



## ENGLISH CULTURAL ELEMENTS FOUND IN HIGH-SCHOOL ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS FOR TEFL IN PALEMBANG

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### Abstract

The study was undertaken to find out the English Cultural Elements found in three High School English textbooks in Palembang, to study how these cultural elements were presented in the textbooks, and to assess the English teachers' perception of the elements. The study was conducted qualitatively. The objects were the English textbooks and the population was the English teachers. Three textbooks and 120 teachers chosen as samples. There are four kinds of findings. First, the 17 areas of English cultural elements were found within the texts in the Units of the textbooks. Second, the cultural elements were not presented in a special section but included in the Units of the textbooks. Third, In general the teachers' perceptions of English cultural elements appeared to be at the average to unsatisfactory levels. Finally, the teachers hope the textbooks will contain English cultural elements commonly used by the native speakers in daily activities.

**Key Words:** English Cultural Elements, Textbook

### INTRODUCTION

The importance of knowing culture in understanding a reading text appealed to the writer, after she had read an article in the *English Teaching Forum* entitled "Cultural Background Knowledge and the Teaching of Reading" written by Sandra McKay (1987:18-20). In this article, the author said that it is extremely difficult to avoid the presentation of some cultural information in a text. In other words, the teaching and learning of English, especially the teaching of reading requires a brief discussion of relevant cultural elements so that the students will have a better understanding of the text. McKay also said that cultural elements of a text had more effect on the reading comprehension than the levels of syntactic or semantic difficulty.

Commonly, most of Indonesian students often found some troubles in understanding English utterances, words and sentences, such as the word "breakfast" and the sentence "are you married?" Lexically, breakfast means morning meals. However, at first she could not compare the cultural meaning of breakfast and "sarapan" in terms of the food taken. As a matter of fact, the food taken for breakfast in English culture is not the same as the food taken for breakfast (*sarapan*) in Indonesian culture. Generally, in English culture, breakfast consists of toast, bacon, egg, and a glass of fresh milk (See Tierskey and Tierskey, 1990:52), but in Indonesian culture, the food taken for breakfast usually consists of rice, sometimes fried rice with a piece of fish or beef, and a cup of tea or coffee for some people. The interrogative sentence "Are you married?" is grammatically correct but culturally inappropriate if it is said to someone we do not know very well. In other words, a native speaker of English seldom asks this question on a first meeting with another person. Therefore, without knowing English cultural elements, Indonesian students will not understand the complete meaning of an utterance, like breakfast.



As a matter of fact, Scarcella and Oxford (1992:184) say, “to study a language without studying the culture of the native speakers of the language is a lifeless endeavor”. In other words, the language itself cannot be learned without an understanding of the cultural context in which it is used. Thus, although language learners are able to read and speak the target language, it does not guarantee that cultural understanding takes place. Therefore, it is very necessary to discuss English Culture more intensively in teaching and learning a language especially in EFL context.

Moreover, Pulverness (1995) notes, approaches which disregard the cultural dimension of language are fundamentally flawed, then language teachers cannot avoid conveying impressions of another culture. Language does not only involve knowledge of syntax, phonology and lexis but also it cannot be separated from the culture in which it is deeply embedded. Furthermore, According to Brown (1994:167), any listening to the utterances of native speakers, any reading of original text, or any use of the language to convey messages will introduce attention to cultural elements. both learners and teachers of a second language need to understand cultural differences, to recognize openly that everyone in the world is not "just like me" 'that people are not all the same beneath the skin. There are real differences between groups and cultures. Consequently, language teachers cannot avoid conveying impressions of another culture whether they realize it or not

What have been described above made the writer interested in conducting a research on the cultural elements found in the high school English textbooks and the Palembang English teachers' perceptions of these cultural elements. As far as she knew, there was no empirical information about this issue. Therefore, a systematic and scientific research on this issue was necessary to be conducted. In fact, this issue is in line with the argument made by Kilickaya (2004:3):

Most of the cultural information comes from course books that are designed for a specific language. Course books will directly or indirectly communicate sets of cultural values. This is called 'hidden curriculum' (Cunningsworth, 1995; Holly, 1990). Many educationalists claim that hidden curriculum is more effective than the official curriculum

Four problems or research questions were dealt within this research. First, What cultural elements were found in the high school English textbooks in Palembang? Second, How were the cultural elements presented in the textbooks? Third, what were the teachers' perceptions of cultural elements in the high school English textbooks? Fourth, What should a Cultural based textbook contain?

