensive textbooks. Byram, in particular, has developed a checklist for the appropriate cultural content in a textbook. This part of checklists is inspired by the concept of cultural learning and teaching as an intrinsic aspect of language instruction:

- 1) Social group and social identity (social class, regional identity, ethnic minorities)
  - 2) Interaction with others (differing levels of formality; as outsider and insider)
  - 3) Beliefs and actions (moral, religious beliefs; daily routines)
  - 4) Institutions of social and political life (state institutions, health care, law and order, social security, local government)
  - 5) The life cycle and socialization (families, schools, employment, rites of passage)
  - 6) History of the country (historical and contemporary events seen as markers of national identity)
  - 7) Geography of the country (geographical factors seen as being significant by members)
  - 8) Stereotypes and national identity (what is a "typical" national stereotype sign)
- (Byram, 1993, p5-10)

Byram's standard is thought to be more thorough as well as practical. It encompassed almost all parts of civilization, from the moral to the material. As a result, the author opted to use the Byram checklist as the section " " for collecting, analyzing, and evaluating cultural content data in the textbook.

Textbooks should be developed with a clear explanation to increase cultural value in EFL teaching. The value of textbooks varies, but in general, they help with the process of teaching and learning in second language nations. According to McKay (2002), textbooks may be "a teacher, a map, a resource, a trainer, an authority, a de-skinner, and an ideology" as part of teaching and learning. As a result, it may serve as a significant source of cultural knowledge as well as linguistic and thematic resources that depict the existing ideology of ESL nations. Textbooks in every corner of the world have different cultural orientations, depending on whether the source culture, target culture, or international target is founded on.

The source culture textbook represents the learner culture, whereas the target culture textbook reflects the target language used as first languages. The international target culture was influenced by a variety of cultures from English-speaking nations as well as non-English-speaking countries that regard English as an international language (Cortazzi and Jin, 1999 in McKay 2002).

Norrizan (1993; McKay, 2002) investigated the influence of diverse cultural components in ESL texts delivered during ESL sessions in two Malaysian schools with two different student groups. She chose examples from a school in Community A with pupils from the middle or upper middle classes and a school in Community B, which was an urban town with low-income families, to contrast the schools based on economic background. She used the cultural uni matrix study to include common topical issues such as housing kinds, abroad studies, satay, business loans, trips, air journeys, and local festivals, among others. The items were chosen based on a study

of six form four ESL textbooks used by the school sample's instructors. Data gathering methods such as interviews and classroom observations were used to determine if the student was familiar with the relevant topics supplied.

In comparison to the community B, students from medium or upper middle class households are more familiar with most current subjects, according to the results. She came to the conclusion that the textbooks reflected both middle-class beliefs and lifestyles. As a result, students in Community A were able to engage in successful relationships. In contrast, pupils in community B are less interested and likely to ignore the lessons. She advised teachers to select more relevant themes that are in keeping with the students' culture.

The study indicated that familiar things can help with second language learning and teaching. Regardless of the ambiguous effect of Western culture on English learning and instruction, Shimako (2000) asserted in her opinion published in McKay (2002) that most Japanese textbooks incorporated Western value and character, despite the fact that local culture is more important. The setting tale of a western traveler who is introduced to local culture depicts the method of foreign culture. Western culture is typically shown in an American perspective.

In Korea, teaching and studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL) included many elements of social life, including lifestyle, behavior, ideas, and the target culture's custom system. Students are intentionally trained to grasp cultural elements, but they are also required to learn language features. It is found that at the secondary level, the majority of selected themes are related to local culture, such as cuisine, vacations, gesture, weather, customs, and trips to English-speaking nations. The basic element of culture is 'culture as a way of life,' which includes social aspects of culture. Other components, such as the beauty of culture and culture as a way of thinking and doing, have received less attention.

In Chile, the cultural contents centered on the notion of belonging. The Ministry of Education in Chile has established a textbook idea named "Go for Chile" (Mugglestone, Elsworth, and Rose 1999, 2000 in McKay, 2002). This idea is designed to achieve the government's educational objectives. The books itself address several locations in Chile as well as diverse local cultures.

