



Content Analysis of Local Culture Representation in the ‘English for Nusantara’ Textbook for Secondary School

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ABSTRAK

This study analyzes the representation of local Indonesian culture in the English for Nusantara textbook series for Junior High School. Employing a mixed-methods approach with a convergent parallel design, data were analyzed using the cultural frameworks of Cortazzi and Jin (1999) and Yuen (2011). The findings reveal a strong dominance of local culture (Source Culture) with an average representation of 72.48%, while target culture (Target Culture) constitutes only 4.79%. The representation of local culture develops strategically across grade levels: serving as a familiar scaffold in Grade VII, a tool for civic education in Grade VIII, and a platform for global agency in Grade IX. These findings reflect a “*Local-Centric with Strategic Global Awareness*” model, aligning with the English as an International Language (EIL) paradigm and the glocalization objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum. The study concludes that the textbook series successfully repositions English as a tool for local expression and global engagement, detached from Western cultural hegemony.

Kata Kunci: Content analysis; English textbook ; local culture; English for Nusantara; Merdeka Curriculum

INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalization, English language learning encompasses not only linguistic competence but also intercultural understanding. Textbooks serve as cultural mediators that shape students' perceptions and cultural identities (Yuen, 2011). In Indonesia, where English is a foreign language, the dominance of Western culture (Target Culture) in textbooks may lead to cultural alienation and neglect of the richness of students' local culture (Source Culture) (Alfaya, Rochsantiningsih, & Sumardi, 2023). Previous studies indicate an imbalance in representation, where Western culture continues to dominate Indonesian EFL textbooks despite recent curricular reforms (Jayanti & Mustofa, 2023).

The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes contextual learning and the integration of local wisdom. As an implementation, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) published the English for Nusantara textbook series, which claims to incorporate Nusantara cultures. However, the claim of cultural integration has not been extensively examined in terms of its depth, balance, and pedagogical integration across the complete series (Grades VII–IX). The gap between curricular claims and actual representation in textbooks presents an empirical issue that requires investigation.

Based on this gap, this study aims to: (1) identify and analyze the representation of local Indonesian culture in the English for Nusantara textbook using Yuen's (2011) framework; (2) analyze the proportional balance between local culture (Source Culture) and foreign cultures (Target Culture and International Culture) based on Cortazzi and Jin's (1999) categories. The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive analysis of the complete series of government-published textbooks within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum, employing a mixed-methods approach that integrates quantitative and qualitative analysis.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a mixed-methods approach with a convergent parallel design, in which quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed separately and then integrated during interpretation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2023). The primary data sources are the English for Nusantara textbooks for Junior High School Grades VII, VIII, and IX (First Edition, 2022) published by Kemendikbudristek.

The research instrument is a coding sheet developed based on the integration of two theoretical frameworks: (1) Cortazzi and Jin's (1999) Cultural Source Categories: *Source Culture (SC)*, *Target Culture (TC)*, *International Culture (IC)*; (2) Yuen's (2011) Cultural Dimensions: *Products*, *Practices*, *Perspectives*, *Persons*. Data collection was conducted through systematic content analysis of all texts, images, dialogues, and tasks in the three textbooks.

Quantitative analysis involved calculating the frequency and percentage of each cultural representation. Qualitative analysis was conducted thematically to interpret the depth, authenticity, contextualization, and pedagogical integration of cultural representations. Validity and reliability were ensured through peer review of the coding process and data triangulation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Representation of Indonesian Local Culture

The analysis indicates that local Indonesian culture is represented dynamically and develops according to grade level. The distribution of representations based on Yuen's (2011) dimensions is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Local Culture Representation Based on Yuen's (2011) Dimensions

Grade	Products	Practices	Perspectives	Persons
VII	14	9	8	12
VIII	9	9	7	9
IX	10	8	7	12

Source: English for Nusantara for Grades VII, VIII, and IX (2022)

In Grade VII, local culture functions as a familiar scaffold, presenting concrete cultural elements close to students' lives, such as traditional food (*nasi goreng*), clothing (school uniform), and school practices (flag ceremony). The comprehensive representation across all four dimensions indicates meaningful integration rather than mere decoration.

In Grade VIII, local culture transforms into a tool for civic education. Themes of nationalism (Independence Day celebrations) and environmental care (the *Bye Bye Plastic Bags* movement) are integrated into language tasks, such as using the past tense to describe panjat pinang competitions. Values such as gotong royong (mutual cooperation) and environmental responsibility are explicitly conveyed through narratives and learning activities.

In Grade IX, local culture serves as a platform for global agency. Issues of conservation (endemic wildlife such as proboscis monkeys) and local wisdom (folktales like *Timun Mas*)

are used as contexts for developing advanced language skills and discussions on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Students are encouraged to use English as a tool to describe, analyze, and advocate for local issues in global conversations.

Proportional Balance between Local and Foreign Cultures

The proportional analysis of cultural sources reveals a consistent and strategic pattern, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Proportional Representation Based on Cultural Source

Grade	Source	Target	International
VII	72.88%	8.47%	18.64%
VIII	77.27%	2.27%	20.45%
IX	67.27%	3.64%	29.09%
Average	72.48%	4.79%	22.73%

Source: *English for Nusantara for Grades VII, VIII, and IX (2022)*

This data forms a “*Local-Centric with Strategic Global Awareness*” model. Local culture (Source Culture) serves as the dominant core across all grade levels, peaking in Grade VIII (77.27%). Target culture (Target Culture) is intentionally minimized (average 4.79%) and often presented contrastively, for instance through “*Did You Know?*” columns comparing local and foreign habits. Meanwhile, international culture (International Culture) functions as a global window, its proportion increasing from 18.64% in Grade VII to 29.09% in Grade IX, shifting from popular content (K-Pop) to authoritative discourse (scientific research, global campaigns).

These findings reflect a paradigm shift in English language teaching in Indonesia, from native-speakerism orientation towards the English as an International Language (EIL) paradigm, which emphasizes the ownership of English by its global community of users (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). This approach aligns with the principles of culturally responsive pedagogy, which places students’ cultural experiences and identities at the foundation of learning (Gay, 2011). However, the extreme marginalization of target culture implies limited student exposure to the socio-pragmatic contexts of communication with native speakers, an important aspect of intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the English for Nusantara textbook series has implemented a “*Local-Centric with Strategic Global Awareness*” model of cultural representation. The series successfully positions local Indonesian culture as the dynamic core of English language learning, evolving from a scaffolding function to an empowering agency.

This configuration decisively deconstructs Western cultural hegemony (Target Culture) and repositions English as a neutral tool for expressing local identity and participating globally, aligning with the glocalization vision of the Merdeka Curriculum.

This study has limitations, as it focuses solely on textbook content analysis without involving teacher and student perceptions. Therefore, it is recommended that future research conduct classroom ethnography or surveys to explore the impact of this representation model on students’ cultural identity, learning motivation, and intercultural competence. For textbook developers and teachers, these findings can serve as a reference for strengthening authentic and diverse integration of local culture, while considering the inclusion of contextual supplementary materials on target culture for a more holistic enrichment of communicative competence.

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