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Evaluating the Cultural Contents in an Indonesian EFL Textbook: Teachers' Views

Juang Rudianto Putra¹, Sita Musigrungsi^{1,2}

¹ Faculty of Liberal Arts, Prince of Songkla University, Hat Yai, Thailand

² Research Centre for Educational Innovations and Teaching and Learning Excellence, Prince of Songkla University, Hat Yai, Thailand

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Abstract:

The study aimed to reveal the views of Indonesian EFL teachers about the cultural contents of an Indonesian EFL textbook. *Buku Bahasa Inggris* (BBI) for Grade 12, an EFL textbook endorsed by the Indonesia Ministry of Education and Culture (MONEC), was chosen as the research object. Utilizing an online questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, 68 Indonesian EFL teachers from sixty-eight different public senior high schools in the country were conveniently selected to evaluate the cultural contents of the textbook. Even though it is Indonesia-centric, the findings reveal that BBI was not entirely designed for culture-based language learning. It contains a low load of cultural information, less supportive tasks and exercises, and no cultural aspect delivery guidelines. Additionally, few culture-free materials were spotted. The study gives constructive feedback to improve the textbook, which could better suit teachers' and learners' expectations. The study enriches the literature in evaluating pedagogical values of cultural contents in EFL textbooks, which are rare, particularly in the Indonesian EFL context.

Keywords: cultural contents, Indonesian English as a foreign language textbook, teachers.

评价印尼英语课本中的文化内容：教师的观点

摘要：

该研究旨在揭示印尼外语教师对印尼外语教科书文化内容的看法。印度尼西亚教育和文化部（摩内克）认可的英语教科书 12 年级的英文书籍（BBI）被选为研究对象。通过在线问卷调查和半结构化访谈，方便地选择了来自全国 68 所不同公立高中的 68 名印尼外语教师，对教材的文化内容进行评估。尽管它以印度尼西亚为中心，但调查结果表明，BBI 并非完全为基于文化的语言学习而设计。它包含的文化信息量低，支持性任务和练习较少，并且没有文化方面的交付指南。此外，发现了很少的无培养材料。该研究为改进教

科书提供了建设性的反馈，这可以更好地满足教师和学习者的期望。该研究丰富了评估英语教科书中文化内容的教学价值的文献，这些教科书很少见，尤其是在印度尼西亚的英语环境中。

关键词：文化内容、印尼英语作为外语教材、教师。

1. Introduction

The textbook serves as a vital component of English as a foreign language (EFL) educational practices (Xiang & Yenika-Agbaw, 2021). Despite the presence of various online learning resources and recent technologies as tools to help teach and learn the language, the central function of the textbook in English classrooms has stood the test of time. It continues to offer valuable resources for both teachers and learners (Ahmadi & Derakhshan, 2016). Serving as an essential knowledge source and a principal pillar of language input (Adugna, 2019), the content of EFL textbooks has always been the focus of attention and has frequently triggered calls for evaluative investigation.

As far as the content of EFL textbooks is concerned, the inclusion of culture has always been an attractive issue for both experts and practitioners to research. Many existing publications that mainly discuss culture representations in particular English textbooks validate this phenomenon (Alshenqeeti, 2019; Baleghizadeh et al., 2020; Joo et al., 2020; Kirkgoz, 2019; Koksai & Ulum, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2021). However, regardless of their surprisingly interesting findings, most of the studies neglected the importance of evaluating, for example, the teachability of cultural contents presented in the textbooks. Since teaching cultures in EFL classrooms could be a complex task for most EFL teachers, Forman (2014) suggests that EFL textbooks should not just present culture-related content but also consider their teaching practicalities.

In short, studies evaluating the pedagogical value of cultural content in EFL textbooks have not been adequately documented. The present study attempted to fill this gap. An Indonesian EFL textbook, *Buku Bahasa Inggris* (BBI), was chosen and further evaluated following the guidelines for evaluating cultural content in textbooks proposed by Kiliçkaya (2004). The textbook is specifically designed for each grade of senior high schools in Indonesia and prescribed by the country's Ministry of Education and Culture (MONEC) to be used by all government senior high schools. Launched in 2015, being easily accessible and freely downloadable has made the textbook rapidly reach nationwide use. Previous studies have only been concerned with identifying the representation of cultures contained in BBI (Dewi, 2016; Hartono, 2017; Setyono & Widodo, 2019). Therefore, the present study was conducted to reveal the pedagogical values of the cultural contents in BBI. Considering the views of Indonesian EFL teachers, the result is expected to provide valuable input for the future development of the textbook.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Cultural Contents in English Textbooks: Previous Studies

Baleghizadeh et al. (2020) attempted to capture the representation of culture in three English as a second language (ESL) grammar textbooks. These three textbooks were selected due to their status as the best-seller textbooks for ESL grammar exercises in the world. Furthermore, they were assessed to have more various practices and updated lessons. Additionally, the assessment from all professors using the textbooks revealed that the materials therein were easy to deliver. However, employing content analysis, the study found that the distribution of cultural representations in the textbooks was imbalanced. Cultural contents in the textbooks under investigation were dominated by the cultures of inner-circle countries.