The characters in the novels are drawn from a diverse range of ethnicities and cultures, yet western values such as career women are also shown in the plot. Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990) said in McKay (2002)'s study on teaching materials in Morocco that there is no practical benefit to adding Western culture in secondary schools. It is claimed that by including western values, learners will be more prone to compare their local culture to western values, which may lead to unhappiness. Furthermore, teachers thought that students would be more motivated to study English if the background was focused on their daily lives rather than the culture of English-speaking nations. They also noted that including cultural elements into English instruction can help students grasp English as an international

language, respect local culture, prepare students to travel overseas and interact with people, and inspire students.

In short, textbooks in the aforementioned nations employed Western cultures to distinguish between local and Western civilizations. The books also addressed themes such as gender roles, which were approved by the local Ministry of Education. Based on these investigations, the author proposes to investigate cultural aspects and depict cultural value in English language textbooks in one of Indonesia's schools.

## **METHOD**

### **Design and Samples**

The research is descriptive-qualitative and basic quantitative in nature. Rather of counting the number of cases, this research counts the quality of each one. This is why it is referred to as a qualitative investigation. This topic focuses on whether the culture presented in textbooks is more local or Indonesian culture or western culture. This suggests that the current study is more concerned with data interpretation than with providing statistical results.

### **Instrument and Procedure**

This study also employed basic quantitative data, which implies that it focuses on qualitative data while simultaneously analyzing simple quantitative data and explaining the outcomes. In terms of descriptive aspects, the research mostly reported the phenomena seen. The explanation addressed social, cultural, and linguistic issues. It is referred to as an expository conversation since the arguments discussed are thoroughly clarified.

### **Data Analysis**

This study's data were derived from textbooks. The writer used English textbooks as data sources and examined them. The Department of National Education issued the chosen English textbooks. These were their names:

- 1) Wardiman, A., et al (2008). English in Focus (for Junior High School SMP/MTs in Grade VII). Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan Nasional Pusat Perbukuan.
- 2) J. Priyana et al (2008). Scaffolding (English for Grade VIII Junior High School Students). Jakarta: Pusat Perbukuan Departemen Pendidikan Nasional.
- 3) Susilohadi, G., et al (2008). Contextual Bahasa Inggris Teaching and Learning, SMP/MTS Kelas IX Edisi 4. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan Nasional Pusat Perbukuan.

## **RESULT AND DISUSSION**

The statistics from textbook materials were obtained by examining three English textbooks for Junior High School issued by Pusat Perbukuan Departemen Pendidikan Nasional Tahun 2008. The writer adopted Byram's standard for analyzing and examining cultural elements in English textbooks. Byram's criteria is regarded as adequate and thorough. According to Byram (1993), cultural materials should encompass eight major categories, as demonstrated in the following list:

"The following are the criteria for evaluating English textbooks (with a concentration on cultural content)":

- 1) Social group and social identity (social class, regional identity, ethnic minorities)
- 2) Interaction with others (differing levels of formality; as outsider and insider)
- 3) Beliefs and actions (moral, religious beliefs; daily routines)
- 4) Institutions of social and political life (state institutions, health care, law and order, social security, local government)
- 5) The life cycle and socialization (families, schools, employment, rites of passage)
- 6) History of the country (historical and contemporary events seen as markers of national identity)
- 7) Geography of the country (geographical factors seen as being significant by members)
- 8) Stereotypes and national identity (what is a "typical" national stereotype sign) (Byram, 1993, p5-10)

The current study focuses on the topic of cultural content in English textbooks used by one of Indonesia's junior high schools. The screening of the English module used in English teaching, i.e. English textbooks for Junior High School issued by the Department of National Education, was utilized to undertake the study of cultural contents of English textbooks.

The Byram's checklist criterion is used to gather, assess, and evaluate cultural material in English textbooks. This standard is thought to be more complete and efficient. Furthermore, Byram's standards take into account all aspects of culture, including spiritual and material components. The criteria of textbooks specified on cultural contents are shown in the following list.

