

**CULTURAL CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENT  
WORKSHEETS FOR THE EVEN-SEMESTER EIGHTH GRADERS OF  
MADRASAH TSANAWIYAH NEGERI 1 IN PRABUMULIH**

**A THESIS**

**by**

**NUR FATIMAH ARIYANTI**

**Student Number: 06011181823021**

**English Education Study Program**

**Language and Arts Education Department**



**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

**SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY**

**2023**

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**Approved by,**

**Advisor**



**Dr. Ismail Petrus, M.A.**

**NIP. 196211151989031002**

**Certified by**

**Coordinator of English Education Study Program**



**Eryansyah, M.A., Ph.D.**

**NIP. 196907181995121001**



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**Nur Fatimah Ariyanti**

**Student Number: 06011181823021**

**This thesis was defended by the writer in the final program examination and was approved by the examination committee on the:**

**Day: Monday**

**Date: June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**1. Chairperson : Dr. Ismail Petrus, M.A.**

(  )

**2. Member : Amrullah, M.Ed., Ph.D.**

(  )

**Palembang, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**Certified by,**

**Coordinator of English Education Study  
Program,**





**Eryansyah, M.A., Ph.D.  
NIP. 196907181995121001**

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned,

Name : Nur Fatimah Ariyanti

Student Number : 06011181823021

Study Program : English Education

Certify the thesis entitled “CULTURAL CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENT WORKSHEETS FOR THE EVEN-SEMESTER EIGHTH GRADERS OF MADRASAH TSANAWIYAH NEGERI 1 IN PRABUMULIH” is my work, and I did not do any plagiarism or inappropriate quotation against the ethic and rules commended by Ministry of Education of Republic of Indonesia Number 17, 2010 regarding plagiarism, in higher education. Therefore, I deserve to face court if I am found to have plagiarized this work.

Indralaya, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023

The undersigned,



Nur Fatimah Ariyanti

06011181823021

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to:

My father (Bani Ari Seno) and mother (Asmara Murni, S.Ag.)

## **MOTTO**

“People have always taken everything for granted. However, in life, we own nothing. Thus, we shall avail ourselves of it to the fullest before we lose it.”

Nur Fatimah Ariyanti

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Finally, the writer wishes to recognize the imperfection of this thesis, as it still offers numerous opportunities for improvement. However, the writer hopes that this thesis will provide guidance and information for those who wish to research a topic similar to this thesis.

Furthermore, the writer would like to say a final thank you, as she is grateful for the opportunity to conduct this research and for the support and encouragement she has received from everyone. Thank you for the invaluable contributions to the writer's academic and personal growth.

Indralaya, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023

The writer,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nur Fatimah Ariyanti', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nur Fatimah Ariyanti

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# CULTURAL CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENT WORKSHEETS FOR THE EVEN-SEMESTER EIGHTH GRADERS OF MADRASAH TSANAWIYAH NEGERI 1 IN PRABUMULIH

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## ABSTRACT

The recognition of English as a lingua franca means that the role of culture in English language education must be re-evaluated to make teaching and learning English include cultural aspects since culture is essential in language. This study analyzes the cultural content in the student worksheets used in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 in Prabumulih. The study utilized a qualitative research design and employed content analysis as the primary method. The study objectives were to determine the types of culture by Cortazzi & Jin (1999), elements of culture by Brown (2000), and how cultural information is presented in the student worksheets with media of cultural information presentation by Adaskou et al. (1990). The study findings revealed that the cultural content in the student worksheets of “*Ratih Modul Pendamping Bahasa Inggris Kelas VIII Semester Genap*” mainly focused on the target culture (50% or 36 instances) for the types of culture, the social organization (33% or 26 instances) of the elements of culture, and dialogues for habitual actions and contextual writing tasks (32% or 15 instances) of the media of cultural information presentation. However, there are exclusions to one of the elements of culture and media of cultural information presentation with their imbalanced proportions, including imbalanced proportions of the types of culture of the cultural content across the student worksheets. The study concludes with recommendations for minor differences in the distribution of cultural content to make it adequate and diversified and the need for teachers and students to carefully consider the cultural content and seek other supplemental materials to fill in the missing content. The study provides a reference for future researchers investigating the cultural content analysis of instructional materials.

