



PORTRAYING THE CONTENT IN THE TEXTBOOK ENTITLED “*THINK GLOBALLY ACT LOCALLY*” BASED ON CULTURAL VIEW

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study examines cultural representation in the Indonesian EFL textbook "Think Globally Act Locally" for Grade 9 students. Employing a descriptive design and content analysis approach, the research applies the theoretical frameworks of Cortazzi & Jin (regarding cultural categories: Source, Target, and International Cultures) and Yuen (regarding cultural dimensions: Product, Practice, and Perspective). The findings reveal a conspicuous imbalance. Cultural representation is significantly dominated by Indonesian Source Culture, reflected in the use of local names, folklore, cuisine, and landmarks. While this aligns with the "Act Locally" directive, this dominance overshadows the inclusion of both Target and International Cultures, which are not only minimal but also presented superficially. Furthermore, the analysis of cultural dimensions indicates a heavy reliance on surface-level representations of Products, while understanding of Practices and, in particular, the underlying Perspectives or philosophical values of cultures is severely limited. The study concludes that the textbook's unbalanced approach risks constraining students' global outlook. Therefore, it recommends a more equitable and profound integration of diverse cultural categories and dimensions to effectively foster the intercultural awareness competence essential for navigating global dynamics.

Keywords: Textbook Analysis, Cultural Representation, Cultural Dimensions, EFL.

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks remain a fundamental component in the teaching and learning process, serving as a primary resource for both educators and students. Even in the digital age, their role is sustained as they provide organized, reliable content and a clear pedagogical framework, offering a trustworthy alternative to the vast and unvetted information on the internet (Knight, 2015). In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, the integration of culture is paramount. Language and culture are inextricably linked, often described through the metaphor of an iceberg where language is the visible tip and culture is the vast, hidden foundation (Jiang in Wahid et al., 2023). Teaching language without its cultural context risks creating a superficial understanding, as learners may struggle to interpret meaning embedded within that culture (Alptekin in Nur et al., n.d.).

Furthermore, incorporating cultural content, especially that which is relevant to the learner's own environment, enhances comprehension and serves as a medium for character development (Dewi & Batan, 2016). This underscores the necessity of cultural instruction as a fundamental principle in language education (Sellami in Rohmani & Andriyanti, 2022).

Previous research has established a strong precedent for analyzing cultural content in EFL textbooks. Studies have evaluated textbooks based on general quality criteria (Suryani, 2018) and have specifically examined the integration of source, target, and international cultures to enhance learner motivation (Rahayu, 2023). Notably, Wahid et al. (2023) conducted a cultural analysis of a junior high school textbook using a qualitative descriptive method and frameworks of cultural categories and dimensions, a methodology that shares similarities with the



present study. However, a gap exists in the analysis of the specific textbook "Think Globally Act Locally" for Grade 9. While similar studies have been conducted on other textbooks, this particular resource has not been the primary object of such cultural investigation. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by portraying the cultural representation within its content

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Role and Definition of Textbooks

A textbook is a standard book, most commonly in printed form, used as a fundamental teaching and learning medium in educational institutions (Fitriyah, 2018). It serves as a structured guide that covers curriculum-defined topics, providing a reliable reference for both teachers and students, making the learning process more efficient and effective (Mudzakir AS, 2010; Sulistiyo et al., 2021). In the context of English language learning, textbooks are particularly crucial as they form the basis for language input, determining lesson content, skill balance, and the types of practice students engage in (Richards, cited in Fitriyah, 2018). Furthermore, English textbooks do not only teach language skills but also serve as a vehicle for imparting moral values and cultural understanding (Sulistiyo et al., 2021).

Culture in Language Learning

Culture is defined as the totality of thoughts, experiences, behavioral patterns, values, and assumptions about life that guide behavior and are socially transmitted across generations (Jandt, cited in Margana, 2009). In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy, language and culture are deeply intertwined. A primary objective of learning English is to develop students' awareness of both the target culture and their own, enabling

effective and appropriate communication (Rahayu, 2023). It is critical that learning about other cultures serves to broaden students' perspectives without necessitating abandonment of their own cultural identity (Genc & Bada, cited in Rahayu, 2023). This cultural knowledge influences all linguistic levels, including semantics, pragmatics, and discourse.

