Cultural Content Analysis of English Textbook on Merdeka Curriculum

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ABSTRACT
The objective of this research was to investigate the cultural content found in the English textbook titled "Bright an English" published by Erlangga in 2022, designed for seventh-grade junior high school students. This research used content analysis method. Some underlying models proposed Chao and Yuen were used as the main framework for analyzing the textbook. The investigation revealed that the textbook primarily emphasizes the promotion of Indonesian culture, which serves as the source culture, accounts for 49% of the content in the textbook. The second highest is the target culture with 23%, followed by the international culture with 22%. Interestingly, intercultural interaction and Islamic culture have the smallest proportions, only 1% and 5% respectively. Moreover, each cultural element within the textbook is closely linked to the objectives of the Merdeka curriculum, which seeks to strengthen the Pancasila student profile such as having faith and fear of God Almighty, possessing noble character, being self-reliant, promoting mutual assistance, embracing global diversity, and cultivating critical thinking and creativity. Therefore, it can be concluded that the "Bright an English" textbook is not only rich in diverse cultures but also aligns with the characteristics and goals of the Merdeka curriculum.

Keywords: English Textbook, Cultural Content, Merdeka Curriculum

ABSTRAK
Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki muatan budaya yang terdapat dalam buku bahasa Inggris berjudul "Bright an English" yang diterbitkan oleh Erlangga pada tahun 2022, dirancang untuk siswa kelas tujuh sekolah menengah tingkat pertama. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode analisis konten. Beberapa model yang diajukan oleh Chao dan Yuen digunakan sebagai kerangka utama untuk menganalisis buku teks tersebut. Hasil investigasi menunjukkan bahwa buku teks ini secara utama menekankan promosi budaya Indonesia, yang berperan sebagai budaya sumber, mencakup 49% dari isi buku teks. Budaya target berada di peringkat kedua sebesar 23%, diikuti oleh budaya internasional sebesar 22%. sebaliknya, interaksi antarbudaya dan budaya Islam memiliki proporsi yang paling kecil, hanya 1% dan 5%. Selain itu, setiap unsur budaya dalam buku teks ini berhubungan dengan tujuan kurikulum Merdeka, yang bertujuan untuk memperkuat profil siswa Pancasila yaitu beriman dan bertakwa kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Kuasa, berakhlak mulia, mandiri, gotong royong, berkebhinekaan global, berpikir kritis dan kreatif. Oleh karena itu, dapat disimpulkan bahwa buku teks "Bright an English" tidak hanya kaya akan budaya yang beragam, tetapi juga sejalan dengan karakteristik dan tujuan kurikulum Merdeka.

Kata Kunci : Buku Teks Bahasa Inggris, Muatan Budaya, Kurikulum Merdeka

INTRODUCTION

Language and culture have been studied as inseparable components. Culture and language are intertwined and mutually influential (Ardi et al., 2020, p. 216). Culture encompasses beliefs, values, norms, symbols, and ideologies that define a nation's way of life, shaped by its past civilizations. While language serves as a means of communication and a tool for recording and transmitting cultural changes and historical events from one generation to the next. The interconnection between language and culture has an implicit impact on language acquisition, indicating that the learning of language and culture should occur simultaneously. Learning a language without its

associated culture is impossible because culture serves as a vital backdrop for language use (Ayu, 2020).

Understanding the cultural context in which a language is used plays a crucial role in language learning. True proficiency in a new language requires proficiency in its cultural context. In other words, Language and culture are intertwined, and without a deep understanding of both, achieving genuine fluency becomes difficult. Therefore, during the process of learning a foreign language, mastering the cultures in which a language is spoken is an essential part of learning. learners need to understand and be able to adapt to the simple expressions of culture used in the country where the language is being studied, such as how to express gratitude, express greeting and leave-taking, express apology, give and receive compliments, express agreement, and disagreement with someone's opinion and so on. They need to understand regional differences in intonation and habitual behavior. They must be more understanding and intelligible for communication to go easily and be considered effective. This may be accomplished by modifying the language and culture that is involved.