The objectives of this research were to find out the cultural elements found in the high school English textbooks in Palembang. Furthermore, it also investigated how the cultural elements were presented in these textbooks, whether they were presented explicitly or implicitly in them. It means what format of presenting language and cultural elements was used in a textbook for TEFL. The third was to investigate on teachers' perception on cultural elements in the high school English Textbook, and the last was to find out what a cultural based textbook contain

This research focused on sociocultural aspects that might exist in the passages used in the high school English textbooks in Palembang. The scope of this research was limited to the cultural meaning of utterances; words, sentences or discourse embedded in the texts. It was not directed to the English culture as a whole but only concerned with daily common cultural elements such as etiquette and family.

The results of this research might be used for the development of the curriculum, to design syllabi. It means that in making a syllabus or points of teaching on the basis of the materials oriented to curriculum, the teachers should include relevant cultural elements. Second, they might also be

useful for the selection of instructional materials. Ideally, the instructional materials used should be authentic; written by native speakers of English that could include English cultural elements. Third, they might be related to the development of the methodology of teaching English as a foreign language, especially in terms of presenting the English cultural elements, in the textbooks as demanded by curriculum itself. The method that often includes English cultural elements, for example, belongs to Communicative Methodology that consists of discourse competency, linguistic competency, sociocultural competency and strategic competency.

In short, the major significance of the results of the research was concerned with the quality of the textbooks investigated in terms of cultural elements in order to develop the students' competency in English communication, especially in understanding English texts.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Importance of Introducing the English Culture in TEFL

Culture is the total set of beliefs, attitudes, customs, behaviour, social habits, etc. of the members of a particular society (Oxford, 1996:IX; Richards & Platt, 1999:70). In short, it is the totality of the ways of life of a language community. However, the present research was focused on common English cultural elements used in English textbooks for senior high schools.

A good knowledge of English culture is crucial in communication, especially when a foreign user communicates with the native speakers of the language. As language and culture are closely related, cultural misunderstanding often brings about embarrassment. The use of English automatically involves the use of its culture and knowledge of what native speakers actually do and say. Seelye (1984:26) argues that the study of language cannot be divorced from the study of culture. In other words, language accommodates the culture of the native speakers.

It is commonly accepted that language and culture are inseparable; one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture (Kramsch, 1988:63). Furthermore, he claims that culture includes the behavioral patterns or lifestyles of the people: when and what they eat, how they make a living, the way they organize their society, the attitude they express towards friends and members of their families, how they act in different situations, which expressions they use to show approval and disapproval, and the traditions they must observe.

A number of textbooks, journals, articles, research reports and papers that the writer of this thesis had read actually support the importance of culture in teaching English. First, Lado (1974) presents a fairly new field of applied linguistics and the analysis of culture, making a comparison of any two languages and cultures to discover and describe the problems that the speakers of one language will have in learning another language. Second, Harmer (2001:93-96) stresses the cultural implications of the methods teachers use. He gives an example of the relationship between methods and culture by giving a transcript from a class activity at the university of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, USA. Two students, a Japanese male (S3) and a Malaysian female (S4) were doing the following conversation. The teacher (T2) facilitated.

S4: The price...

S3: A little costly..

T2: (helping out) too expensive

S3: No... not... a little costly?

T2: OK, so you won't choose that because it is too expensive...

S3: I can't say costly?

T2: Well... (long pause). Costly is OK, yeah, but more often ... probably we say expensive

S3: OK, you are my teacher... (laughs)

T2: No, you don't have to agree with me...

S3: I don't have to...?

What has happened in this short incident is that two educational cultures seem to have come sharply into conflict. That there is a mismatch between the teacher's intention and the learners' interpretation. Indeed, the teacher's attitudes to the language, and the way it is taught reflect cultural biases and beliefs about how the learners should communicate and how they could talk by themselves. And where, as shown in the example above, there are differing beliefs or expectations, the teaching-learning exchange could become problematic.

