

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language and culture are inseparable and connected because culture encompasses both language and other aspects of expression. As stated by Risager (2012), language and culture are inseparable considering that they are important to social behaviors inside the real world. Culture must be introduced and supported for a language learner to utilize the language correctly. Learning a foreign language teaches pupils not just four language skills but additionally approximately the culture of the language they are studying because language is inextricably related to the culture of the those who speak it.

Because language and culture are inextricably linked, so incorporating culture into textbooks for teaching English is widely accepted. Textbooks play a crucial role in teaching and learning, which is why teachers use them to teach cultural components. Dorò (2013) stated that choosing the right textbook is crucial since it serves as a model for discussing and interpreting culture. Many textbook authors use passages having cultural importance to pique the learner's interest. Cultural content not only piques the learner's interest, but it also imparts new knowledge.

Purba (2011) mentioned that textbooks are becoming one of the most expected source media that exposes culture. The Ministry of Education and Culture in Indonesia publishes and provides textbooks to students and teachers to

help them become proficient in learning English. Since textbooks are one of the main tools used in classrooms for instruction, they aid in teachers' transmission of knowledge and students' comprehension.

In Indonesia, textbooks have various versions of each curriculum, including revised editions, and the latest is that the Ministry of Education and Culture has changed the curriculum from the 2013 curriculum to the 2022 Merdeka curriculum. The Merdeka curriculum's target for students' learning through the English textbook is to gain new perspectives on themselves, social relationships, culture, and global work opportunities based on SK Kepala BSKAP (Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan) No. 8 Tahun 2022. Moreover, According to SK Kepala BSKAP No. 8 Tahun 2022, the Merdeka curriculum's English learning aims to to help students communicate effectively in English using different types of texts like spoken, written, visual, and audiovisual materials. It also focuses on developing cross-cultural understanding and appreciation for Indonesian and foreign cultures, their perspectives, practices, persons, and products. Hence, the new version of the textbook for the new curriculum is expected to have a balance of cultural content from both Indonesian and foreign cultures.

Culture is one part of English textbooks that teachers must communicate to students. Essentially, when teaching English using textbooks, it's important for teachers to explain the cultural aspects too. Learning a language isn't just about developing skills. Students also need to be provided with more information about the cultural content represented in the textbook materials. Because most teachers

nowadays only focus on improving students' four skills and do not explain the culture when teaching and learning languages. And then the student doesn't know about the culture. Furthermore, utilizing the textbook as a single instrument, the teacher can integrate explanations of language and culture to help students comprehend which culture is Indonesian and which is foreign.

Thus, based on the description above, the function of culture in English textbooks was crucial as is its use in the classroom instruction. English textbooks must incorporate aspects of Yuen's culture, that includes products, practices, perspectives, and persons. Furthermore, English textbooks should feature a balance between the culture of the local language and the foreign language in order to help students grasp the culture contained in the textbook and develop students' cultural awareness while learning English.

One of the reasons why cultural knowledge should be integrated in English textbooks because learning about different cultures allows students to interact with others more effectively. This skill is crucial in today's world, where people can easily travel long distances and encounter individuals from diverse backgrounds. By equipping students with cultural knowledge, they are able to easily communicate with people from diverse cultures confidently and avoid making social mistakes. As a result, teachers must introduce students to the culture of the language they are learning.. This approach enhances student motivation as they not only learn the language itself but also understand its usage in real-life communication. In conclusion, incorporating cultural knowledge in English textbooks enables students to navigate cross-cultural interactions with

ease or creates an in-depth comprehension of the language in the context of culture.

To discover what cultures were represented in the textbook, the researcher examined the textbook using Yuen's theory. Yuen (2011) mentioned that an English textbook used as a tool for learning a foreign language must contain the following four cultural elements: person, perspective, practice, and product. If we discuss about practice, it means to daily life activities, society, and also customs such as rituals, celebrations, ceremonies, passing traditions, and so on. The next cultural aspect is perspectives, which refers to a community's beliefs, values, about anything that may differ from another community's culture, such as inspiration, myth, and world view or value. Next product as a cultural element that can include food, places (travel destinations and historical sites), things, and literary works such as poems, inventions, music, movies, or entertainments. Lastly is the person, which means that individuals who represent the culture of a society. This includes religious figures, historical figures, artists, writers, athletes, and others in the community who are included in English textbooks.

The researcher did a research study that focused on examining an English textbook entitled "Interactive English", written by Kenneth W. Ament and Gumanti N. R. The following textbook has been utilized by seventh-grade students in junior high school was published by Yudhistira in 2022 and it was created based on the Merdeka curriculum.

