

Hybrid Culture in Indonesian EFL Textbooks: Policies and Pedagogical Implications

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Abstract

Hybrid Culture is a new term which reflects the diversity and complexity of the world culture existing today. The term hybrid culture refers to the mixture of several kinds of culture blended or integrated into one new culture which has the characteristics of the old and new culture it represents. In the context of EFL learning in Indonesia, many EFL textbooks do not really cover the hybridity of the culture which creates the pedagogical implications in the future of education. The majority of the textbooks either focus on the local or target culture. They do not emphasize the importance of the students to understand that culture is not single-handedly original in its nature but consists of many external factors. This study attempts to examine such a phenomenon. The data were taken from 3 (three) local EFL textbooks used in some high schools in Indonesia. The researcher uses the Content Analysis method with the cultural content evaluation by Byram and Morgan (1994) and Kilickaya (2004). They proposed a qualitative evaluation checklist with a list of criteria for examining the extent and methods of how culture is presented. There are nine categories from the checklist, namely- social identity and social groups, social interaction, belief and behavior, socio-political institutions, socialization and the life-cycle, national history, national geography, national cultural heritage, stereotypes and national identity (Byram & Morgan, 1994). Then the results were compared and it was found that the textbooks do not clearly represent the hybrid culture in their content.

Keywords: *Culture; EFL; Hybrid; Local Culture; Target Culture*

Abstrak

Hibridisasi Budaya adalah istilah baru yang merefleksikan keragaman dan kompleksitas budaya yang ada di dunia saat ini. Istilah hibridisasi budaya mengacu kepada percampuran beberapa budaya yang bergabung menjadi suatu budaya baru yang memiliki kedua karakteristik budaya baik lama maupun baru. Dalam konteks pembelajaran EFL di Indonesia, banyak buku teks EFL yang tidak meliputi hibridisasi budaya yang berdampak pada dunia pendidikan di masa yang akan datang. Mayoritas buku teks tersebut berfokus pada budaya lokal dan budaya asing saja. Hal ini membuat siswa tidak memahami bahwa budaya pada dasarnya tidak berdiri sendiri namun terdiri dari beberapa faktor eksternal. Penelitian ini berusaha untuk melihat fenomena tersebut. Data diambil dari 3 (tiga) buku teks Bahasa Inggris lokal yang dipakai di SMA di Indonesia. Untuk evaluasi konten budaya, Byram and Morgan (1994) dan Kilickaya (2004) mengajukan ceklis evaluasi kualitatif dengan daftar kriteria untuk menguji sejauh mana konten budaya direpresentasikan. Terdapat 9 (sembilan) kategori dalam ceklis tersebut, diantaranya: social identity dan social groups, social interaction, belief dan behaviour, socio-political institutions, socialization dan life-cycle, national history, national geography, national cultural heritage, stereotypes dan national identity (Byram and Morgan, 1994). Hasilnya kemudian dibandingkan dan ditemukan bahwa dalam buku-buku teks tersebut tidak secara jelas merepresentasikan hibridisasi budaya dalam konten mereka.

Kata Kunci: *Budaya, EFL, Hibridisasi Budaya, Budaya Lokal, Budaya Asing*

INTRODUCTION

The topic of learning culture has a crucial position in learning English language because learning a certain language means learning a certain culture. The relationship between language and culture is highly strong (McKay: 2004, p. 12). Learning a language cannot be separated from learning the culture associated with it. Both of them are bound together not only to indicate how people use language as expressing facts and ideas but also to reflect their attitudes which are developed through the way living in their communities. Furthermore, language symbolizes people's cultural reality because it becomes a symbol of cultural identity.

There are several dimensions of culture which can be found in EFL textbooks. Most of them are related to either local or target culture. There have been plenty of studies attempting to analyse the local and target culture in EFL textbooks. Hence, there is little research focusing their study on the existence of hybrid culture.

The term 'hybrid' means "combining two different things" (Cambridge. 2019). The term 'Hybrid Culture' refers to the coexistence, harmony, and synchronization of oral culture, written culture, printed culture, mass culture, media culture, and cyberculture mixing all of them in webs of meaning produced by individuals (IGI Global, 2021). In this study, the researcher uses the term hybrid culture as the main issue in the context of EFL learning through textbook writing.