In the context of English as a foreign language, cultural information is often included in teaching materials such as textbooks. Textbooks are expected to encompass various cultural aspects, not only the source culture (Indonesian culture) but also the target culture (English-speaking country culture) and international culture (cultures other than the source and target cultures) (Afriani et al., 2019, p. 66). However, research has indicated that textbooks often inadequately represent the target culture. Sue Garton and Keith Richards have asserted that in countries like Saudi Arabia and China, educational materials are developed with minimal or very limited reference to cultures originating from English-speaking regions (Garton & Richards, 2014). Nevertheless, textbooks should ideally incorporate elements culture of the English speaking country since English is a globally taught and studied language used by people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Chen & Le, 2019). Hence, developing cultural sensitivity is crucial for achieving success in language acquisition (Lee & Li, 2020). Incorporating cultural elements into language education provides students with opportunities to see the world from different perspectives, equipping them for more informed engagement on both national and global levels. This approach can promote greater cultural acceptance and understanding, reduce bias, heighten awareness of diverse cultures, and enable effective and respectful communication in various contexts (Prihatiningsih et al., 2021).

Moreover, to equip learners with effective communication skills for diverse social situations, teaching materials within textbooks should be crafted to include elements of culture and intercultural understanding, along with appropriate pedagogical approaches. Textbooks convey cultural insights through visual elements, written content, and tasks, which can foster cultural awareness in students, whether they are aware of it or not, and contribute to their development as global citizens on the international stage. In addition, Indonesia is a diverse country with a significant Muslim population, possesses a unique culture and set of values that differ significantly from those of English-speaking countries. Hence, when teaching English, it is crucial to incorporate the Islamic culture and values (Asmawati & Ahmad Riadi, 2022). However, within the Indonesian education system, there are instances where certain materials, such as the 2014 edition of the textbook "buku penjaskes" designed for high school students, contain inappropriate imagery, language, stereotypes, and promote unhealthy behaviors. It provides dating advice and encourages teenagers to engage in unrestricted sexual activity. Similarly, the textbook "buku agama" for Senior High School students

includes content that suggests harm towards others. These publications were subsequently removed from classrooms and retailers (Afriani et al., 2019, p. 66).

Drawing from the above situation, cultural factors must be investigated immediately. Therefore, the researcher aims to investigate whether the cultural content in the textbook reflects a balanced proportion following the framework proposed by Chao (1999), which includes five types of culture: source culture, target culture, international culture, intercultural interaction culture, and universality across culture. Additionally, this study will also analyze the distribution of cultural dimensions as introduced by Yuen, covering aspects such as product, practice, perspective, and person. With this approach, the researcher seeks to assess the extent to which the "Bright an English" textbook meets the standards for balanced and comprehensive cultural representation in the context of English language teaching. In EFL materials, the product is represented in various forms such as pictures, illustrations, or realia, depicting tangible cultural objects like food, tourist destinations, films, songs, news, or fashion. The second element, people, refers to figures, celebrities, and famous individuals, both real and fictional, who are part of the culture. These may include popular artists, film actors, pop singers, comedic characters in movies, and so on. The third cultural element, practice, pertains to real-life activities inherited by specific social groups and passed down from generation to generation. Lastly, the fourth element, cultural perspective, reflects how a particular group of people views various aspects of life. For example, it could involve family relationships, the concept of friendship concerning money, time, and the like.