**Keywords:** Content Analysis, Culture in Language Education, Student Worksheets

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A Thesis by an English Education Study Program Student, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sriwijaya University

Name : Nur Fatimah Ariyanti

NIM : 06011181823021

Certified by,  
Coordinator of Study Program,



**Eryansyah, M.A., Ph.D.**  
NIP. 196907181995121001

Approved by,  
Advisor,



**Dr. Ismail Petrus, M.A.**  
NIP. 196211151989031002

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of the study, the problem of the study, the purpose of the study, and the significance of the study.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Language is an agreed-upon system of meaningful symbols that are both arbitrary and conventional. It includes articulate sounds or instruments used for communication by groups of people to convey ideas and emotions (Wibowo, 2001). In a more detailed explanation, language refers to an essentially non-instinctive and uniquely human approach to communication. Language communication includes ideas, emotions, and intentions through a system of voluntarily generated speech (Sapir, 1949). According to these definitions, it is clear that language is essential to people's lives and has numerous benefits in various facets of daily life. To communicate and connect with other people, people use language as a medium of communication (Wardhaugh, 2009). Since language serves as a medium of communication between people to exchange different ideas, language can also serve as a medium for transmitting culture. Kramsch (1998) states that language acts as the expressions, embodiments, and symbols of cultural reality.

Culture includes explicit and implicit patterns of and for acquired behavior, conveyed by symbols, that constitute the characteristic achievements of groups of people, including their manifestation through artifacts. Cultural cores include inherited and authenticated historical ideas and primarily embedded values. On the one hand, these cultural systems are also composed of products of action, while on the other hand, they are the conditional components of further action (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). Similarly, Matsumoto (2002) states that culture constitutes attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors that belong to a group, yet they exhibit

variations from person to person and pass down across generations. Culture also distinguishes members of a particular group or category of people from one another (Hofstede, 1994).

To further explain the idea of the interdependence of language and culture, language serves as the medium through which culture finds expression, as individuals interpret, mediate, and transcribe cultural elements using language (Kramersch, 1995). Thus, language is not just a communication tool, although it encapsulates socially ingrained practices. Likewise, social interaction is linguistically responsible because language mediates every social interaction. Language is inherently social. As such, the social context influences spoken language, as it is interrelated with language and the social context in which it occurs. Thus, the production of language must be considered not only as a way of thinking but, above all, as a cultural practice, i.e., as a way of acting that presupposes and, at the same time, communicates ways of belonging to life in society (Duranti, 1997).

Kramersch (1998) states that language and culture are inextricably linked. Language expresses, embodies, and symbolizes the reality of culture, which is why this connection exists. Furthermore, language and culture are interrelated because culture relates to language use and structures since no level within language is independent of culture. In short, it is impossible to separate culture from language (Liddicoat et al., 2003). Jiang (2000) states that culture becomes perceptible through its language since language reflects culture. According to this definition, language expresses, embodies, and symbolizes cultural reality. More specifically, shared experiences form the basis of people's spoken words. They reveal communicable facts, ideas, or actions because they appeal to people's knowledge of their world. In this sense, language expresses cultural reality. In addition, members of a community or social group create experiences with language. They make meanings through the medium they have chosen to communicate with each other. The same way people use spoken, written, or visual media produces purposes that are intelligible to the group to which they belong. In all its verbal and nonverbal aspects, language embodies cultural reality. After all, language is a system of signs

considered to have the value of the culture itself. People identify themselves and others through their language; they perceive language as a symbol of social identity. Thus, language symbolizes cultural reality (Kramersch, 1998).

Language learning involves understanding culture to ensure effective communication. It is due to the diversity of social and cultural environments, especially the environment in which L1 and L2/FL learning occur. The variety of social and cultural settings can hinder effective communication between people from different backgrounds if the culture is not adequately understood, given the context in which the language is spoken (Rahmannia, 2020). In addition, culture is essential in language teaching to promote learners' communicative competence. Language and cultural competence are complex and dynamic (Rodrigues, 2000). Because communicative competence within a language requires a person to acquire the knowledge to perceive, interpret and enact correctly according to the culture to which the language is related (Omaggio & Hadley, 1986). Therefore, the goal of EFL teaching would be to teach students to acquire intercultural communicative competence. Thus, foreign language learning becomes a form of enculturation in which a learner receives a new cultural frame of reference and a new worldview that reflects both the culture of the target language and the speakers of the language (Alptekin, 2002).