Language teaching materials are very essential. One of the most widely used teaching materials is textbooks. In almost every country in the world, textbooks are the key components to a success language programs and in constructing an effective teaching and learning environment (Richard, 2001). To construct an effective teaching and learning environments, the foremost aspect that should be presented in language teaching is cultural content (Pulverness, 2003). Cultural content has become an important aspect since, as a matter of fact, language is one of the products of culture (Yule, 2014). Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is another issue raised by Tudor (2001). He said that sociocultural dimensions of communication and the cultural contents are crucial. Culture cannot be ignored in program designs and teaching so culture cannot be disregarded in the design of EFL textbooks.

Culture is often about wisdoms and worldview of the country and textbooks can be a good source for students to learn and adopt these wisdoms and worldview and to develop their cultural awareness and identity (Hermawan, 2012). In dealing with culture, (Holliday, 1999) mentions that there are 2 (two) kinds of cultures namely large and small cultures. Large culture prescribes ethnic, national, and international entities whereas small culture deals with small social groupings or activities wherever there is cohesive behavior, and thus avoids culturist ethnic, national or international stereotyping. In Indonesian context, on one hand, the culture represented in most English textbooks is either local or target culture, be it American or simply the West culture. On the other hand, there is no clear cut between the Eastern and the Western culture as the two cultures have blended in such a way that it is difficult to distinguish them. A good illustration would be McDonald restaurants in Indonesia. The fast food restaurants provide rice where it can only be found in the country. This phenomenon is called Hybrid Culture. Hybrid cultures are antagonistic to standing authority and cultural hegemony - hybridisation engenders diversity and heterogeneity. Heterogeneity and multiplicity are here underlined as important aspects of hybrid cultures.

Unfortunately, the previous studies regarding the issue did not emphasize on the existence of the hybrid culture. They mainly focused on the local or target culture instead. It is very crucial that textbook writers take into consideration the idea of hybridity in their writings. They must avoid cultural hegemony in the local English textbooks as language and culture must be put in the right context of the users. For that reason, the researcher is trying to investigate the existence of hybrid culture in the local English textbooks used in senior high schools in Indonesia. The findings would be great benefit for policy makers in educational sector especially in textbook writing.

METHODS

In this study, the content analysis design was used for addressing the purpose of this study since it is a research design used to help researchers make inferences by interpreting and making codes for textual materials and by analytically evaluating texts such as documents, oral communication, and graphics (Mayring, 2014).

Mayring (2014) argues that the central idea of the content analysis is to evaluate texts or documents, oral communication, and graphics or pictures through working with many text passages and analyses of frequencies of categories and processing and assigning categories to text passages.

1.1. Data Resources

The data were taken from 3 (three) local English textbooks used in Indonesian senior high schools, namely (the researcher uses initial as the consent form has not been sent to the publishers):

1. X textbook
2. Y textbook
3. Z textbook

1.2. Data Collection Technique

Guided by Byram and Morgan's (1994) evaluation checklist with a list of nine criteria, the researcher evaluated the local and target language cultures in local English textbooks for senior high school students in Indonesia. The researcher examined the percentage of local and target cultures proportions in English textbooks for senior high school in Indonesia. Particularly, the researcher searched for whether English School textbooks promoted a balanced proportion of the local and target language cultures or not. The researcher analysed the reading texts in the three textbooks published by local publishers.

1.3. Data Analysis

The researcher used checklists proposed by Byram and Morgan in analyzing the textbooks. There are nine categories from the checklist, namely; social identity and social groups, social interaction, belief and behavior, socio-political institutions, socialization and the life-cycle, national history, national geography, national cultural heritage, stereotypes and national identity (Byram & Morgan, 1994).