In their textbook for TEFL and TESL at the intermediate level, Levine and Adelman (1993) provide cultural notes in each unit of the textbook. In addition, according to Kilickaya (2004:1) teachers want to have cultural elements in their language (EFL) classroom in the form of textbooks. However, he claims that textbooks and teachers' books written by native speakers probably contain cultural elements that may be not suitable for TEFL. Therefore, cultural elements in English textbooks should be investigated and analysed in relation to the points required by CBC.

The *English Teaching Forum* contains various articles on the needs of language learners to understand the cultural elements of the language they are learning. For example, as stated previously, McKay (1987:19-20) argues that it is difficult to avoid the presentation of some cultural elements in reading texts. In addition, she states that to understand a reading passage or a dialogue, the learner needs the competency to understand the cultural elements embedded in the texts. Finally, she stresses the fact that because of the lack of cultural background knowledge, a learner cannot fully have the competency in comprehending a text.

Moreover, Pulverness (1995:3) claims that to teach foreign culture is to introduce learners to the new meaning systems and their associated symbols, to provide them with opportunities to acquire new competencies. Indeed, a language is a tool for learning a new culture.

Furthermore, Tavares and Cavalcanti (1996) argue that cultural learning positively affects learners' linguistic success in foreign language learning. It has been recognized that culture and language are interrelated and that language is used as the main medium through which culture is expressed

### **Culture**

Culture may mean different things to different people. In the anthropological sense culture is defined as the way people live (Chastain, 1988:302). Trinovitch (1980:550) cited in Barani, G (2009) defines culture as "...an all-inclusive system which incorporates the biological and technical behavior of human beings with their verbal and non-verbal systems of expressive behavior starting from birth, and this "all-inclusive system" is acquired as the native culture". This process, which can be referred to as "socialization", prepares the individual for the linguistically and non-linguistically accepted patterns of the society in which he lives.

According to Brown (1994:170) culture is deeply ingrained part of the very fiber of our being, but language –the means for communication among members of a culture- is the most visible and available expression of that culture. And so a person's world view, self-identity, and systems of thinking, acting, feeling, and communicating can be disrupted by a change from one culture to another. Similarly, Tang (1999) propounds the view that culture is language and language is culture. He suggests that to speak a language well, one has to be able to think in that language, and thought is extremely powerful. Language is the soul of the country and people who speak it. Language and



culture are inextricably linked, and as such we might think about moving away from questions about the inclusion or exclusion of culture in foreign language curriculum, to issues of deliberate immersion versus non-deliberate exposure to it.

In a word, culture is a way of life (Brown, 1994:163). It is the context within which we exist, think, feel and relate others. It is the “glue” that binds a group of people together. It can be defined as a blueprint that guides the behavior of people in community and is incubated in family life. It governs our behavior in groups, makes us sensitive to matters of status, and helps us to know what others expect of us and what will happen if we do not live up to their expectations. Thus, culture helps us to know how far we can go as individuals and what our responsibility is to the group.

### **The Importance of Incorporating Culture in EFL Classroom**

Why is incorporating culture in EFL classroom inevitable? There are at least three fundamental reasons to answer to this question: First, if language and culture are inseparable then as learners acquire a new language they will automatically acquire a new culture. However, we cannot expect this culture to be the same as either learners’ native culture or the culture of the language they are studying. The learners will initially have a synthesis with their own culture, and learning a foreign language such as English may use it in ways that express meaning in their own culture. Nevertheless, as learners’ understanding of a foreign language develops they may come to understand other values and meanings familiar to the foreign culture that are alien to their culture.

Yet their understanding of these values and meanings may still be different to that of the native speakers. This leads Kramsch (1993:205-206) to suggest that foreign language learning takes place in a “third place” that the learner must make for him/herself between their first culture (C1) and the foreign language culture (C2). This third place involves the language learner in an objective and subjective reflection of C1 and C2 from which they must choose their own meanings that best reflect their personal perspectives. Therefore, in order to introduce foreign language culture, teachers of English should decide the cultural classifications to be compared and contrasted with students’ L1 culture.

In a more detailed way, Buttjes (1990: 55), by referring to some ethnographic language studies, summarizes several reasons why language and culture are from the start inseparably connected, i.e: (1) language acquisition does not follow a universal sequence but differs across culture; (2) the process of becoming a competent member of society is realized through exchanges of language in particular social situations; (3) every society orchestrates the ways in which children participate in particular situations, and this is, in turn, affects the form, the function, and the content of children’s utterances; (4) care givers’ primary concern is not with grammatical input, but with the transmission of sociocultural knowledge, and (5) the native learner, in addition to language, acquires also the paralinguistic patterns and the kinesics of his or her culture.