Evaluating textbooks, particularly their cultural content, is crucial for assisting instructors in choosing EFL resources that fulfill students' needs. Specifically, there needs to be an analysis of the cultural content in English textbooks used in schools. Therefore, the researcher selected the textbook "Bright an English" designed for seventh-grade junior high school students and published by Erlangga in 2022, for analysis. The study involved examining the cultural aspects included in the textbook. Moreover, this textbook was chosen by the researcher for this study because it follows the current teaching curriculum, known as the Merdeka curriculum. Hence, two research questions guiding the research are (1) what types of cultures are represented in the english textbook? (2) What aspects of Islamic cultural dimension are represented in English textbook? It is expected that the result of this research will give a contribution to the pedagogical aspect as it can give input for the EFL teachers in selecting textbooks based on cultural content consideration.

METHOD

This study employs a content analysis research design. Content analysis is a systematic inquiry conducted on written records or documents as the primary data source. Therefore, this study takes an interpretative approach to analyze the cultural content representations in the English textbook. In this study, the researcher refers to two theoretical frameworks as guidelines for analyzing cultural content. Chao's framework is used to classify various types of cultures, including source culture, target culture, international culture, and intercultural interaction. Meanwhile, Yuen's framework is employed to understand cultural dimensions encompassing dimension of product, practice, perspective, and person.

The data for this research is derived from written texts and images extracted from an English textbook titled "Bright an English" designed for seventh-grade junior high school students. This textbook was authored by Nur Zaida and published by Erlangga in 2022. It comprises eight chapters and spans a total of 158 pages.

In analyzing the data, the researcher follows Miles and Huberman's framework, which encompasses three primary activities: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. During the data reduction phase, the researcher meticulously reads each word and sentence on every page of the book. The researcher then proceeds to mark and assign codes to every image or written text that signifies cultural content. Subsequently, the researcher classifies the sources and aspects of cultural content based on Chao and Yuen's theoretical frameworks. In the data display phase, this stage involves presenting the categorized cultural content. It includes the creation of narratives and interpretations based on the data. Lastly, drawing conclusions is the subsequent step, where the researcher synthesizes the analyzed data to form meaningful insights and conclusions regarding the cultural content within the text.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
The representation types of culture in English textbook

The purpose of this research is to examine and analyze various cultural types based on Chao's cultural theory. This study focuses on four aspects of cultural categories: source culture, target culture, international culture, and intercultural interaction. In addition to Chao's theory, this research also investigates the cultural aspects within Islamic culture. To facilitate the researcher in analyzing each cultural type within the content of each chapter in the textbook, Yuen's theory is employed. This theory allows for the examination of various dimensions, including products, practices, perspectives, and persons, across different types of culture. By applying this framework, the researcher gains a comprehensive understanding of how cultural elements are represented in the textbook, enabling a more in-depth analysis of each cultural type. The result of the investigation is shown in the table below.

Table 1 the representation of cultural content in *Bright an English*

No	Type of culture	
1	Source culture	**Product :** Tourist destination *(Gili Meno island, Sangalaki Island, Prambanan Temple),* Traditional food *(Soto, Lontong Sayur, Nasi Kuning, garang asem, sate lilit, coto Makassar, and baubar patin),* art form *(batik ayam ciparage)* Practice : student mini project to create a video about traditional cuisine, The conservation of turtles on Gili Meno Island, handshaking. Perspective ; Person ; Reading texts about successful Indonesian entrepreneurs such as Reza Abdul Jabbar and Mr. Omar, as well as inspirational figures like Akeyla Naraya.
	Target culture	Product ; tourist destinations (Balboa Park, USS Midway Museum, and La Jolla Cove), culinary (burgers, haggis, and brain sandwiches), Practice ; juggling attractions and fireworks parties. Person ; Emma Watson and J.K. Rowling

	International culture	Product ; tourist destinations like Cappadocia, Petronas Tower, and Fuji Mountain. cuisines such as sakura mochi, dorayaki, pasta, Practice ; eleven attractions in Singapore and renting hot air balloons in Cappadocia.
	Intercultural interaction	student mini project to create videos about the physical characteristics of individuals from Indonesia or other countries.
	Islamic culture	Product ; Taj Mahal building. Practice; Illustration of a female student wearing clothing that covers her body, dialogue, Naufal and his family are searching for a halal restaurant while in America. Person ; Reza Abdul Jabbar and Alshad Ahmad

Note: The descriptions provided here offer some examples of how culture is represented in *Bright an English*. It is not intended to exhaustively describe all the cultural contents and sources found in *Bright an English*.

