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## Multicultural Competence in English Language Pedagogy: An Analysis of Cultural Values in Indonesian Primary ELT Textbooks

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### Abstract

This study aims at investigating how different cultures are depicted in textbooks. The textbooks were selected by examining their reference to Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circle countries, including cultural themes which represent these countries. This study's data corpus consisted of two EFL Primary textbooks, Hang Out 4 and Hang Out 5. Employing Critical Discourse Analysis as the research design, this study adopted two frameworks to analyze the data: Kachru's (1986) Concentric Circles to categorize the cultural contexts and Pfister and Borzelli's (1977) categorization to identify the cultural aspects represented. The findings revealed that the cultural representation in the textbooks reflected significant diversity. Particularly within the inner circle, the United States was the nation whose culture was best represented. While in outer and expanding circles, East Asian countries were dominant and included all five categories. However, Indonesia as the source culture has little reference in this textbook.

**Keywords:** Cultural values, ELT textbook, English language pedagogy, Multiculturalism

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### INTRODUCTION

✉ English is gaining importance as a global lingua franca used by speakers with diverse mother tongues and nationalities. Since it is impossible to learn a language without studying the nation's content, culture, and policy, multicultural materials representing the nationalities of English speakers must be incorporated into English language teaching (ELT) textbooks. In line with what Yuen's (2011) argument stating that learning a foreign language should involve gaining knowledge of the culture in which the language is used and how other cultures are portrayed. Regarding the source of the culture, Cortazzi and Jin (1999) categorized cultural information into three categories: source culture (original culture of learners), target culture (some countries where the target language is the primary language), and international target culture. Thus, English language learning materials are expected to increase cultural content, including from countries where the language is used as either a second or a foreign language.

Due to the fact that English is a lingua franca or international language, acknowledging multiculturalism in language textbooks is es-

sential for language teaching and learning. This could be accomplished by incorporating cultural content from diverse countries around the world. Because any texts, exercises, and assignments selected or created by the author(s) are partially based on the author's own ideology, concern, and agenda, and partly based on the philosophy asserted in the curriculum, the selection of what cultures are depicted in ELT textbooks is inevitably ideology-laden (Setyono & Widodo, 2019). Hinkel (1999) believed that textbooks can serve as a teacher, map, source, trainer, authority, and ideology for teaching culture in ELT classrooms. Therefore, the cultural content of ELT materials should reflect English's status as a global language and satisfy learners' communication needs in various contexts, including their own (Alptekin, 2002).

Equivalence is required when incorporating cultural values into teaching materials. As a consequence, many authors have proposed using both cultures of the local language and target language to address the boundary of using only one of the cultures as learners must comprehend their own and others. Evidently, a growing number of studies have analysed the cultural content of ELT textbooks used all over the world. One of which

is Pasand and Ghasemi (2018) in Iran analyze three textbooks using Hillard's (2014) framework the outcome of the analyses declared the distance of cultural topics represented in the series is somewhat minor. The results also demonstrated that the series is very restricted in its treatment of intercultural factors, and it is simply focused on local problems. These findings suggest that more cultural topics should be counted in textbooks, and should be placed on developing students' intercultural competence through participation in missions or activities geared toward other cultures and communities. Joo et al., (2020) inspected five EFL textbooks avowed for use in Grade 3 by the South Korean government. The goal was to determine if and how the multimodal founts used in these textbooks met the curriculum need of presenting English as a significant mode of communication between countries. The crucial multimodal content analysis of characters and their interactions in the textbook revealed that in Korean EFL textbooks, there is a general western bias and knotted support of native-speaker. More recently, Tajeddin & Pakzadian (2020) stated that In American English File, the majority of references to the three circles and cultural elements were against Inner Circle countries. Besides, references to Outer and Expanding Circles' diversity and cultural elements were more visible in the Interchange and English Result series. All three-textbook sequences, however, primarily exhibited Inner-Circle accents. These results have involvements for materials builders who want to use English as an international language instead of just representing native speakers' linguistic norms and cultures in ELT textbooks.