Theoretical Frameworks for Cultural Analysis

This study employs two main theoretical frameworks to analyze cultural content in textbooks.

a. Cultural Categories (Cortazzi & Jin)

Cortazzi & Jin (cited in Wahid et al., 2023) classify cultural content into three categories:

1. **Source Culture:** The learner's native culture (e.g., Indonesian culture, featuring local names, locations, and conversations).
2. **Target Culture:** The culture of the language being learned (e.g., cultures of English-speaking countries like the USA or UK, including their norms and behaviors).
3. **International Culture:** Cultural practices and characteristics not exclusive to one country but found globally (Sitoresmi, 2019).

b. Cultural Dimensions (Yuen)

Yuen (cited in Wahid et al., 2023; Setyawaningsih et al., 2021) proposes four dimensions to assess the depth of cultural representation:

1. **Products:** Tangible or visible elements of culture (e.g., names of cities, food, institutions, technology). **Practices:** Patterns of social behavior and interactions (e.g., daily routines, conversations, rituals).



Perspectives: The underlying values, beliefs, and opinions conveyed through dialogue and visuals.

2. Persons: Representations of famous or inspiring individuals.
3. These frameworks provide a comprehensive lens for identifying not only what cultures are represented (Categories) but also how deeply they are explored (Dimensions) within an EFL textbook.

METHOD

The goal of this study was to identify and explain the cultural content contained within the Indonesian EFL textbook "Think Globally Act Locally" for Grade 9. The descriptive qualitative methodology is used in this study. A category of research methodologies that generate findings without relying on quantitative measurement or statistical analysis is referred to as qualitative research. As noted by Ary et al. in Suryani's journal (2018), this approach deals with data in the form of words and pictures rather than numbers and statistics. This research assessed the texts and images in the English textbook by applying the cultural dimensions of Yuen and the cultural categories of Cortazzi & Jin.

The data for this research was collected from the textbook "Think Globally Act Locally," an official government-published book for junior high school. The primary instrument for data collection was the researcher, supported by documentation analysis of the textbook's content, including dialogues, stories, and images. For data analysis, this research used the interaction analysis model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which involves the steps of Data Reduction, Data Display, and Conclusion Drawing/Verification. To ensure the

trustworthiness of the study, the researcher applied Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

This research analyzes the representation of culture in the English textbook 'Think Globally Act Locally', published by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia (2018). Data was collected from 11 chapters and 209 pages, then categorized based on the Yuen's dimension of culture; Product, Practice, Perspective, and Person. And Cortazzi & Jinn's categories of culture; Source culture, Target culture, International culture. Here is the Representation of Culture in Textbook:

Cultural Dimension

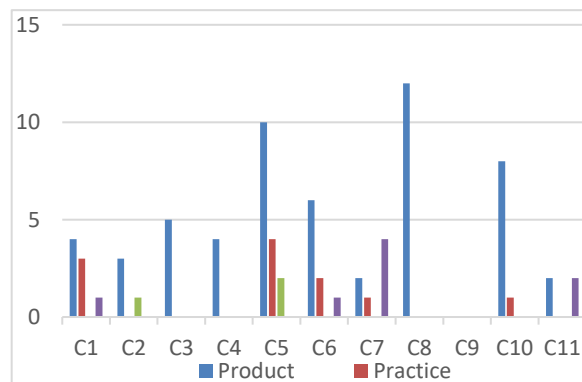


Figure 1. Dimension Culture

Based on the results from the data chart, it can be seen that among the four cultural aspects proposed by Yuen, namely Product, Practice, Perspective, and Person. The most dominant aspect is the Product. the following examples illustrate these four key aspects:

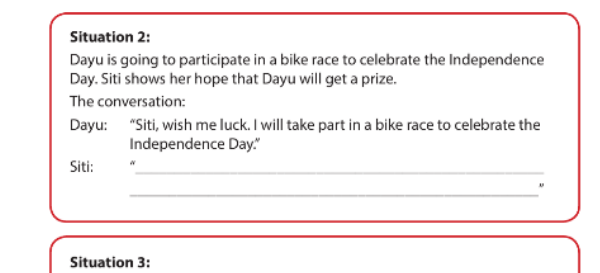
- a) Ambon City as a Product Dimension



Picture 1. mentions the city of Ambon

In chapter 5 page 103, there is an example of a sentence mentioning the city of Ambon that can be found in the phrase: “I know that the sun usually shines brightly in Ambon”. Ambon is a city located in Indonesia. According to Yuen in a journal by Wahid et al. (2023), cultural dimensions encompass four aspects: products, practices, perspectives, and person (Wahid et al., 2023). One of these aspects is Product. In (Setyawaningsih et al., 2021), Yuen explains that the Product dimension represents cultural information conveyed through elements such as the names of cities, countries, institutions, organizations, vehicles, places, entertainment venues, technologies, symbols, ature, food products, and more. This confirms the representation of Indonesian culture in the content on page 103, as evidenced by the example sentence mentioning Ambon, a city in Indonesia.

