

An Overview of ELT Course Book (the cultural content in the book "BAHASA INGGRIS")

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Received: March 3rd, 2020

Accepted: March 16th, 2020

Abstract

In the practice of teaching and learning, planned teaching material undoubtedly holds a very crucial role. A textbook is the example of the teaching material that has been used for five decades as the manual instruction as well as a source of information in the teaching and learning activity. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a textbook as "a book about a particular subject that is used in the study of that subject especially in the school". Furthermore, regarding its importance the textbook provides the sources related to the skills, behavioural aspects, beliefs and knowledge covered by cognitive elements and teaching techniques supported by the curriculum. This article is written as a review on an English course book to find the cultural content presented in that book. Adopting content analysis, this review concludes that the course book offers cultural contents that allow the students to learn certain target culture in term of literature. Some minor drawbacks are highlighted as discussed in this paper.

Keywords: *world englishes, cultural content, english coursebook*

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1. Background

In the practice of teaching and learning, planned teaching material undoubtedly holds a very crucial role. A textbook is the example of the teaching material that has been used for five decades as the manual instruction as well as a source of information in the teaching and learning activity (Iqbal, 2013). Merriam-Webster dictionary (2017, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/textbook>) defines a textbook as "a book about a particular subject that is used in the study of that subject especially in the school". Furthermore, regarding its importance, Iqbal (2013) noted that the textbook provides the sources related to the skills, behavioural aspects, beliefs and knowledge covered by cognitive elements and teaching techniques supported by the curriculum.

In terms of EFL/ESL teaching and learning activity, English textbooks according to Harmer (2007, in Nomnien, 2013) generally used as a basis of English language teaching, ready-made materials and the teacher's standard which consist of instructions, activities and sources.

The contents of an English textbook may also cover cultural aspects of language instruction. Wu (2010) notes that comprehensive and standardized textbooks may promote cultural input whereas a strict textbook may not facilitate the cultural aspect. Thus, as English has become a "Global Language" which not only used by some English-speaking country but also globally in any country around the globe, elements of cultural awareness are essential within the textbook of English.

Based on the explanation above, the writer will try to review a textbook of English used in Indonesian schools in the area of cultural contents. The following table explains the detail of the chosen book:

Authors	: Mahrukh Basir, Helena I. R. Agustin and Emi Emilia
Year of Publish	: 2014
ISBN	: 978-602-282-479-4
Place of Publish	: Jakarta
Publisher	: Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan R.I.

This textbook of English is chosen to be reviewed based on of two reasons; firstly, the book was published by the government of Indonesia through the ministry of education and culture of Republic Indonesia which is expected to be a standardized and comprehensive as well as a free source to all teachers in Indonesia. Secondly, the new curriculum (curriculum 2013) which is the newest curriculum available in Indonesia is applied in this book. Thus, the book might relevantly facilitate the writer regarding the expected data of cultural contents in term of global Englishes.

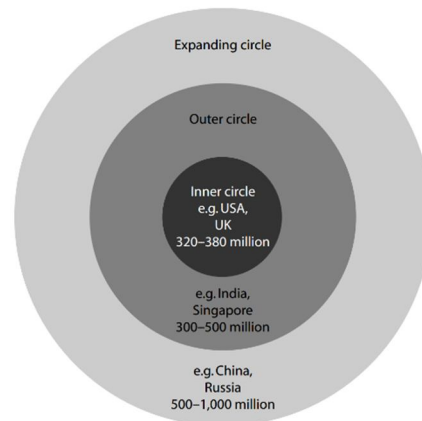
This paper will be delivered in four-part of discussions; the introduction, review of related literature, discussion and the conclusion. In the introduction, the writer will be discussing the background of the study, rationale of the chosen book, and assignment outline. The second part, review of related literature will be discussing the current theory and findings cultural contents in Indonesian English textbook or the English textbook used in the other non-English-speaking countries which carried out the cultural content aspects. The third part, the discussion will consist of the review of a selected textbook namely "Bahasa Inggris" in terms of the cultural contents within the book. The last part, the conclusion will carry out some reflection of the study and overall summary regarding the study.