Table 2 the frequency of each cultural content in *Bright an English*

Type of culture	Dimensions of culture				
	Products	Practices	Perspectives	Persons	Total
Source Culture	78	20	1	11	111 (49%)
Target Culture	40	5	0	8	52 (23%)
International Culture	43	6	0	1	50 (22%)
Intercultural Interaction	0	2	1	0	3 (1%)
Islamic Culture	1	8	0	2	11 (5%)

Based on the presented data, it is evident that the source culture has the highest proportion of representation compared to other cultures in *Bright an English* textbook. The source culture accounts for 49% with a frequency of 111. The prominence of the source culture or Indonesian culture is similar to english textbook studied by (Masturah et al., 2021). Additionaly, According to Meng, the revised edition of the textbook, which is part of the new curriculum in 2022, should include additional details about Indonesian local cultures to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the students' national culture (Meng, 2023).This reseach is also aligns with the findings of Arnis Silvia's research, the study conducted on English teachers at Madrasah Tsanawiyah in DKI Jakarta suggests prioritizing the source culture, while other cultures such as the target culture, international culture, and Islamic values are presented as complementary elements (Silvia, 2014).

The source culture is predominantly presented within the product dimension of the textbook. This is exemplified by the information provided in the reading texts, which cover various aspects such as tourist destinations like Gili Meno and Sangalaki Island, alongside traditional Indonesian culinary delights such as Garang Asem, Sate Lilit, Coto Makassar, and Baubar Patin. The representation of source culture helps to familiarize students with their own local culture and enhance their understanding and appreciation of it. It was in the line statements of Ian Glenn C. Labtic and Adisa Teo, it is believed that incorporating the learners' own culture in an English textbook can assist language learners in contemplating their own cultural background and utilizing it as a foundation for intercultural communication (Labtic & Teo, 2020, p. 16). Furthermore, the integration of source culture enables junior high school students to access foreign language acquisition more easily. This aligns with what Ariawan and Mahmud have

revealed in their study, as they stated that presenting the source culture will facilitate learning for students because they are already familiar with it (Prihatiningsih et al., 2021, p. 131). This means that language learners can raise their own cultural awareness while learning the target language.

However, the importance of the target culture cannot be denied. According to Dat Incorporating target culture content in the textbook can expose learners to "new" experiences and demonstrate how individuals from various cultural backgrounds lead their lives (Faris, 2016). Most teachers believe it is better to introduce the target culture through comparisons between Western and Indonesian people, encompassing lifestyles, habits, customs, etiquette, what is permissible and what is not, and body language (Afriani, 2019). These elements are also necessary for cultivating cross-cultural communicative competence among students. In the *Bright an English* textbook, several pieces of information have been provided on cultural awareness that explores the differences between Indonesian culture and the target culture, such as expressions of how to greet people, give compliments, receive compliments, and express congratulations. This is highly important for students to be aware of as they learn English. They need to recognize these differences to avoid pragmatic failures when communicating with individuals from cultures different from their own.