*Table 1*  
*The Analysis of English text book (English in Focus for grade VII Junior High School*

No	Byram's Criteria	Details	Position	Number	Percentage
1.	Social identity and social group	What is your name? What should I buy? What do you do? My hobby	Page 1 Page 57 Page 101 Page 139	4	33,33%
2.	Social interaction	Greeting and introducing Asking and giving information	Page 8 Page 27 Page 107 Page 143	4	33,33%

		Describing people Asking and responding clarification expression			
3.	Belief and behavior	Work out	Page 123	1	7,69%
4.	Social and political institutions				
5.	Socialization and life phrase	Let's go to school Family life	Page 39 Page 83	2	16,67%
6.	National history				
7.	National geography	Things around us	Page 19	1	7,69%
8.	Stereo types and national identity				
<b>Total</b>		<b>12</b>			<b>100%</b>

Byram's English book requirements, titled English in Focus for Grade VII Junior High School, includes describe about Indonesian cultures on various pages, including page 1, 57, 101, and 139. The primary topic of the conversation is personal identity, which accounts for around 33.33 percent of the whole discussion. Other topics covered include social life, religious beliefs, and conduct. The social life is represented by greeting, introducing, asking and giving information, and characterizing persons, which account for 33,33 percent of the total. While just 7.69% of the overall conversation is devoted to explaining the point of belief and conduct.

Within the conversation, the writer identified no social or political issues. However, social contact and life events or phases such as family, going to school, or school life are included in textbooks. This type of topic received around 16.67% of the conversation time. Despite the fact that national history, national identity, and social stereotypes are not included in textbooks, 7.69 percent of students debate national geography. This type of topic usually discusses topics that happen in one's everyday life.

*Table 2*  
*The Analysis of English Text Book (Scaffolding, English for Junior High School Students)*

<i>Grade VIII)</i> No	Byram's Criteria	Details	Position	Number	Percentage
1.	Social identity and social group	Describing things and animals My gorgeous idol	Page 1 Page 21 Page 61 Page 79 Page 141 Page 161	6	46,15%

		My unforgettable holiday My first experience Once upon a time A friend in need is a friend indeed			
2.	Social interaction	Asking for, giving and refusing goods and services Agreeing and disagreeing something Asking for and giving opinions Starting, extending and ending a conversation on the telephone	Page 1-20 Page 41-60 Page 62-79 Page 103	4	30,77%
3.	Belief and behavior	Life performances	Page 103	1	7,69%
4.	Social and political institutions	Celebration around the world	Page 123	1	7,69%
5.	Socialization and life phrase				
6.	National history				
7.	National geography	Wonderful places	Page 41	1	7,69%
8.	Stereo types and national identity				
<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>100%</b>		

In another book called Scaffolding English for Junior High School Students Grade VIII, the Byram's criterion/standard highlighted Indonesian culture on pages 1, 21, 61, 79, 141, and 161. The majority of the debate revolves around the description of

items, which accounts for 46.15 percent of the entire discussion. The issue of social contact is also included, as shown in numerous dialogues such as asking for something, asking for and providing views, offering and denying products and services, agreeing and disagreeing, and so on. These kind of discussions are assigned 30.77 percent of the time. The other subject, belief and conduct, is covered in around 7.69% of the textbook. The social and political problem accounted for 7.69 percent of total talk, the same as belief and conduct. Celebration is an example of this issue in many regions of the world.

This textbook, on the other hand, does not address the problem of socialization or social life and events in life. National historical issues are still not addressed in the textbook, although national geographical issues account for approximately 6.69 percent of total discussion. That topic is primarily given through mentioning great locales. Meanwhile, the issue of stereotyping and national identity is not addressed.