The new status of English as an international language (EIL) or lingua franca requires researchers, linguists, and practitioners to reconsider the essential role of culture in English language teaching (Brown, 2000; Byrnes, 2010; Kramersch, 1993). Its new position, however, requires an approach that is more complex than its previous EFL status. As the role of English has evolved, it has led to the development of communicative approaches to teaching and learning the language. Because of this development, it is necessary to include language culture in teaching and learning, as culture is vital because of its interrelationship with language. Regardless of culture, language teaching remains inaccurate and incomplete. Therefore, it is essential to recognize that culture is crucial because it relates to language (Lado, 1964).

Hamiloğlu & Mendi (2010) state that including culture in EFL teaching must emphasize the target language's social functions and sensitize learners to culture. Recognizing one's own culture opens a path that leads to new cultural awareness by cultivating cultural awareness. Thus, developing intercultural understanding enhances the practical skill of intercultural communication (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003). Learning additional languages always involves learning about the culture with which one has associated the languages. One of the main reasons for learning a language is to experience other cultures from the inside, empathize with a broader range of people, and enrich one's ability to appreciate people's diverse experiences. Thus, the most successful language learners learn culture and language simultaneously, making teaching language and culture inseparable (Ho, 2009; Valdes, 1986).

Moreover, the existing inseparability between language and culture has prompted researchers to investigate the field of English language teaching as teachers teach English in different cultural contexts. Part of the investigation of language and culture is how EFL instructional materials represent culture (Rahmannia, 2020), in this case, using student worksheets (LKS) during teaching and learning activities. McGrath (2002) states that instructional materials contain cultural content. They provide valuable insights into students' exposure to new cultural expressions and diversity (Lund, 2006). Therefore, appropriate EFL instructional materials must present cultural content. Instructional materials are ideologies in how they reflect worldviews about cultural systems and societal constructs to both students and teachers, which indirectly affect their perceptions of culture (Aliakbari, 2005). Since transmitting a particular language through instructional materials can affect language learners' attitudes, selecting English textbooks or student worksheets should consider any cultural content in the instructional materials. It is essential because, as Phillipson (1992) states, English can undermine the presence of local culture if its transmission is uncontrolled and unfiltered.

Cortazzi & Jin (1999) state that instructional materials such as textbooks and student worksheets often feature different types of culture. These are source culture,



target culture, and international culture. Source culture or local culture describes the culture of the learner's native country; target culture, which represents the culture of the L1 English-speaking country; and international culture, which describes the culture of the international FL country where English is a foreign language. In further explanation, source culture material refers to the content representing the language learner's culture. Target culture material relates to content that represents the culture of the native English-speaking country. In addition, international culture material refers to content representing various cultures in countries where English is not the first or second language but rather an international one.

In addition to categorizing content in instructional materials by types of culture, categorizing content in instructional materials by elements of culture can also be done. Brown (2001) states that there are at least seven elements of culture: social organization, customs and traditions, religion, language, arts and literature, forms of government, and economic systems. These elements of culture will indicate the particular culture presented within the textbook and student worksheets (LKS). In terms of a detailed explanation, social organization is how a given culture categorizes society into smaller groups of people. The purpose of social classes is to place people in order of status according to their importance to a culture. Customs and traditions refer to a culture's laws and moral and ethical expectations expressed as gestures, norms, and values. Rules of conduct represent pre-established ideas about right and wrong. Religion unites people around shared beliefs and values. It is how people deal with the unknown by establishing appropriate rules of behavior (right and wrong). Language refers to a set of written and spoken signs that can communicate with each other in different ways. It can unite people from similar cultures and distinguish people from different social groups within different cultures. Art and literature are products of the human imagination and help members of society communicate the fundamental beliefs of the culture. Forms of government concern the system of government and how the government governs the people. In addition, economic systems regulate the conditions of resources for

survival. Economic systems address fundamental questions of what to produce, how to make it, and for whom and how people acquire their basic needs.