In the context of Indonesian ELT, cultural contents in ELT textbooks have also been an area of research interest over the past decade. Numerous studies have been conducted to explore cultural elements in English textbooks with a variety of topics, Setyono & Widodo (2019) investigated multicultural values in an English textbook for Indonesian secondary school students and how these values may influence students' intercultural competence. The results convey four values in the investigated textbook: honor for diversity (pluralism), honor for indigenous peoples' rights, experiencing peace with nature, and enhancing the value of cultural products. In spite of having a fair number of multicultural topics, the textbook still underrepresented Asian and African cultural materials. More recently, Mandarani, et al., (2021) investigated three textbooks of junior high school in Indonesia, that: social group & social identity dictate the cultural ideal, and the presence of the

target cultures is still protruding, but the authors had attempted to defend the initial content of the source culture and the students entail to be aware the significance of learning culture from their English textbooks & expand their cultural reference and a specific level of honor, as well as toleration for others. As English becomes more important as a global lingua franca, multicultural materials from Outer and Expanding Circle countries must be included in ELT textbooks. That's why English teachers should teach multicultural aspects creatively and use multimodal materials to partake students in culturally rich language-learning tasks (Setyono & Widodo, 2019).

However, despite the abundance of research in this field, these studies tend to investigate cultural values in Indonesian textbooks written by local authors. Very few focus on the cultural values in Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) aligned books, especially in primary school textbooks. Furthermore, although by national regulation English is not a required subject for primary school students in Indonesia, in practice many schools incorporate it as a locally adapted subject. These schools are given freedom to select textbooks that will be used in their classrooms, and it is common for Indonesian primary schools to use customized ELT textbooks published by international publishers for the English subject.

In light of the aforementioned empirical void and the prevalent use of CEFR-aligned textbooks in Indonesian primary schools, the present study was designed to investigate the cultural values of Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circle countries in ELT textbooks used in Indonesian primary schools. Consequently, this study seeks to address the following questions: 1. What cultures are represented in the selected textbooks?; 2. How are these cultures represented?

## METHODS

### The Study

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is adopted as the main approach to analyse the cultural values portrayed in the primary English textbooks in Indonesia. According to Fairclough (2001), CDA is the transdisciplinary way in which perspectives and denominations from outside textual analysis or discourse analysis can be run as ways of analyzing texts which gain concept into the textual side of the social practices, processes, and relations that are the center of the exclusive research plan. Moreover, Halliday (1978) disproves

that discourse as text is both a process and a product, created, infused, and defined in a particular social connection. CDA in this study was used to verify verbal and visual texts in two textbooks to illustrate the deputation of cultural values.

The corpus data of this study were extracted from primary English textbooks entitled “*Hang Out*” Grade 4 and 5. It was published in Indonesia by adopting and following the CEFR-based curriculum or often referred to as the Cambridge curriculum. The reason why the researchers choose these textbooks is that it was highly used by private schools, notably in municipal regions in Indonesia, such as international base schools, integrated Islamic schools, and other schools that adopt the Cambridge curriculum. Another reason is the books have affluent verbal and textual content representing cultural values from other countries that are considered to have a significant role. Thus, these textbooks have prosperous information on how cultural values represent Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles as well.

#### Data Analysis

In analysing the corpus data, the researchers used two frameworks adopted in evaluating the textbook; Kachru’s (1986) Concentric Circles model and Pfister and Borzelli’s (1977) categorization. The criteria refer to Inner circle, Outer, and Expanding circle nations. This is supported by Mathew R (2014), who stated that the inner circle is equal for English users as native speakers, or English as the protruding language; such as UK, America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The outer circle represents a state that applies English as an institutional communication tool, like in the country of India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Singapore, South Africa, and Zambia. Last, expanding circles embrace nations that use English for specific purposes such as English is science and technological development, or for diplomatic connections such as in China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, and Nepal. To assure the reference to the cultures of these three circles, five categories presented by Pfister and Borzelli were dissertated. The categories accommodate social, personal, religion/arts/humanities, politics and foundations, and environmental care. The social category consolidates leisure, masses/nationality, job, social level, and manners. For the personal aspect, consuming/shopping, family connections, and housing were devised. Religion/arts/humanities topics contain writing, music, expressions, fables, history, and holy places. The political category integrates government, education, law, and fairness. Environmental themes implica-

te geography, natural resources, climate, financial construction, and urban vs rural.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Reference to the Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles

The purpose of this study was to investigate the representation of culture based on Kachru’s (1986) model in depicting the three circles. Table 1. provides the frequency with which the culture of the Inner Circle countries is mentioned using Pfister and Borzelli’s (1977) categories. The percentages were derived from the total number of references to all nations from the three Circles. The percentages were calculated through the total frequency.

In *Hang Out* book 4, 12 (13,95%) of the themes, are related to inner-circle countries (US 8, Canada 4). The specific target themes of inner countries were only obtained from two countries. But they all include the five aspects, such as Canadian places, American Mall (social), a family connection in Canada (Personal), history of riding horses in America (art/humanities), American Corps (Politic), and Urban life of American (environment).

In *Hang Out* book 5, there are 11 (12,79%) references to the inner-circle countries (Britain 1, US 4, Canada 1, Australia 4, New Zealand 1) only four aspects that the researcher found in this book, such as American people (social), urban life of American (environment), Australian family connection (personal), and England soccer team (arts/humanities). And there is no political aspect found. (See Table 1.)

While table 2 conveys the frequency of the culture of the Outer and Expanding Circle countries mentioned. The percentages were derived from the total number of references to all nations from the Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles. The percentages were projected through the total frequency. Among the nations incorporated, the nations in East Asia such as China, Japan, and Thailand are most represented china portrays the top number of references in *Hang Out* book 5, while Italy represents the highest number in both books.

In *Hang Out* book 4, with 19 (22,09%) of the matrix to Outer and Expanding Circles. Five aspects are represented in this book such as the Tomato Festival in Spain (Social), Camel from Egypt (personal), Eiffel tower in France (religion/arts), Rule in Singapore (politics), and snowy climate (environment).

**Table 1.** Frequency of references to inner-circle countries

Book	Country	N	%	Target cultural themes
Hang Out 4	US:8 Canada:4	12	13,95%	Social, personal, arts, politics, environment (General: Family, personality, customs, countries, people and places, conversation, information, tourism, giving advice and suggestion, morals, invitation and excuses, opinions, information, wisdom, vacation, stories, time, describing object, feelings, emotions, health problems, body language, transportation, indoor/outdoor activity, hope and wishes.)  (Specific: Canadian, Canadian (Edmonton) Mall, American Mall, Family tracking, Canadian family, Vacation to Hawaii, Vacation to Washington, urban life, vacation place(ranch), Canadian businessman, history of riding horses in America, American Corps, etc.)
Hang Out 5	UK:1 USA:4 Canada:1 Australia:4 New Zealand:1	11	12,79%	(General: friends, personality, foods, describing objects, school, people and places, childhood, habits, music, education, misunderstanding, sports, feelings, conversation, helping each other, neighborhood, vacation, asking for and giving directions, information, free time activities, weekly routine, time, discussing future plans, electronic devices, technology.) (Specific: American, Australian, Salmon from USA, Candle from Australia, sneakers made in USA, ceramic dishware made in Canada, trumpet from Australia, urban life of American, England's Soccer team (Chelsea), etc)