2. Theoretical Basis

2.1. Global Englishes

Global English is a term which used to represent the English language which is used in many parts of the world, both English as the first language and second or foreign language (Jenkins, 2002). Braj Kachru, an Indian linguist who is well-known as Pioneer of global Englishes has been studied the spread and growth of the English language in the world. He developed the three circles of global Englishes based on its historical point of view which consists of *an inner circle*, *outer circle*, and *expanding circle* (Crystal, 2012). The inner-circle refers to English in traditional based, which means that in its application, English is used as the primary language in the English-speaking countries such as USA, United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. The outer circle refers to the non-native English speaking countries yet use English as the second language (L2). These countries usually are

English colonialized countries. The countries including Singapore, Malaysia, India, some parts of Africa, etc. The expanding circle refers to the countries that recognized English as an international language. Unlike the outer-circle countries, these countries usually were not colonialized by the countries of the inner circle. Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, Greece, Poland, Indonesia, and many more are the example of the countries which categorized in the expanding circle. These group of countries use and teach English as a foreign language. Furthermore, the circle can be seen as follow:



Kachru's Three circles of Global English (Crystal, 2012)

The figure above also describes the number of English language users which is shown that English being used more as non-official language or foreign language by countries in the expanding circle, followed by the outer-circle countries which used English as a second language. The inner-circle countries which are the user of English as the first language are recorded to be the least in quantity of users. The number of users listed in the figure above will always be expanded following the world progress.

However, there is a controversy toward the notion of global Englishes by Kachru. Sir Randolph Quirk, an American linguist and grammarian (Radtke, 2013) opposed the notion of Kachru which stated that as a global language, English has adopted by millions of people from many cultures around the globe and has no longer a language of inner-circle countries but also the outer and expanding circle which have some English varieties and dialects themselves. Quirk insisted that there should be a single standard of English varieties (British Educational System) which should be taught in the schools around the world. The reason for his view is his fear of possibilities of English will be losing its international function due to its incoherent varieties and forms (Radtke, 2013, Kilickaya, 2009). This notion of Quirk then is responded by Kachru by stating that applying the variety of norms such as speech acts and registers would not lead to the issues which feared by Quirk (Kachru, 1985, as in Kilickaya, 2009). Furthermore, strong support of Kachru's idea also proposed by Widdowson (1994, as cited in Kilickaya, 2009) by stated that English cannot be positioned as the ownership of the native speaker itself. In fact, in term of English as an International language, it is not under the ownership of some countries within the inner circles but also nations beyond the inner circles as well.

2.2. Linguistic Imperialism to Cultural Imperialism in ELT Textbooks

In today's world, English has been globally expanded and caused to the domination over the other language which leads to the Linguistic imperialism (Nordquist, 2016). It is obvious that

in learning a foreign language such as English will also end up with learning about some aspect which attached in the target language itself. Pennington (2014) stated that learning a new language will serve the learner the language skills and the knowledge of the world through cultural aspect which comes with the learning activity of the language itself. This is how Linguistic Imperialism come into the learning of foreign language learning.

In an article entitle English as lingua franca (DAWN.COM, 20013), Linguistic imperialism defined as all the dominant practice of a target language which brings with it the cultural, social, political, economic, and ideologies into other nation who learn the language. Concerning it, Philipson (1992) tries to correlate the linguistic imperialism with cultural imperialism as in the application, the culture of English-speaking country is embedded into the learning materials. Sweeny (2006, as cited in Elham and Reza, 2013) points out that globalization leads to the cultural domination of the English language due to the influence of wide range messages, icons, and brands. In line with the statement, Bottery also came up with the statement that the globalization is strongly related to the control of the English language (2000, as cited in Elham and Reza, 2013).

Moreover, based on the writer experience as a student as well as teacher, many ELT coursebook was found using "template" based on what appeared as the culture of inner-circle countries, mostly England and USA. To support the writer's statement, the writer quoted Crawford's (1990, in Elham and Reza, 2013) identification of the ELT textbook. He points out that (1) most of the textbook may alter the contents as in its reality, the textbook often created by following idealism of white and middle-class point of view towards the world, and (2) the textbooks are written based on the demand of global needs, thus it may lead to the lack of specific necessity of the learners from various cultural backgrounds.

2.3. Cultural Contents of the Course Book

Cortazzy and Jin, in the book entitled "Culture in second language teaching and learning" by Eli Hinkel (1999) proposed three types of cultural elements; *source culture*, *target culture*, and *international target cultures*. Source culture related to the language learners' native culture, target culture refers to the culture in which the English language take part as the first language, and lastly, the international target culture which refers to the variety of culture both from English and Non-English speaking countries. These cultural elements then are used as the foundation of creating content of teaching material in the textbook.