b) Celebrating the Independence Day as a Practice Dimension



Picture 2. Dialogue about commemorating Independence Day

In chapter 1 page 8, there is dialogue about commemorating Independence day that is in the sentence from “Siti, wish me luck. I will take a part in a bike race to celebrate the independence day”. Independence Day is an annual celebration held on August 17th to commemorate Indonesia’s independence. Typically, the celebration is accompanied by various competitions, ranging from sports events to simple games like cracker-eating contests and sack races. This tradition is deeply ingrained in Indonesian society, and celebrating Independence Day has become an integral part of Indonesian culture.

c) Diversity as a Perspective Dimension



Picture 3. Diversity in the image of two children of different races

In chapter 5 page 95, there is a picture that show a diversity of two children of different races. The image depicts two children of different races, distinguished by their physical features: one has fair skin and straight hair, while the other has dark skin and curly hair. This illustrates the existence of diversity, particularly racial diversity. Despite their differences, the two characters in the image are shown to be good friends. Diversity is an aspect found in many places, and one of its forms is racial diversity. Racial diversity refers to the variety of human identities based on physical traits or geographical origins. While racial diversity exists in nearly every part of the world, how societies perceive, respond to, and integrate this diversity into daily life is heavily influenced by culture. In



the United States, diversity has been a major issue, marked by widespread racism against Black individuals. However, many in society have resisted such discrimination, prompting the government to implement policies like affirmative action to create equal opportunities for minorities and uphold civil rights. Despite progress, cases of racism persist, such as the 2020 incident of police violence against a Black man. In Indonesia, diversity is deeply ingrained in society. Historically, the archipelago has been a hub of trade, leading to a rich blend of races and cultures. The Indonesian national motto, inscribed on the Garuda Pancasila emblem “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” (Unity in Diversity) emphasizes the nation’s commitment to embracing differences. This motto reflects Indonesia’s respect for diversity, not only in race but also in religion, ethnicity, and other aspects. In conclusion, diversity is not confined to specific regions but exist worldwide. Like Indonesia’s Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, many societies strive to harmonize differences, proving that diversity, when respected, becomes a unifying force rather than a divider.

d) There is a sentence that mentions “Pattimura”

On page 110 of Chapter 6 there is a sentence that mentions “Pattimura”, specifically in the phrase: “Last week, her class went to the orphanage on Jalan Pattimura to bring them some new books for the library.” In this sentence, Pattimura is the name of a street. Pattimura is one of the most celebrated national heroes in Indonesia. The name refers to Thomas Matulesy, an Indonesian national hero who led a resistance against Dutch colonialism in the Maluku region.

Thomas Matulesy, more commonly known as Pattimura, was born in Maluku on June 8, 1783. In 1817, he was chosen by the local community and traditional leaders to lead an uprising. Alongside other Maluku figures such as Christina Martha Tiahahu, Paulus Tiahahu, and Said Perintah. Using guerrilla tactics, he won several battles against the Dutch. However, in November 1817, Pattimura was captured by Dutch forces. On December 16, 1817, he was executed by hanging at Fort Nieuw Victoria in Ambon. Today, Pattimura remains one of Indonesia’s most revered national heroes, symbolizing courage and resistance against colonialism. According to Yuen in a journal by Wahid et al. (2023), cultural dimensions encompass four aspects: products, practices, perspectives, and person (Wahid et al., 2023). One of these aspects is Person. In Setyawaningsih et al. (2021), Yuen explains that cultural dimension of a person refers to inspiring and famous people or individuals (Setyawaningsih et al., 2021). This explains that the mention of Pattimura in one of the sentences on page 110 of Chapter 6 represents Indonesian culture.