Table 3

*The Analysis of English text book (Contextual Teaching and Learning, Bahasa Inggris Junior High School Grade IX*

<i>The Analysis of English text book (Contextual Teaching and Learning, Bahasa Inggris, Junior High School Grade IX)</i> No	Byram's Criteria	Details	Position	Number	Percentage
1.	Social identity and social group	Are you sure? How do you do it? What a pity? What are they? Really? What is it like? Could you?	Page 1 Page 24 Page 41 Page 55 Page 71 Page 90 Page 107 Page 121	8	72.73%



		Long long time ago, there was			
2.	Social interaction	Expressing and responding to doubt, asking for repetition, showing concern, showing surprise or wonder. Expressing and responding to bad news. Responding to good news and expressing opinions	Page 2 Page 42 Page 72	3	27.27%
3.	Belief and behavior				
4.	Social and political institutions				
5.	Socialization and life phrase				
6.	National history				
7.	National geography				
8.	Stereo types and national identity				
<b>Total</b>		<b>11</b>		<b>100%</b>	

Another textbook, Contextual Teaching and Learning Bahasa Inggris Sekolah Menengah Pertama Kelas IX, described the Byram criterion concerning Indonesian culture on pages 1, 24, 41, 55, 71, 90, 107, and 121. The discussion continues to highlight personal identity, which accounts for around 72.73 percent of the total. Social interaction accounted for 27.27 percent of the total portion, which included materials such as expressing and responding to doubt, asking for repetition, expressing concern, expressing surprise or wonder, expressing and responding to bad news, responding to good news, and expressing opinions, among others.

There are also a few typical subjects that are not included in the textbook. The textbook does not include topics such as belief and behavior, social and political concerns, national historical issues, national geography, socialization, and life situations. The writer claimed that English textbooks in Indonesia had been updated

to reflect the worldwide trend. It is mirrored in the design and way of delivering the reading texts and terminology in the textbooks. Some literature discuss Indonesian culture, such as Borobudur and Batik, and the vocabulary is also tied to the theme and content.

This suggests that the focus of English study in Indonesia has been established to enable students to convey their opinions about local culture using English as the medium. This paradigm differs from the previous curriculum, which merely advised students to mimic the manner in which English native speakers communicate. It is also evident that the capacity to communicate is more important than conducting native-style conversation. Nonetheless, the curriculum covers linguistic aspects such as pronunciation while also encouraging pupils to be more conversational in English.

Although it is said that cultural content should be included in English textbooks, the information utilized in the textbooks is primarily about social life and local culture. This cultural material is meant to foster a sense of belonging among kids, instill local value in pupils, and demonstrate the original culture to the worldwide community. Although it is necessary to include local culture into the English teaching and learning process, the application of correct Basic English rules such as British and American English should remain crucial in order to be carried out without discouraging learners' efforts. As a result, teachers should not tell students that their English is terrible just because their accents and intonation do not represent the local style as long as they are able to communicate.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the explanation provided above, the writer concluded that the material contained in English textbooks included the issue of Indonesian culture. The majority of the conversation focuses on Indonesian culture, and it is regarded as an efficient method of teaching English to Indonesian learners. Several linguists, including Andy Kirkpatrick (2007), Jennifer Jenkins (2000), and Sandra-Lee McKay, support this idea (2008). They contended that incorporating local culture in English learning is more beneficial than relying on native culture. Furthermore, they emphasized that it is not always necessary to compel students to mimic native performance because the key aim is to be able to converse in English with their peers. Furthermore, students seldom use English to converse with native speakers, therefore it is best to focus on the local culture rather than the culture of English-speaking nations.

The author also noticed that the cultural material of this book is divided into two categories: local culture and 'localized culture.' In Indonesia, 'localized culture' refers to a synthesis of several ethnic cultures. This perspective is supported by the textbook, which is focused toward a direct and clear portrayal of local cultures, such as explanatory passages for local festivals and traditional dances. Some intercultural behaviors and exchanges are also prefaced in various textbook sections. However,

there is no comparison of native English cultures to local cultures. In this regard, English's position in the EFL setting has been elevated to "English as an International Language" (EIL) by employing it as a medium to promote local culture on a global level.

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