social identity and social groups: groups within the nation-state which are the basis for other than national identity, including social class, regional identity, ethnic minority, professional identity, and which illustrate the complexity of individuals' social identities and of a national society (NB the issue of national identity is dealt with under 'stereotypes');

social interaction: conventions of verbal and non-verbal behaviour in social interaction at differing levels of familiarity, as outsider and insider within social groups;

belief and behaviour: routine and taken-for-granted actions within a social group national or sub-national and the moral and religious beliefs which are embodied within them; secondly, routines of behaviour taken from daily life which are not seen as significant markers of the identity of the group;

socio-political institutions: institutions of the state and the values and meanings they embody which characterize the state and its citizens and which constitute a framework for ordinary, routine life within the national and sub-national groups; provision for health-care, for law and order, for social security, for local government, etc.;

socialization and the life-cycle: institutions of socialization, families, schools, employment, religion, military service and the ceremonies which mark passage through stages of social life; representation of divergent practices in different social groups as well as national auto-stereotypes of expectations and shared interpretations;

national history: periods and events, historical and contemporary, which are significant in the constitution of the nation and its identity both actually significant and, not necessarily identical, perceived as such by its members;

national geography: geographical factors within the national boundaries which are significant in members' perceptions of their country; other factors which are information (known but not significant to members) essential to outsiders in intercultural communication (NB national boundaries, and changes in them, are part of 'national history');

national cultural heritage: cultural artefacts perceived to be emblems and embodiments of national culture from past and present; in particular those which are 'known' to members of the nation e.g. Shakespeare in Britain, the Impressionists in France, Wagner in Germany through their inclusion in curricula of formal education; and also contemporary classics, not all of which have reached the school curriculum and some of which may be transient but significant, created by television and other media e.g. Truffaut's films in France, Agatha Christie in Britain, Biermann's songs in Germany;

stereotypes and national identity: for example, German and English notions of what is 'typically' German and English national identity; the origins of these notions historical and contemporary and comparisons among them; symbols of national identities and stereotypes and their meanings, e.g. famous monuments and people.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Table 4.1.

Hybrid Culture in Local EFL Textbooks

No	Textbook	Local Culture	Target Culture	Hybrid Culture
1	Textbook X	15	10	5
2	Textbook Y	10	7	3
3	Textbook Z	8	5	3

It can be seen from the table that the textbooks have few or not significant number of hybrid culture representation compared to local or target culture. This means that the textbooks do not put a strong emphasis on hybrid culture. This will result in the students not having awareness of the existence of hybrid culture. Pedagogically, the students will have problems understanding different cultures which are problematic in terms of the intercultural communicative competence as well as the ability to respect different cultures. Understanding hybrid culture would significantly create tolerance among the students and finally would promote cultural understanding among the people in the world.

Table 4.2.

The Cultural Categories in the EFL Textbooks

No	Categories	Textbook X	Textbook Y	Textbook Z
1	social identity and social groups	v		
2	social interaction	v	v	v
3	belief and behaviour	v	v	v
4	socio-political institutions	v		v
5	socialization and the life-cycle	v	v	
6	national history	v	v	v
7	national geography	v	v	v
8	national cultural heritage	v	v	v
9	stereotypes and national identity	v	v	v

As for the table above, it can be seen that all the textbooks are equally emphasizing on the 9 (nine) cultural category checklist by Byram and Morgan (1989). This means that the textbooks contain a balanced and proportional materials which are good for the students. Despite the fact that the books have few content of hybrid culture, they try to present the cultural categories in a good way.

Discussion

At such, investigating and analyzing the results would be beneficial for further policies regarding the textbook writing especially for the government, educators, scholars, and practitioners who are concerned that education is part of national goals and culture is embedded as national identity. Some pedagogical implications would also arise as teachers are supposed to learn more about hybrid culture to be confident in sharing the knowledge with the students. The awareness of the existence of hybrid culture would significantly change the paradigm of teaching and learning especially in EFL classroom. The more aware the students about hybrid culture, the more competent they are in the intercultural communication.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

It can be concluded that all the 3 (three) local EFL textbooks contain only little emphasis on hybrid culture which has a significant impact on the intercultural competence of high school students in Indonesia. It also plays an important role in the pedagogical aspect of EFL learning as well as policies in EFL textbook writing for high school students in Indonesia.

The writer suggests that more textbook writers put more emphasis on the existence of hybrid culture in the materials or the content of the textbooks. By doing that, there will be more students who have cultural understanding which eventually build cultural awareness and cultural competence among them. As for the teachers, they must promote the understanding of hybrid culture in the teaching-learning process.

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