The second reason for the inevitability of incorporating cultural matters into an ESL/ EFL program is the premise that since language and culture are inseparable, language teaching is culture teaching. Valdes (as cited in Baker, 2003) states: “every language lesson is about something and that something is cultural.” After observing some relevant studies, Buttjes (1990:55) explains why language teaching is culture teaching: (1) Language codes cannot be taught in isolation because processes of sociocultural transmission are bound to be at work on many levels, e.g. the content of language exercises, the cultural discourse of textbooks and the teachers’ attitudes towards the target culture; and (2) in their role of “secondary care givers” language teachers need to go beyond monitoring linguistic production in the classroom and become aware of the complex and numerous processes of intercultural mediation that any foreign language learner undergoes. To accentuate that





an ESL/ EFL teaching is a foreign culture teaching, Brown (1994:33) emphasizes on ‘acculturation’ – the process of becoming adapted to a new culture.

The third reason for the inevitability of incorporating cultural matters into an EFL program is the fact that the major goal of a foreign language program is the mastery of communicative competence. To achieve this, a learner should be able to conceive of the native speakers of target language as real person. For many people, this is difficult to do for although grammar books gives so called genuine examples from real life, without background knowledge those real situations may be considered fictive by the learners. In other words, one needs a sound grasp of the background knowledge of the target culture in order to communicate successfully with the speakers of another language. His understanding of the culture would help him relate the abstract sounds and forms of a language to real people and places (Chastain, 1982). Thus, an ESL/ EFL learning is fundamentally foreign culture learning. Samovar et al. (1981:3) accentuate that culture and communication are inseparable because culture not only dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication precedes, it also helps to determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted.

Finally, cultural learning is very effective to increase learners’ motivation which greatly affects every learning process. Culture classes do have a great role in achieving high motivation because most learners like culturally based activities such as singing, dancing, role playing, or doing research on other countries and people.

#### **The Role of Textbook in Language Learning.**

The textbook and instructional materials are often used by language instructors, for they are considered essential constituents in EFL classrooms. As Hutchinson and Torrest (1994:315) suggest that the textbook is an almost universal element of English Language teaching. There will be no teaching-learning seems complete until it has its relevant textbook.

Sheldon (1988) posits that textbooks do not only represent the visible heart of any English teaching and learning program but also offer considerable advantages for both students and teachers in ESL/ EFL classroom. He also points out students often have expectations about using a textbook and believe that published materials are more systematic and credible than teacher-planned materials.

Several positive roles of textbook in English teaching and learning context are identified by Cunningsworth (1995) as follows. A textbook is: (1) an effective resource for self directed learning or self-access work, (2) an effective resource for presentation material, (3) a source of ideas and activities for learner practice and communicative interaction, (4) a reference source for students on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and other aspects of language; (5) a syllabus where they reflect a predetermined learning objectives and (6) a support for less experienced teachers who have yet to gain in confidence.

According to Kitao et al. (1995) a good characteristics of a textbook used for EFL teaching and learning is determined by several factors. First, English textbook should have correct, natural, recent, and standard English. Since students’ vocabulary is limited, the vocabulary in textbooks should be controlled or textbook should provide information to help students understand vocabulary that they may not be familiar with. For lower level students, grammar should also be controlled. Many textbooks use narrative and essays. It would be useful to have a variety of literary forms (for example, newspaper, articles, poetry or letters), so that the students can learn to deal with different forms. Then, the cultural information included in English textbooks should be correct and recent. It should not be biased and should reflect background cultures of English. It should include visual aids, etc., to help

students understand cultural information.

Moreover, Kitao et al. (1995) add that from Learners' viewpoints, the content of English textbooks should be useful, meaningful, and interesting for students. While no single subject will be of interest to all students, materials should be chosen based, in part, on what students, in general, are likely to find interesting and motivating. In terms of difficulty, as a general rule, materials should be slightly higher in their level of difficulty than students' current level of English proficiency in order to allow them to learn new grammatical structures and vocabulary. Meanwhile, in terms of instructional issues, English textbooks should have clear instructional procedure and methods, that is, the teacher and students should be able to understand what is expected in each lesson and for each activity.