Cultural Categories

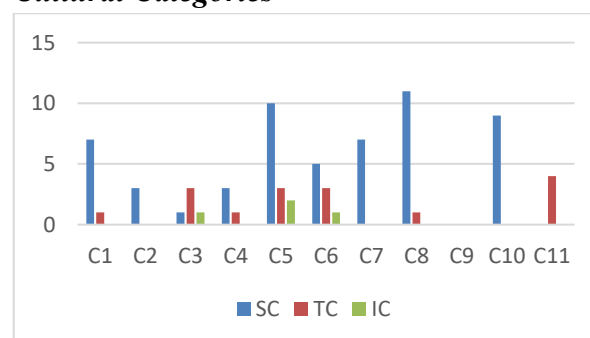


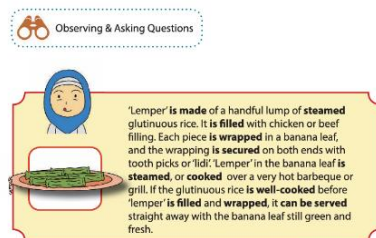
Figure 2. Cultural Categories

Based on the results from the data chart, it can be seen that among the three cultural categories proposed by Cortazzi & Jinn, namely Source culture, Target culture, and



International culture. The most dominant category in the textbook entitled “Think Globally Act Locally” is Source culture. the following examples illustrate these three key aspects:

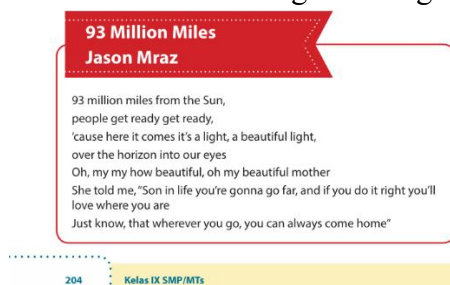
a) Description of Lemper as a Source culture



Picture 4. Text description explaining about Lemper

In chapter 8 page 147, there is a description text that explains Lemper. Lemper is a traditional Indonesian snack made of glutinous rice filled with shredded chicken or fish, wrapped in banana leaves, and then steamed or grilled. It is widely popular across Indonesia, though some regions refer to it by different names. For example, in Sulawesi, it is called lalampa, while in Java, Bali, and Sumatra, it retains the name lempur. Beyond being a culinary delight, lempur holds cultural significance, particularly in Javanese traditions. It is considered a symbol of blessings and is often served at important events such as weddings and thanksgiving ceremonies. Despite its simple ingredients, lempur carries deep cultural meaning, making it an integral part of Indonesia’s heritage.

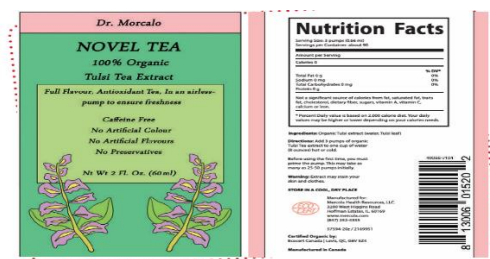
b) 93 Million Miles song as a Target culture



Picture 5. Featuring 93 Million Miles song

In chapter 11 page 204, there is content that featuring 93 Million Miles song. 93 Million Miles” is the title of a song by an American band, Jason Mraz. The song 93 Million Miles was released in 2012. The title refers to the average distance between the Earth and the Sun, which is approximately 93 million miles or about 150 million kilometers. The song explores the concept of home and family as a place to return to, no matter how far one travels. It uses the metaphor of the Earth’s distance from the Sun. 93 million miles as a symbol of how far people may go in search of life’s meaning. One of the lyrics in 93 Million Miles states: “Son, in life you’re gonna go far, if you do it right, you’ll love where you are.” This lyric reflects the typical American work ethic and optimism, which are deeply ingrained in American culture. From this explanation, it can be seen that this content represents American culture.

c) Tea as an International culture



Picture 6. Picture of a tea product brochure named Novel Tea

In chapter 3 page 50, there is a picture of a tea product brochure named Novel Tea. Tea is a drink derived from the extract of tea leaves, with its origins traced back to China. From there, it was disseminated globally via Chinese merchants. Its popularity in Europe was significantly boosted when Queen Catherine of Braganza, a tea enthusiast, introduced it to the English royal court. Meanwhile, in Korea, tea culture was



established under King Heungdeok's influence. As for Indonesia, tea arrived through *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC), which imported it from China as a trade commodity. Initially, Indonesia served merely as a transit hub, where tea was stored briefly before being shipped onward to Europe. Tea has been cultivated across various regions of the world including Europe, Africa, Japan, China, Korea, and even Indonesia. This global spread has led each country to develop its own unique traditions and cultural practices for consuming tea so that each country has its own culture in consuming tea. Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that tea culture belongs to many nations not only Indonesia, America, or Europe.