Concerning the Cortazzy and Jin's proposal of cultural elements above, McKay (2003, in Elham and Reza, 2013) proposed the *cultural contents* in the textbook should include local cultural contents. He also suggested that the cultural contents in the textbook should not be limited from the countries in the inner circle. The cultural here refers to the noticeable cultural creations such as dress, cuisine, customs, festivals, traditions, etc. (Munandar and Ulwiyah, 2012). McKay also suggested that the local teacher (non-native speaker) need to consider the linguistic information, cultural contents, etc. which suitable in relation with the local culture (2003, in Elham and Reza, 2013).

According to Skopinskaja (1992, as cited in Vrbová, 2006) based on the necessity of this study, there are some lists of textbook evaluations based on the necessity of TEIL, those are; (a) Cultural content of teaching materials, (b) the cultural knowledge presentation, (c) attitudinal perspective contents, (d) intercultural perspective content presentation, and (e) culture and language perspective content presentation. About it, there are also some criteria of ELT material development which have been discussed by some scholars (Matsuda, 2012, McKay, 2012, as cited in Xu, 2013, p11). Those are; (1) the localization of English materials

for local learners, (2) intercultural awareness of the learners based on their needs of English, (3) exposure of different varieties of English, (4) multiculturalism promotion, and (5) the chances provided for the learners in associating their own culture and needs.

3. Method

3.1. Method of Discussion

As mentioned in the earlier paragraph, the writer conducted a review of an English Coursebook which commonly used by teachers in Indonesia entitled "BAHASA INGGRIS". The scope of the analysis is only discussing the cultural contents in terms of globalization of English within the textbook. The analysis of the content of this coursebook is based on the list of evaluation criteria by Skopinskaja (1992, as cited in Vrbová, 2006) which associated to the criteria of ELT development by Matsuda and McKay. Thus, in this paper, the writer only discussed three cultural contents of the coursebook which narrowed based on the two proposals. Those are *cultural content of teaching materials*, *intercultural perspective through content presentation*, and *culture and language dimension*.

4. Discussion

4.1. Cultural Content of Teaching Materials

The cultural content of teaching materials refers to the cultural character of foreign countries (Vrbová, 2006). In the first chapter of this book, the writer found the cultural content of the reading material entitled "The Enchanted Fish" which an England fairy tales (see appendix). Based on the writer's observation on the source available (google books), this reading material was modified from graphical folklore into the short story. Yet, there is still an illustration of the story showing a picture of a typical western fisherman with castles. The story is also narrated in the settings of the middle-age western kingdom where the castle, crown, and emperors were mentioned. Furthermore, the use of typical western rune being used in the story which in the writer's point of view could act as the double-edged sword. In one hand, this rune will introduce old western literature to the students. While in the other hand, in the context of teaching English as a global language, the student will find this kind of rune unimportant in their communication in the target language, even it is also complicated to be understood since the structure of words in the rune sentences is "unusual".

This type of teaching materials, according to the writer's own experience has been very common in many English textbooks for decades. This is clearly showing the elements of the target culture being put in the teaching material. This statement is also supported by a current study of cultural content distribution in textbooks done by Toprak and Aksoyalp (2015) which resulted that majority of the contents in the textbooks they analyzed came from the inner countries such as the United Kingdom and the USA. They also stated that sources from other English speaking countries remained lessened.

4.2. Intercultural Perspective through Content Presentation

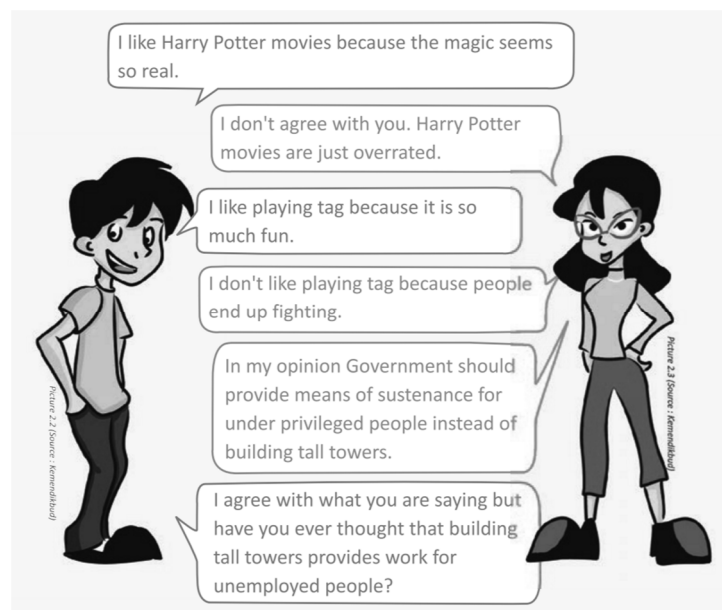
This aspect is related to how the coursebook of ELT promoting the intercultural awareness of students (Arabski and Wojtaszek, 2011). The western folklore which mentioned earlier can also be used as an example of intercultural perspective through the content presentation which is applied in the textbook. Another example of the intercultural presentation content also can be found within this coursebook which being delivered through tasks. Take the example of the writing task in the book which instructing students to write folklore of their cultural background (here, Indonesian folklore) in English. Students are expected to raise