In addition, Byrd (2001:415) cited in Wong (2011:5) claims most teachers depend on textbooks- often as a required tool because they provide content and activities that shape what happens in the classroom. Byrd (2001:415) also says that textbooks become an alternative for three main reasons: they are apparently eclectic alternatives to save time and money, they include pictures and graphic materials that may be more efficient than the teacher's descriptions, and they contain all kinds of objects that may be difficult to bring into the classroom. EFL textbooks are, indeed, a major necessity for most teachers, because the bulk of them feature an eclectic approach based on the current theories proposed by communicative trends. According to Richards (2005:14), textbooks are designed in such a way that their tables of content suggest a gradual development of language forms and functions, going from the most basic to the most complex. All the approaches and features previously mentioned are intended to develop the use of communicative language

However, despite considerable effort on the part of text designers, editors and publishing houses, a range of grammar-oriented activities and mechanical practice continues to prevail. according to Richards (2005:15), as a first step, it is crucial to differentiate the three main types of language practice found in most English instructional materials, (1) mechanical practice refers to controlled activities that involve repetition and substitution drills. They are designed to practice the use of particular grammar item. In many textbooks, this practice demands sentence completion (usually with grammar activities in isolation), but lacks authentic language negotiation; (2) meaningful practice refers to activities in which language still is controlled and students are required to make meaningful choices when carrying out practice; (3) communicative practice embodies those activities in which language is not totally predictable. Language production at this level is more spontaneous and authentic, because meaning negotiation takes place "within a real communicative context" and real information is exchanged.

These three types of language practice essentially define the kinds of activities often featured in communicative textbooks. All three are expected to be included in methodological sequence of the various units that constitute English textbook, mainly because students need to go through a process of controlled-practice, by first working on easy guided mechanical activities before eventually reaching a degree of free language practice that embraces communicative interaction.

#### **Classification of English Cultural Elements**

This research focuses on the cultural elements in the textbooks used in high schools in Palembang. The classification of cultural elements is determined by adapting the classification of cultural elements proposed by some experts. First, Finocchiaro & Bonomo (1976: 60-67) classify cultural elements in the perspective of English speaking students learning French as the foreign language. They classify aspects of native culture into nine major categories, but the cultural elements of the target culture, culture of the language to be learnt, is classified into three major aspects; (1) (France) in contemporary world, (2) The France of the French (3) (France) in the development of

civilization. Second, Ferreira (1981) classifies English cultural elements into 42 units. Third, Levine & Adelman (1993) classify cultural elements into 12 units in their textbook. Fourth, Tavares & Cavalcanti (1996) presents 8 general categories of cultural aspects. Fifth, Robinson cited in Petrus (2004) provides three general categories of cultural aspects.

The classification of English cultural elements made by the five experts and required by CBC actually has more similarities than differences. The similarities were used in the classification of English cultural elements to be investigated in this research. As a result, English cultural elements, in the present research were limited to 17 major areas supplemented by relevant cultural elements in each area related to common daily life situations, as follows:

**TABLE 2** Areas of English Cultural Elements

Areas of English Cultural Elements	English Cultural Elements
1. Etiquette	greeting, introducing oneself, giving congratulations and condolences, apologizing, making requests and refusals, and leave taking
2. Family	family members, relatives, and relationships
3. Occupations	jobs, getting jobs, and earning a living
4. Food	main food, meals, ordering lunch
5. Location	living room, dining room, bathroom, and kitchen
6. Directions	asking and answering questions on where a place is, public buildings, and city maps
7. Preferences	likes & dislikes, movies, telling time, TV shows
8. Shopping	Shopping for food, eating habits, menu, shopping list
9. Family chores	housework, house cleaning, laundry, and washing the dishes
10. The weather	seasons, weather patterns, temperature
11. Education	levels, school and college life, tuition
12. Cooking	ways of cooking, spices, recipes, and utensils
13. Presents	choosing presents, customs, giving presents
14. Vacations	holidays, kinds of vacation, school holidays and activities in holidays
15. Routines	daily activities, spare-time activities, making appointments, going to bed and getting up
16. Sports	favorite sports, national games, and hobbies
17. Health	common diseases, hospitals, doctors, and medical treatment