**Table 2.** References of Outer and expanding circles

Book	Country	N	%	Target cultural themes
Hang Out 4	Outer; Singapore(1) India (1) Africa (1) Tanzania(1)  Expanding; Dubai (2) South Korea (1) Norway (1) Sweden (1) Spain (1) Egypt (1) France (2) Italy (4) Kenya (1) Thailand (1)	19	22,09%	Social, personal, arts, politics, environment (example: animal population (Africa), Summer in New Delhi, Indian food, Tanzania maps, Rules in Singapore, places in Dubai, South Korea, transportation in Norway, Sweden, Tomato Festival in Spain, Camel from Egypt, falcon, pigeon in Dubai, Eiffel Tower, Gondola from Italy, Tuk-tuks from Thailand, traveling by dog sled in Norway and Sweden, rules in Paris, rules In Rome, colosseum Italy, the geography of Kenya. Climate (rainy, chilly, stormy, sunny, cold, boiling, snowy, freezing).
Hang Out 5	Outer; India (2) Malaysia (1) Africa (1) Expanding; Turkey (3) China (5) Ecuador (3) Austria (1) Japan (4) South Korea (2) Brazil (1) Indonesia (2) German (1) Russia (2) Scotland (1) Egypt (2) Dutch (1) Spain (2) Finland (1) Greek (1) Peru (1) Thailand (3) Italy (4)	44	51,16%	Indian food, Turkish, Chinese, Ecuadorian, Strudel from Austria, Mochi from japan, Pasta from Italy, coconut from Indonesia, pineapple from Thailand, digital camera from japan, PC from south Korea, sandals from brazil, flute from Ecuador, silk curtains made in china, school's uniform made in Italy, suitcase from china, umbrella from Indonesia, souvenir from Korea, skis from Japan, German outward bound, Summer in Russia, golf from Scotland, Vacation to desert Egypt, history of mangle from dutch, student life of European (Eduardo from Spain), Capital of Spain, The silk road, ice skating from Finland, gymnastics from Greek.

While in Hang Out book 5, with 44 (51,16%) of the references, also five categories are depicted; summer in Rusia (social), vacation to the desert Egypt (personal), history of Mangle from Dutch (arts/humanities), Capital of Spain (politic), the silk road (environment).

### Cultural Representation in Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles

To answer how cultures are represented in both books, we elaborate them through the figures below that represent cultures from the three concentric circles. The Inner Circle in Hang Out 4 is depicted in two figures, Figure 1 and Figure 2. Figure 1 pictures a Canadian family who lives in America. The image representing their identities can be observed in both written text through the figure title and visual text through the physical appearances of the characters. As what van Leeuwen (2008) emphasized that dress, hairdo, and, facial features are defined as cultural categorization.



Figure 1. Canadian Family

In Figure 1 for example, the characters have dark brown and yellow hair with brown skin. While Figure 2. shows a famous mall located in the state of Minnesota: the American Mall. Cultural representation also can be seen from the public space, as stated by Castells (2004), the physical locations, as well as the scheme of conduct that happens in those locations where people are requested to take an energetic part and take part, supplying them against think of tenure, a location of social action, and a location of society can redefine public space (Castells, 2004) therefore, from the activities done by people in public places can occur social interaction among diverse cultures as it informed by this textbook, the learner can do some rides while visiting this place.



Figure 2. American Mall

The Outer Circle found in this book has come from the country of Singapore as evident in Figure 3. which demonstrates the rules made by the Singapore government not to trade chewing gum due to keep the city clean. Here, it was informed that the rules made by the government were regulation of public spaces (Gehl, J. & Gemzøe, 2004) that can be a national identity.



Figure 3. Chewing gum on the ground

The expanding circle cultures found in this book come from some countries, one of which is South Korea. As seen in Figure 4. that represents the famous underground mall in Seoul, the capital of South Korea. A public spot is probably a meeting place or section of surroundings, downtown, fixed zone, waterfront, or other areas in the public world that aids encourage social interaction and a sense of society (Carmona, M., & Tiesdell, 2007). The representation of Expanding Circle through public spots like that depicted in this textbook which shows an underground mall covered with a giant fish-filled aquarium may send a message that the society lives in a developed country with modern civilization.



Figure 4. Underground Mall in South Korea

To sum up, the representation of all three circles in this book indicates that this textbook represents multicultural values due to the part of English as a lingua franca. But in the case of Indonesia as the source culture, there is no information depicted in this text-book. Hence, Hang Out book 4 does not contain Indonesian culture as the original culture of Indonesian students in primary school.