According to National Standards for Foreign Language Education project states that students cannot achieve true proficiency in a new language unless they have achieved proficiency in the cultural context in which the new language is used.(Kuo & Lai, 2006, p. 5) This indicates that comprehending target culture is crucial to gaining success in second language learning. The target culture in the English textbook represents cultures from countries such as the USA, UK, Australia, and New Zealand. The target culture is evident in the product dimension, such as culinary examples like burgers, haggis, and brain sandwiches, as well as tourist destinations like Balboa Park, USS Midway Museum, and La Jolla Cove. In terms of practices, it includes activities like juggling attractions and fireworks parties. Additionally, the target culture is also represented through real figures like Emma Watson and J.K. Rowling, as well as fictional characters from the Harry Potter series. On the other hand, the international culture in the textbook is represented through cultures from countries like Malaysia, Japan, Spain, Singapore, Brazil, and China. The international culture is conveyed through the product and practice dimensions, including international cuisines such as sakura mochi, dorayaki, pasta, and various tourist destinations like Cappadocia, Petronas Tower, and Fuji Mountain. The practices at these tourist destinations include activities like visiting eleven attractions in Singapore and renting hot air balloons in Cappadocia. The goals of introducing students to foreign cultures include enhancing global awareness, teaching societal norms, promoting respect and tolerance, encouraging self-reflection, and facilitating authentic intercultural communication (Afriani et al., 2019). This is vital as students learn English, as they also need to acquire the associated culture. By being exposed to a wide range of cultures, it is hoped that students will gain cultural knowledge through the language they are studying. This aligns with Chlopek's assertion that individuals can become successful intercultural communicators by building their ability to compare their own culture with others worldwide, critically evaluate and interpret the results of such comparisons in verbal or non-verbal communication.(Afriani et al., 2019, p. 71) Therefore, the role of teachers in providing quality teaching materials to address cultural diversity is essential in supporting students' success.

In addition to source culture, target culture, and international culture, the textbook also includes intercultural interaction. Intercultural interaction refers to activities that involve exploring and examining the differences or similarities between the local/source culture and the target/international culture.(Chao, 2016, p. 197) Although the representation of intercultural interaction in this textbook is relatively small, comprising only 1% with a frequency of 3, it still provides opportunities for students to engage in learning experiences that involve cross-cultural interactions. One example of intercultural interaction described in the textbook is through the creation of mini projects. In these mini projects, students are asked to create videos about the physical characteristics of individuals from Indonesia or other countries. Through this activity, students are encouraged to understand and appreciate the cultural diversity around them, as well as enhance their ability to communicate across cultures. By including intercultural interaction in the textbook, it is hoped that students will continue to engage in activities that broaden their understanding of other cultures and improve their ability to communicate effectively with individuals from different cultural backgrounds.

English textbook "Bright an English," it is based on the latest curriculum known as the "Merdeka Curriculum." In accordance with Cunningsworth, a textbook can be considered effective if it aligns with the language learning program's goals and objectives (Akhmad et al., 2022). One of the characteristics and goals of the Merdeka curriculum is the strengthening of the Pancasila student profile (Safitri et al., 2022). The Pancasila student profile consists of six dimensions: having faith and fear of God Almighty, possessing noble character, being self-reliant, promoting mutual assistance, embracing global diversity, and cultivating critical thinking and creativity (Kemendikbud, 2022). Consequently, it is crucial for English textbooks to incorporate the values inherent in the Pancasila student profile.

Within the Bright an English textbook, various cultural elements are incorporated, including the source culture, target culture, international culture, intercultural interaction, and Islamic culture. The presence of these diverse cultures in the textbook underscores the emphasis on encouraging students to embrace global diversity. The textbook's goal is to expand students' awareness of various cultures, fostering an appreciation for the richness of diversity found worldwide. This aligns with Chlopek's assertion that individuals can become successful intercultural communicators by developing their ability to compare their own culture with other cultures worldwide, critically evaluate and interpret the results of such comparisons in verbal or non-verbal communication (Afriani et al., 2019). Thus, this textbook not only aids students in learning English but also teaches them to appreciate and understand other cultures and the universal values inherent in Pancasila. In the face of the globalization era, emphasizing cultural diversity and intercultural interaction is a crucial aspect of preparing students to become successful intercultural communicators and build harmonious relationships in diverse societies.