## METHOD OF RESEARCH

This research was done by using the descriptive method because the objectives were to find out and describe the English cultural elements in the textbooks oriented to the *Competency-Based Curriculum* (CBC) used at high schools in Palembang. In addition, it also attempts to find out and describe the perception of teachers of English of the English cultural elements in the textbooks they employed. In a sense, this research actually followed the principles of qualitative approach to the descriptive method, because the data collected and analyzed were in the form of words and sentences, not numbers (see Bendazzollee & Escalante, 1992:18-19; Huberman and Miles, 1992: 15-17).

As a matter of fact, this research used the typical qualitative approach known as documentary analysis describing a given situation, facts or events by means of the data obtained from various documents, such as books, papers, and specialized journals. In this research, the main documents for the sources of the data were the English textbooks related to CBC currently implemented at the high schools in Palembang. These books contained elements of English culture. Papers on aspects of English culture, and several volumes of *English Teaching Forum* were also referred to.

Since the main objective of this study was to investigate English cultural elements in the textbooks, the objects were the English textbooks used in state and private senior high schools in Palembang. 12 different English textbooks were used by these teachers, as stated on page 20.

By means of purposive sampling, the samples taken were three English textbooks that were popular among English teachers. The three textbooks are as follows

1. Lukman, Emilia Iragiliati et al. 2004. *Headlight: An Extensive Exposure to English Learning for SMA Students*. Jakarta: Erlangga
2. Sundayana, Wahyu et al. 2004. *English for SMA*. Bandung: Grafindo Media Pratama
3. Suprpto F.A., and Mariana Darwia. 2005. *Linked to the World: English for Senior High School*. Jakarta: Yudistira

Each of the three textbooks consists of two volumes, one for grade X and the other for grade XI, and was written on the basis of the principles of CBC, the *2004 English Curriculum*. These textbooks were used as the sources of data and as the basis of writing the items in the questionnaire.

Because this research also used a questionnaire to be answered by teachers of English at state and private senior high schools in Palembang, the population also covered the teachers of English. According to the Palembang Office of the Department of National Education, there were 309 teachers of English, 86 teachers of state senior high schools and 223 teachers of private senior high schools in Palembang.

**TABLE 3.3** High School Teachers of English In Palembang

High Schools	Number of Teachers of English
State schools	86 teachers
Private schools	213 teachers
Total	309 teachers

Source: Palembang Office of the Department of National Education

Thus, the population of the study consisted of all the state and private senior teachers of English in Palembang. The samples were 120 teachers of English, 60 state senior high school and 60

private senior high school teachers of English who taught at the schools located at the main streets in Palembang.

The samples were taken by means of purposive sampling for three reasons. First, the schools had existed on the city for more than 20 years. Each of the schools had 4 to 9 senior teachers of English using the same textbooks who were experienced enough to answer the questionnaire convincingly. Third, the location of the schools was convenient, meaning they were passed by public transportation (see Arikunto, 1989: 118 and 123).

This research used four kinds of instruments for the collection of the data. First, to answer the first research problem, “What cultural elements are used in the high school English textbooks in Palembang?”, the data were collected by means of a matrix containing a checklist in the form of a complete list of elements. In this case English cultural elements and how the elements were presented were arranged to provide an easy means of finding information about the cultural elements in the textbook (See Arikunto, 1989:128). The format of the matrix was adapted from the model proposed by Hamp-Lyons (1983:45-47) in selecting a textbook for teaching reading skills.

The matrix in Table 3.4 consists of two headings: (1) areas of English cultural elements arranged vertically, and (2) the textbooks investigated arranged horizontally. For practical purposes, the titles of the textbooks were symbolized with the capital letters: A, B, C, D, E, and F.

1. A, B : *Headlight: an Exposure to English Learning for SMA Students*; Book 1 and Book 2
2. C, D: *English for SMA*; Book 1 and Book 2
3. E, F : *Linked to the World: English for Senior High School*; Book 1 and Book 2

The letter A and B refer to the textbooks published by Erlangga used in grade X and grade XI, respectively. The letters C and D refer to the textbooks published by Grafindo used in Grade X and XI, respectively. Finally, the letters E and F refer to the textbooks published by Yudhistira used in Grade X and XI, respectively.