Regarding cultural information in instructional materials, various media such as textbooks or student worksheets (LKS) provide a way to present cultural information. However, the percentage varies considerably depending on the authors. Adaskou et al. (1990) state that different media can present cultural information in a transferable way. These media are; descriptive texts, cultural notes, dialogues for habitual actions, contextual writing tasks, idioms and collocations, realia, sound recordings, and visual illustrations. More specifically, descriptive texts include informative texts that provide readers with information about a particular culture. Cultural notes include notes or text about how people from different cultures perceive and respond to specific topics. Dialogues for habitual action have natural dialogues or conversations between speakers that mention cultural elements. Contextual writing tasks cover filling gaps, writing sentences, or completing dialogues that mention one or more cultural elements, such as names of people, foods, and songs. Idioms and collocations cover some words whose meaning differs from their written form. Realia includes tangible objects in pictures that refer to a particular culture, such as postcards, e-mails, and invitations. Sound recordings include some audio, such as songs and recordings of podcasts, that represent a specific culture. In addition, visual illustrations include some illustrations that appear to be representative of a particular culture.

Further exploring the issue of how EFL instructional materials represent culture within them, Sheldon (1988) and Kitao & Kitao (1997) state that culture is an essential factor to consider when selecting instructional materials. Accordingly, textbooks and student worksheets (LKS) provide students with valuable insights by exposing them to new cultural expressions and diversity. Moreover, in EFL learning, students learn about the culture of the target language, their own culture, and the cultures of others through their acquired target language. Including both source culture and target culture in EFL instructional materials can help students perceive the differences between two cultures and analyze intercultural understanding (Straub, 1999). It is also necessary to teach the target culture and

language (Byram, 1988; Kramsch, 1993; Hinkel, 1999; Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). Furthermore, the knowledge of English should enable non-native speakers to represent their norms and culture (McKay, 2000). Therefore, Indonesian EFL learners need to understand cultural content in EFL instructional materials such as textbooks and student worksheets representing three types of culture: source culture, target culture, and international culture. They must prepare students when they encounter intercultural communication situations and establish their cultural identity according to the educational standards for Indonesian schools (Rahmannia, 2020). Researchers believe a balanced integration of both cultures is necessary to maintain learners' attitudes toward the source and target languages (Rahmannia, 2020). Peterson & Coltrane (2003) and Kramsch (1993) support the previous statement. They state that equal proportions of source and target cultures are essential because they are not in conflict. Similarly, McKay (2000) states that language instructional materials should include various cultural elements, including local culture, to help students develop an interest in learning the language, to stimulate student motivation, and should not be exclusively about the country of the native English speaker.

However, several previous studies indicate that the representation of target cultural content dominates the majority of EFL instructional materials. It is related to several research studies investigating cultural content representation in instructional materials. For example, a study conducted by Sitoresmi (2017) investigating cultural content analysis in the Challenge series textbooks: 2, 3, and 4 high school textbooks published by Pearson stated that the amount of culture within both the source and international cultures is significantly less than the target culture. According to the research results, she recommended to the textbook authors that there should be more inclusion of source culture and international culture in the textbook. In contrast to the previous study, a study conducted by Aprilianto (2017), in his research on the analysis of cultural representation in textbooks, shows that source culture dominates the type of culture in the textbook study. The textbooks analyzed, published by Kemdikbud, Department of National Education, and MGMP Bogor Regency, are titled "English When English Rings a Bell, English

on Focus, and English Teaching Materials.” SMP Negeri 3 Gunungsindur used these textbooks. Discovering the result within the study’s findings, the cultural content contained in the textbook featured more source culture than the target culture and international culture. According to the results of this research, the target and international cultures are necessary to provide comparison and information to avoid misunderstanding in communication. Concerning the two issues described above, the importance of researching cultural content in instructional materials is evident. Especially in the case of this study, the current curriculum is the basis for the content of the selected English student worksheets (LKS) for junior high school.