In Hang Out book 5, multiculturalism is a prevalent phenomenon. As seen in Figure 5, five children depicted in the image represent diverse races and countries of origin, including inner and expanding circles. This diversity is visible through the physical appearances of the characters, such as the color of their hair, the shapes of their eyes, and the tones of their skins. The depiction that these multiethnic children gathering in one spot, which is the bonfire are a real representation of what multi-culturalism looks like and how it should be practiced by the citizens of global village to promote and value their diversity as suggested by Wise and Velayutham (2009)



Figure 5. Children from diverse countries

The written text accompanying the image provides vivid explanation of the multiculturalism presented in the book. The first kid on the left side is Daniel who came from America. He has yellow hair, blue eyes, and white skin tone. The second kid was Jenny, who came from Australia. She's depicted has curly hair and dark brown skin tone. The third is Nadir from Tur-ky. He

has mid-brown skin with dark brown hair. The fourth was Mateo from Ecuador. He has lighter skin compared to both Jenny and Nadir. He has dark brown hair color. The last kid which is on the right side of this was Li, she looks whiter and brighter than the others. She has slanted eyes that make her instantly recognizable if she was from Southeast Asia, namely China. While the three circles of this textbook were discussed in the next section.

Another culture from inner-circle we found in the textbook is the picture of a foot-ball club from London, UK namely Chelsea (Figure 6.). As it is known that football is part of a sport that has been called a major cultural phenomenon (Tomlinson, et al 2003) the writ-ten text informed how the lives of the players. As a famous football club, Chelsea has a lot of fans from various countries and they have a busy schedule of matches. It requires the players to travel to another football club station. This also certainly triggers their fans to watch their matches wherever they are. It can be said that the fans of this club are wealthy citizens of the city who can visit and watch every match they have and the interaction among the fans may be a message that football can be seen as a functional communication network of society (Wagner, & Storm, 2013).



Figure 6. Football Club of Chelsea

In the outer circle, it is depicted from Indian food namely Barfi (figure 7.). The re-searchers found that it is really important for the students to know some foods from various countries like India as defined by Fischler (1988), Food can be used to define oneself as well. So, it can be inferred that food can be a representative of a country's culture. The information can be noticed in the written text that gives plain evidence of its ingredient and how to make it as emphasized by Rozin (1980), making food praxis includes a practical judgment influenced by the entrance, surroundings, and nutritional needs and one that

is essentially social, cultural, and psychological.



**Figure 7.** Barfi is one of Indian food

While the expanding circle, the re-researchers found in fig. 8 pictures a thing from Indonesia which is the culture of origin here. The depiction may dispatch a note to notify a tropical fruit that is famous and widely grown in Indonesia. Coconut can be categorized as food, that is solely impacted by many aspects of socio-cultural contexts (Roudsari et al., 2017). Its representation through fruit like that delineated in this textbook that shown may send a signal that Indonesia has a very large area, therefore many coconut trees grow and are cultivated.



**Figure 8.** Indonesian Thing

To conclude the representations of all three circles found in Hang Out 5, it denotes that Indonesia is the source culture and has little reference.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate how ELT textbooks differ in reflecting Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circle countries' cultures and to what extent do these textbooks represent cultural values. The findings convey that Hang Out book 4 portrays the biggest total of references to Inner Circle nations. These three textbooks, to some extent, represented different sectors of Outer and Expanding Circle states. Textbook analysis revealed that Hang Out book 4, and Hang Out book 5 Result successively used

all five types of cultural themes to ensure a reference to the culture of Inner Circle countries, especially the US. The representation of cultural topics of Outer and Expanding Circle nations has become more assorted while that of Inner Circle nations has insulted. In these two ELT textbooks, little reference was made to the learners' original culture, in this case, is Indonesia. These findings are also akin to those studies which pointed out that the supreme culture category was the target culture with the least concern paid to source culture (Nguyen et al., 2021; Setyono & Widodo, 2019; Syrbe & Rose, 2018) The representation of the culture from both books conveyed a clear example of multiculturalism that should be added to ELT textbooks as stated by Setyono and Puji Widodo (2019).

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