**Table 3.4** Matrix With A Checklist for the Areas of English Cultural Elements

Areas of English cultural Elements	The Textbooks					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
1. Etiquette						
2. Family						
3. Occupations						
4. Food						
5. Location						
6. Directions						
7. Preferences						
8. Shopping						
9. Family chores						
10. The weather						
11. Education						
12. Cooking						
13. Presents						
14. Vacation						
15. Routines						
16. Sports						
17. Health						

Second, the data for the answers to the second research problem, “How are the cultural elements presented in the textbooks?”, were collected by using certain instruments depending on the

existence of English cultural elements in the textbooks in question, whether the elements were presented explicitly or implicitly. In other words, the presentation was said to be explicit if the elements were directly stated in the texts; for example, “shopping”. On the other hand, implicit presentation indicated that the elements were touched upon indirectly without mentioning the names of the elements. For example, from the following dialog

Shop assistant: what are you looking for?

Costumer: I’m looking for brand new detergent

(Erlangga (2), 2004:8)

The data were collected by using another matrix made by adapting the models of the presentations of language elements from three sources. First, the model is the one used by Harmer (2001). In this model, language elements were presented by introducing the new elements e.g., introduction, after that doing the discovery activities, in which the students find the meaning and use of the elements, then doing oral practice and finally writing the new elements in the students’ workbooks.

Second, the model is the one employed by Levine and Adelman (1993). In this model, the cultural elements were presented in the form of cultural notes, at the end of each unit of the lesson.

Finally, the model is the one suggested in Rieman (2000) the presentation of a new teaching point was done by means of four kinds of teaching and learning activities, namely (1) Building knowledge of field (BKOF); (2) Modelling of text (MOT); (3) Joint construction (JCOT); (4) Independent construction of text (ICOT).

In building knowledge of field BKOF), the activities involved interactive dialogs between the teacher and students leading them to the topic of the lesson. In Modelling of Text (MOT), the students were guided by the teacher to talk about examples of other texts on the topic of the lesson. Then, in Joint Construction of Text (JCOT), the students worked in small groups of three to four members working together to make their own text by applying what they have just learnt and practiced. Finally, in Independent Construction of Text (ICOT), the students worked individually at home to make a written text to the topic and materials of the lesson.

The similarities shared by the three models were used to form nine items for the presentation of cultural elements in the textbooks. The items were written in following matrix adapted from the format of similar matrix devised by Hamp-Lyons (1985:45-47).

**Table 3.5** Matrix of Items of Presentation of Cultural Elements in the Textbooks

Presentation of Cultural Elements	The Textbooks					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
1. Introducing new elements						
2. Doing discovery activities						
3. Finding meaning						
4. Doing practice						
5. Giving cultural notes						
6. Building knowledge of field						
7. Modelling of text						
8. Joint construction						
9. Independent construction						

Notes: A,B,C,D,E,F refer to the textbooks investigated

Third, to answer the third research problem “What are the teachers’ perceptions of the cultural elements in the textbooks they use?”, the data were collected by using a questionnaire containing a set of items related to the topics in the English cultural elements found in the textbooks used.

The questionnaire consisted of three parts. Part I contained a checklist and rating-scales using the Likert-scale to assess the degree of the teachers’ agreement to the statements of opinions or perceptions about the treatment of English cultural elements in the textbooks. This part covered 22 statements written on English and Indonesian to ensure the teachers’ understanding of the concepts in question.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the investigation of the three textbooks, Yudhistira, Erlangga, and Grafindo show the existence of the areas of English cultural elements in an implicit way. In other words, they are not given in a special section but touched upon in the texts in the form of reading passages or dialogs. Therefore, the existence of cultural elements was detected by the word/ phrase naming an area or by reading the texts and making inferences.. For example the text entitled “Programmed Instruction” in Grafindo 1, contain the sentence “the method is called individualized or programmed instruction.” This indicates the occurrence of the area “education” without the details. Consequently, the lack of cultural elements specified for an area may be caused by several conditions.

First, the textbooks do not pay much attention to English cultural elements. No sections are provided for the discussion and practice on English elements.