The student worksheets (LKS) analyzed in this study are the student worksheets entitled “*Ratih Modul Pendamping Bahasa Inggris Kelas VIII Semester Genap,*” published by Sekawan Klaten. The student worksheets were chosen instead of the textbook because the cultural content in the student worksheets is rarely as varied as in the textbooks. It is mainly due to the different objectives of the two different instructional materials; the typical use of textbooks is as instructional materials to explain subjects in a broader sense. On the other hand, student worksheets aim to be brief and concise as they supplement the textbooks. Also, it could be due to the authors of these instructional materials; often, the textbooks are written and published by prominent authors and publishers, where the content is more refined and well-organized. Meanwhile, for student worksheets, the authors and publishers are usually not well known and minor compared to textbook authors. In addition, the content in student worksheets is often not as sophisticated and well-organized as in textbooks. Therefore, it is essential to examine whether the quality of cultural content presented in student worksheets is acceptable or poorly organized. Furthermore, there is another reason why the author chose the specific student worksheets entitled “*Ratih Modul Pendamping Bahasa Inggris Kelas VIII Semester Genap*” for this study. It is because student worksheets are usually used only as a supplement to textbooks due to the problems mentioned above. However, in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 of Prabumulih, students in all grades receive student worksheets for their teaching and learning activities, especially in learning English. In this case, the student worksheets are the primary instructional materials

for the students. In addition, there is significantly more explorable content in these student worksheets due to the variance of content in cultural and academic terms compared to the English student worksheets for seventh and ninth-grade students. Therefore, the selection of student worksheets was deemed appropriate for this study.

In this study, the content to be analyzed is cultural: the types of culture and the elements of culture contained within the student worksheets and how the student worksheets present the cultural information. As for the types of culture themselves, examining the material content provided by the author of the student worksheets is the way to discover them included in the student worksheets, regardless of whether the author has provided the cultural issues in them in terms of the types of culture, namely, source culture, target culture, international culture, or not (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). Cultural information is the standard medium to convey the three types of culture (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). Researchers can analyze the types of culture presented in instructional materials through the elements of culture and the media of cultural information presentation (Sitoresmi, 2017). Regarding the elements of culture, at least seven elements of culture will show certain cultures presented in the instructional materials, namely social organization, customs and traditions, religion, language, arts and literature, forms of government, and economic systems (Brown, 2001). Moreover, regarding the cultural information, seven media are available to present cultural content in student worksheets that, include descriptive texts, cultural notes, dialogues for habitual actions, contextualized writing tasks, idioms and collocations, realia, sound recordings, and visual illustrations (Adaskou et al., 1990). Accordingly, the author studied the student worksheets for the even semester, eighth graders in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 of Prabumulih, entitled **“Cultural Content Analysis of the Student Worksheets for the Even-Semester Eighth Graders of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 in Prabumulih.”**

## **1.2 Problems of the Study**

The following are the problems of this study:

1. What types of culture are represented in the student worksheets “*Ratih Modul Pendamping Bahasa Inggris Kelas VIII Semester Genap*”?
2. What elements of culture are featured in the student worksheets “*Ratih Modul Pendamping Bahasa Inggris Kelas VIII Semester Genap*”?
3. How is cultural information presented in the student worksheets “*Ratih Modul Pendamping Bahasa Inggris Kelas VIII Semester Genap*”?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

In connection with the problems of the study mentioned above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To determine the types of culture represented in the student worksheets “*Ratih Modul Pendamping Bahasa Inggris Kelas VIII Semester Genap.*”
2. To discover the elements of culture featured in the student worksheets “*Ratih Modul Pendamping Bahasa Inggris Kelas VIII Semester Genap.*”
3. To identify how the cultural information is presented in the student worksheets “*Ratih Modul Pendamping Bahasa Inggris Kelas VIII Semester Genap.*”

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The author of this study expects to contribute to the field of education, particularly in selecting and analyzing instructional materials that teachers use in teaching and learning activities. It has two primary meanings:

1. Theoretically, this study will contribute to the theory of analyzing cultural content present in English instructional materials, primarily in student worksheets. Moreover, it provides value to researchers for further study.
2. Practically, this study provides empirical data on cultural content analysis in English instructional materials. The results of this study may be beneficial for the authors of student worksheets to improve the quality of the instructional materials, especially in terms of cultural information or content involvement. This study could hopefully assist the EFL teachers and students in choosing and

use English student worksheets. Also, for future researchers, this study could help them analyze the cultural content in any English instructional materials, especially in student worksheets.

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