their awareness of intercultural in term of discourse activity trough to rewrite the Indonesian folklore which mainly narrated using the oriental style of writing into the English writing style. The guidance of the teacher is required in doing this task. This is a good example of intercultural content presentation being delivered through this textbook.

However, to an extent, the writer found an issue of intercultural content presentation which need to be reconsidered. The book provides some important list of vocabularies based on a theme in every chapter named as "word power". This list of unfamiliar words only provides the USA phonetic symbols to help the students in its sounding. While to the writer view, as a coursebook of English in the level of senior high school, it would be useful to attach the phonetic symbols of British as a secondary way of pronunciation. This is suggested for the reason to introduce the variation of English pronunciation to the student so that can be used in their future application of English communication.

4.3. Culture and Language Dimension Perspective

This aspect refers to the contents of the coursebook which related to the awareness of linguistic, paralinguistic, authenticity of material and appropriate registers in the target language (Arabski and Wojtaszek, 2011). This book, however, is likely to be failed in presenting the teaching materials which expected to accommodate the student in developing their linguistic and paralinguistic awareness. The figure below is an example of the conversation practice which mainly used in this book:



Source: Bahasa Inggris, Kemendikbud

The figure above showed that although the example of the sentences covered the aspect of linguistics such as colloquial, expressions, grammar, etc., the aspect of paralinguistic did not appear to be delivered in the book. While in real-life English communication, paralinguistic is also noteworthy in term of developing their awareness in both cultural and intercultural communication in the corridor of English as a global language. There are numbers of the related aspect of paralinguistic such as, tone, intonations, pauses and filler of English which is noteworthy to be delivered in the coursebook. In terms of intercultural communication, paralinguistic aspects in spoken activity will help the language users to deliver their thought or ideas properly as most English speakers using this to maintain their speaking fluency.

Regarding its necessity, Abercrombie (1968) draws a statement that the conversational use of speaking may not be properly comprehensible unless paralinguistics elements are taken into account. This aspect of paralinguistics can be taught using voice recording with the transcript which is not provided in this book.

5. Conclusion

As mentioned in the earlier discussions, this paper is made to evaluate an English coursebook namely "BAHASA INGGRIS" by Mahrukh Basir, Helena I. R. Agustin and Emi Emilia, which used by the Indonesian government as a recommended English coursebook for senior high school. The discussion is related to the Global English or English as an International/Global language which analyzed the cultural contents of teaching materials within the book based on criteria of English material teaching development by Matsuda and McKay (2012, in Xu, 2013) and textbook evaluation lists developed by Skopinskaja (1992, as cited in Vrbová, 2006) which narrowed into three aspects of textbook contents; Cultural content of teaching materials, Intercultural perspective through content presentation, Culture and language dimension perspective.

On overall review, the writer found that this coursebook is well structured and covers two of three criteria of cultural contents lists mentioned in the earlier paragraph. There are only minor issues regarding reading content in the first chapters which using a rune of old English literature which to the writer has its advantages and drawback. The advantage is the students are allowed to learn target culture in terms of literature. However, without a proper explanation of the rune being used in the material would lead the students on the drawback due to the "strange" structure of words in its sentences. In terms of the intercultural perspective of content presentation, the writer addressed a suggestion on the list of vocabularies provided in this book to also introduce not only American phonetics but also British phonetics to allow students learning the varieties of English pronunciations.

The last criteria successfully presented the content of linguistics such as colloquial, expressions and grammar. However, this book did not cover the paralinguistic aspect of communication in the teaching contents. This paralinguistic content such as pauses, intonation, and fillers in target language culture is a noteworthy element in term of conveying meaning in the communication.

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