Second, the selection of texts, especially reading passages is not directed to the introduction of English cultural elements, even though the curriculum demands the inclusion of sociocultural aspects to develop the learners’ competency in understanding and using English for communication.

Third, the textbooks mostly contain descriptive texts, such as “Means of Transportation” (Yudhistira I page 101), “Clean Water” (erlangga I Page 36), and “Man and environment” (Grafindo II page 15). Because descriptive texts contain facts, they seldom contain aspects of culture in general and common English cultural elements in particular. Where, A narrative usually contains cultural elements, as shown in the following passage taken from CBC.

On Sunday

It is Sunday. Billy and his friends do not go to school, so they plan to clean the bedroom. They also clean the bathroom and living room. They *make the bed*, sweep and mop the floor, dust the furniture and rearrange all their books

“Now everything looks so clean and tidy” says Giga. *Mother* is very proud of them. She gives them a delicious *breakfast* of porridge, *toast and butter and a glass of milk*

In this text there are many cultural elements, the italicized ones, which can be discussed in a brief way in the teaching and learning activities. In fact, the selection of texts affects the learners’ knowledge of English cultural elements. Therefore, the teachers’ perception of English cultural elements also determines their choice of instructional materials.

The respondents were quite interested in the items in the questionnaire; 70% returned the completed sets of a questionnaire. However, their responses varied a great deal, probably they had different perceptions of the existence of English cultural elements and how the elements were presented or introduced in the textbooks they used. Maybe, most of the respondents had very little



knowledge of English cultural elements as demanded by CBC. As a matter of fact, from that information given in the questionnaire, some of the respondents informed that they were graduates of English Education Study Program before the course “Cross Cultural Understanding” was included in the curriculum of English Education Study Program.

Moreover, their reluctance and inability to answer the open questionnaire may be caused by the fact that they seldom participate in seminars or workshops on TEFL such as managed by TEFLIN. Another cause might be the association of teachers’ of the same subject did not function as expected, or simply because they did not understand the concept of culture. From the answers given, which were often irrelevant, we can conclude that they did not understand the question(s). As a result, they seldom talk about the advances in TEFL, and about the importance of English cultural elements in TEFL. Nevertheless, the participation of the teachers in answering the questions in the questionnaire is very good.

## **CONCLUSION**

First, the textbooks for teaching English at senior high schools in Palembang do not provide a special section for introducing and practicing English cultural elements in the form of certain topics related to sociocultural interactions in an explicit way. However, the textbooks do touch upon English cultural elements implicitly in the texts, dialogs and reading passages. An analysis of the reading texts indicates the 17 areas of English cultural elements focused in this research, such as family, occupations, food, and shopping, are found in the textbooks reviewed. However, most the areas do not include the specified elements.

Second, the English cultural elements are embedded in the texts included in each unit or lesson of the English textbooks. Therefore, the research was directed to study the technique for the presentation of the units or lessons. It can be concluded that the textbooks introduce the materials in each unit by using the format proposed by CBC, that is BKOF (Building Knowledge of Field), MOT (Modelling of Text), JCOT (Joint Construction of Text) and ICOT (Independent Construction of text).

Third, the teachers’ perceptions of English cultural elements in the high school English textbooks they use vary from good, average, and unsatisfactory as reflected from their responses to the items in the questionnaire distributed to them. In giving the answer to the item the textbook(s) has(have) the material on the weather (seasons, weather patterns, temperature) most respondents crossed SA (strongly agree), some crossed A (agree), some crossed U (undecided), some crossed D (disagree) and the others crossed SD (strongly disagree). In fact, the writer’s finding in all the six textbooks reviewed and used by the respondents, indicated that the answer to item was SD because the area the weather was found in the texts but without the elements specified.

Fourth, from a study of relevant textbooks and articles, the writer made the conclusion that a cultural based textbook should contain 10 points such as indication of a variety of cultural elements, use of authentic cultural elements, variety of subjects, and provision of illustrations or pictures of cultural element; however, the six textbooks reviewed do not contain all the points, except “variety of subjects”, “guides for students’ activities”, and “comments on appropriateness of uses”.

Moreover, from the respondents’ answers to the yes/ no questions in Part II of the questionnaire, it can be concluded that they have various perceptions of what a Cultural based textbook should contain. Finally, acceptable reasons for their answers are not provided explicitly.



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