Based on the observations that have been made in the VII grade Interactive English textbook used by junior high school students, four aspects of culture, according to Yuen (2011), were found. It is consistent with Yuen (2011), who investigated the cultures covered in the textbook and represented the cultural material using four aspects, namely person, perspective, practice, and product as the data framework for analysis. According to Yuen's study, the material of a textbook can be called culturally relevant if it contains those four cultural dimensions.

To make sure this examine, a few previous studies related to this topic had been conducted by using a few researchers. Salsabila and Susanto (2022) found that the junior high school textbook for grade IX primarily covered source culture and pragmatic sense. This preceding study had specific evaluation, identity, and interpretation of cultural content of the cultural factors based on Cortezzi and Jin's theory and cultural senses primarily based on Adaskou, Brittent, and Fahsi's theory.

Furthermore, Jismulatif et al. (2022) showed that according to the percentage distribution, the product dimension is the most common in textbooks in Yuen's (2011) classification of culture, followed by the person, practice, and perspective dimensions. An imbalance between Indonesian and foreign cultures is revealed by the cultural content of the English textbooks they studied. Only a small percentage of English-language textbooks include other cultures; the majority focus on Indonesian culture.

And then, the study carried out by Noorfauzi (2023) examined whether the cultural dimensions of Yuen as represented in the English textbook align with the Merdeka curriculum's intercultural competency. As a result, the cultural information based on Yuen, as well as the signals of Indonesian and foreign culture, are not balanced in this book. The findings showed that the cultural content in each unit of this textbook didn't have Yuen's four cultural dimensions. In each textbook unit, persons is the most prevalent cultural dimension based on Yuen, following products, practices, and perspectives.

Those previous explanations show that the cultural contents analysis of English textbooks is required to develop and select the textbook contents and to evaluate the textbook for the better English textbook that contains the goal of the national curriculum and cultural aspects. So, in this study, the researcher wants to analyze and classify the cultural content found in the English textbook for junior high school entitled Interactive English for grade VII junior high school.

These explanations show that cultural content analysis in English textbooks is essential to produce and select textbook materials, as well as to review the textbook for a better English textbook that includes the national curriculum's purpose and cultural components. So, in this study, the researcher wants to evaluate and organize the cultural content found throughout the English textbook for junior high school, Interactive English for Grade VII Junior High School.

The researcher wants to analyze it because the researcher is curious about the culture that is imparted in the classroom learning process employing textbooks as a medium. The researcher selects the textbook since it is still used in the

classroom teaching process. Another reason is because the book differs from earlier editions of the series. As a result, in terms of cultural content, the Interactive English for Grade VII Junior High School textbook must be thoroughly examined. Therefore, the author thinks that this study will help readers develop a better English textbook in the future.

1.2. Problems of the Study

Based on the research's background, there are two problems concerning it as follows:

1. What are the aspects of cultural representation in Interactive English Textbook Grade VII?
2. How are the cultural sense represented in Interactive English Textbook Grade VII?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

Based on the previous problem statement the objectives of this study were:

1. To investigate the aspects of cultural representation in Interactive English Textbook Grade VII.
2. To explain how cultural sense are represented in Interactive English Textbook Grade VII.

1.4. Scope of the Study

This research focuses to investigate the cultural representations of the English textbook entitled “Interactive English” for Seventh Grade of junior high school. The data of this study based on the pictures, dialogues, texts, and exercises that found in chapter one until chapter fourteen in the textbook published by

Yudhistira which was written by Kenneth W. Ament and Gumanti N. R. The different aspects of culture were classified in this study using Yuen's (2011) theory framework, and the presentation of cultural sense was explained using Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi's (1990) theory framework.

1.5. Significant of the Study

The results of this research could be expected to provide important contributions to these specific parties.

1. Theoretically

The outcomes of this study should bring benefits that support many cultural concepts. Furthermore, this study can be used as a basis for future research on the similar subject. It can also help the Ministry of National Education improve textbook assessment standards by including cultural information that is more relevant to Indonesian students' requirements.

2. Practically

a. English teachers.

The purpose of this study was to assist teachers in selecting appropriate textbooks for use in the teaching-learning process, as well as to describe different types of cultures found in various texts.

b. Students.

The results of this research can help students comprehend the diverse cultures presented in the reading materials from the textbooks we'll analyze. This will allow them to properly expand their cultural awareness and understanding.

c. Policy-makers in Education or the National Education Ministry

The findings from this study can help education policymakers and the National Education Ministry for designing, developing, and selecting textbook materials that incorporate cultural aspects effectively. The findings can also serve as an evaluation tool to improve English textbooks and make them more culturally relevant.

d. Future Research.

This study would possibly function a reference for future research to improve the excellence of English textbooks.