Within the textbook, there are practices representing Indonesian culture, such as greeting with a smile, also referred to as the 3S (salutation, smile, greeting), and handshaking. These activities show the respect and politeness (Qodriani & Kardiansyah, 2018). By including these cultural practices in the textbook, students not only learn the linguistic aspects of the English language but also gain an understanding of the cultural nuances and values that are associated with effective communication. This exposure enables them to develop an appreciation for a variety of cultural practices and encourages them to embody the virtuous character traits advocated in the Pancasila

student profile, including having faith, reverence for God Almighty, and possessing noble character, which encompasses demonstrating respect and kindness towards others.

Additionally, at the end of each chapter in this textbook, students are assigned individual mini projects. These mini projects play a pivotal role in helping students strengthen their character traits in alignment with the Pancasila student profile. They contribute to the development of self-reliance, critical thinking, mutual assistance, and creativity among students. One notable example of such a mini project in the textbook involves creating a tourist leaflet. This mini project aids students in cultivating self-reliance by encouraging them to take initiative in planning and executing the task independently. It also sharpens their critical thinking skills as they make informed choices regarding information selection and effective design. Furthermore, the process promotes mutual assistance as it provides opportunities for students to collaborate with their peers. Through the creative elements involved in crafting the leaflet, students can explore and appreciate cultural aspects associated with the tourist destination they are promoting, reinforcing cultural values in the process.

Indeed, this textbook not only enhances students' language skills but also nurtures vital character traits essential for personal growth and success. Overall, the textbook's multifaceted approach supports students in becoming well-rounded individuals who are not only proficient in English but also culturally sensitive, reflective, and equipped with the skills needed to thrive in an interconnected world.

The representation of Islamic cultural dimensions in English textbook

In addition to the representation of Indonesian culture, target culture, and international culture, the textbook should also include Islamic culture due to the majority of the Indonesian population being Muslim. As mentioned in Rohmah's study cited by (Silvia, 2014), through a survey that English language teachers expressed the need for Islamic values in English textbooks. The findings of this research indicate that the English textbook "Bright an English" includes elements or representations of Islamic culture, but the coverage is relatively low. For instance, the textbook includes dialogues that touch upon Islamic practices, such as the consumption of halal food.This demonstrates the importance of Islamic dietary guidelines and the concept of permissible and prohibited foods in Islam. By incorporating these aspects, the textbook acknowledges and respects the Islamic culture and its influence on daily practices. By incorporating Islamic culture into the English textbook, students can compare, contrast, and filter the cultures presented in the textbook with their own Islamic values and culture. This enriches their understanding of cultural diversity and fosters a more inclusive learning experience.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of data regarding cultural representation in the English textbook "Bright an English" for seventh grade of junior high school, it can be concluded that the textbook provides a diverse range of cultures. The textbook includes source culture, target culture, international culture, intercultural interaction, and Islamic culture. However, there is an imbalance in the presentation of these cultural categories. The data shows that the most prominent cultural aspect is the source culture, while intercultural interaction and Islamic culture are relatively low. The source culture has

the highest presentation with 40%. The second highest is the target culture with 34%, followed by the international culture with 14%. Notably, intercultural interaction and Islamic culture have the smallest proportions, only 1% and 5% respectively. In terms of the proportion of cultural types, the textbook focuses more on promoting the source culture or Indonesian culture, while the target culture, international culture, intercultural interaction, and are used as complements.

Furthermore, the learning materials in the "Bright an English" textbook cover all dimensions of the project to strengthen of the Pancasila student profile, such as having faith and fear of God Almighty, possessing noble character, being self-reliant, promoting mutual assistance, embracing global diversity, and cultivating critical thinking and creativity. Each dimension in the Pancasila student profile is related to cultural aspects. The textbook integrates the aspects of source culture, target culture, international culture, intercultural interaction, and Islamic culture into the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile. As a result, this textbook not only offers a rich cultural diversity but also aligns with the goals and characteristics of Merdeka curriculum, specifically the strengthening of the Pancasila student profile. Therefore, this textbook can help students in developing relevant competencies for their future while fostering an understanding of Indonesian culture and values.

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