The Imbalanced Cultural Landscape of "Think Globally Act Locally"

This analysis of the English textbook "Think Globally Act Locally" reveals a concerted effort to integrate cultural content, yet one characterized by significant imbalances in both the categories and dimensions of culture represented. The findings suggest that while the textbook successfully embeds culture within its framework, it falls short of achieving the holistic, globally-minded approach its title promises.

The Predominance of Source Culture and Superficial Target Culture

The most striking finding is the overwhelming dominance of source culture (Indonesian). This aligns with the "Act Locally" portion of the title, effectively grounding language learning in the students' familiar cultural context. Dedicating an entire chapter to the "Sangkuriang" legend is a prime

example of using local folklore to engage learners. However, this strength becomes a limitation when it overshadows other cultural categories. The representation of target culture (American/European), while present, is often superficial and lacks contextual depth. For instance, the depiction of a blonde-haired character without accompanying cultural explanation reduces a complex cultural identity to a mere visual stereotype. This approach risks reinforcing essentialist views of Western cultures rather than fostering a nuanced understanding of their practices and perspectives. The minimal inclusion of international culture—appearing in only three of eleven chapters—further narrows the students' cultural horizon. While a tea brochure acknowledges a universal practice, it is a fleeting reference in a sea of locally-specific content. This scarcity misses a valuable opportunity to position Indonesian culture within a broader, global framework of shared human experiences, which is crucial for developing true intercultural communicative competence.

An Over-reliance on the "Product" Dimension

Applying Yuen's framework clarifies the qualitative nature of the textbook's cultural representation. The heavy reliance on the Product dimension (foods, place names, uniforms) presents culture as a collection of static, tangible objects. While these elements are easily identifiable and integrated into lessons, they represent the most superficial layer of culture. The inclusion of Practice (e.g., celebrating Independence Day, birthday traditions) is a positive step, as it introduces cultural behaviors. However, these practices are often presented as activities without deep exploration of their social meanings.



Most critically, the textbook neglects the Perspective dimension, which is the least represented. This is a fundamental shortcoming, as perspectives—the values, beliefs, and worldview that underlie products and practices—are the core of cultural understanding. The book's failure to connect, for example, the legend of Sangkuriang to broader Indonesian values, or to explain the social significance of the practices it mentions, leaves students with a fragmented and decontextualized view of culture. The inclusion of the Person dimension through inspirational figures is a positive note, but its infrequency limits its impact.

CONCLUSION

This study has investigated the representation of culture in the English textbook "Think Globally Act Locally" for Grade 9 students in Indonesia, employing Yuen's cultural dimensions and Cortazzi and Jin's cultural categories.

The analysis reveals that the textbook successfully integrates cultural content, with a pronounced and deliberate emphasis on source culture (Indonesian). This is evidenced by the pervasive use of local names, settings, folklore (e.g., Sangkuriang), and imagery, which effectively grounds the English language learning in a familiar context and aligns with the "Act Locally" directive of its title.

However, this strength is counterbalanced by a significant imbalance. The representation of target culture (English-speaking countries) and international culture is minimal and often superficial. Furthermore, when analyzed through Yuen's framework, the textbook demonstrates a heavy reliance on the tangible Product dimension, with a noticeable underrepresentation of the deeper Perspective dimension, which encompasses

cultural values and beliefs. This creates a disconnect with the "Think Globally" aspect of the title, as students are not consistently guided to understand the underlying worldviews of either their own or other cultures. In conclusion, while the textbook provides a strong foundation for engaging students through local culture, it falls short of fostering a balanced and profound intercultural awareness. For future revisions and pedagogical practice, it is recommended to achieve a more equitable representation of cultural categories and a deeper integration of all cultural dimensions, particularly Perspectives. Such an approach would better equip learners with the holistic understanding needed for meaningful global citizenship.

Ultimately, the textbook presents a paradox: its content heavily emphasizes acting locally, while its aspiration for students to think globally remains largely unfulfilled by its current cultural framework

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