Alshenqeeti (2019) analyzed the representation of foreign cultures conveyed in the EFL textbook series popularly used at Saudi Arabia's public universities. Content analysis was employed. The result of the study reported domination of native English speakers' (NES) cultures.

Similar findings were obtained by Koksai and Ulum (2021). Their study identified cultural representation in two globally produced EFL textbooks used in English classes at Turkish universities. Furthermore, the content analysis disclosed that the textbooks seemed to support the significant inclusion of NES cultures.

The above three studies reported that all textbooks under investigation demonstrated conformity to NES cultures. However, it is understandable since the textbooks were all authored by NES writers and were published by such outstanding inner-circle country publishing companies as Oxford University Press and Pearson. Alptekin (1993) narrates some underlying factors regarding this matter. First, NES writers might experience difficulties creating ELT materials that are not influenced by their Anglo-centric cultures. Second, teaching a FL is historically attached to cultures of its own. Therefore, it is unquestionable that ELT textbooks written by NES writers and published by inner-circle countries' publishing companies would be dominated by Anglo-American cultures. If textbook authors are not informed about their books' potential users, such cultural contents might remain unchanged. However, the case could be different for ELT textbooks made by non-native English speakers (NNES).

Considering the current status of English and some factors affecting the writers' choices of cultural representation, studies regarding the analysis of cultural contents in ELT textbooks written by NNES have yielded exciting outcomes.

Kirkgoz (2019) explored cultures in four EFL textbooks widely used in Turkish secondary schools. These textbooks were authored by Turkish writers and prescribed by the Turkish Ministry of National Education. To analyze the cultural contents of the textbooks, the researcher utilized Cortazzi and Jin's (1999) framework. The study found that the books contained more international cultures. Thus, they were seen to promote globality. Besides, the textbooks were also revealed to carry some target and source culture-related contents.

Interestingly, Nguyen et al. (2021) did a study to evaluate cultural representation patterns instilled in locally-produced Vietnamese EFL textbooks. Through the analytic scheme proposed by Hu and McKay (2012), it was revealed that Anglo-centric English and culture dominated the content and organization of the books. This finding was found to contradict the current status of English as a global language which has successfully dragged people all over the world to interact with each other.

Parallel to Nguyen et al. (2021), Joo et al. (2020) conducted a content analysis with a critical multimodal design to evaluate if culture-related contents in five locally-made Korean EFL textbooks for third-grade students reflect the awareness of English as the world lingua franca. The textbooks under investigation were written by South Korean authors and prescribed by the government. Their study revealed that the textbooks praised native-speakerism.

The findings of the studies identifying cultural contents in locally-made EFL textbooks were adequately surprising. Some textbooks convey more about English-language learners' cultures than others that focus on the cultures of inner-circle countries. Additionally, some are committed to sharing learner, NES, and international sources of culture. However, most of the studies discussed above were executed in less culturally diverse EFL environments, and studies situated in multilingual and multicultural contexts, such as that of Indonesia, are scant and insufficiently documented. Nonetheless, three comprehensive studies identifying the cultural content contained within BBI, which is currently the most frequently used Indonesian EFL textbook series, have been found. Utilizing the frameworks of Cortazzi and Jin (1999), Dewi's (2016) study revealed an imbalance in the cultural contents in the textbooks, which is apparent in their emphasis on Indonesian culture. These findings were confirmed by Hartono (2017), who found that the textbooks primarily focused on the country's local cultures.

Employing critical discourse analysis, Setyono and Widodo's (2019) study reported that the textbook under investigation attempts to promote some multicultural values; however, this infers the need to incorporate multicultural materials sourced from countries in the outer and expanding circles. In other words, BBI were assessed as lacking material on international cultures and confirmed to be Indonesia-centric, placing a greater focus on aspects related to Indonesian cultures.

All of the aforementioned studies concentrated solely on content analysis, and none evaluated the pedagogical value of the cultural content presented throughout the textbooks. Research in this area is lacking entirely in the Indonesian EFL context. Since aspects of culture are difficult to teach, conducting an evaluative study from the perspective of teachers could offer valuable feedback not only for the future development of the textbooks in question but also for the actual teaching of culture in EFL classes. The present study aims to fill the gap observed in the research. By following the guidelines proposed by Kiliçkaya (2004), the study evaluates the pedagogical value of the cultural content found in one BBI textbook.

2.2. Guidelines for Evaluating the Pedagogical Value of Cultural Content in English Textbooks

Kiliçkaya (2004) proposed a framework to evaluate the pedagogical value of cultural content presented in English textbooks. This framework consists of 18 issues that we, as researchers, adapted and categorized into six domains for the present study.

The first domain covers the cultural aspects of the delivery guidelines. This domain includes the presence of specific instructions on how to teach cultural content from textbooks. It also covers issues regarding the suggested roles for teachers in teaching about the cultures in the books. Such delivery guidelines have become necessary due to the fact that aspects of culture are difficult to teach and to learn (Almutairi, 2021; Choudhury & Kakati, 2017). Therefore, English textbooks should offer such information in order to effectively accommodate teachers in the teaching of cultures presented in textbooks.

The second domain relates to the representation of culture in textbooks. It includes the presence of NES, world, and/or Indonesian/learners' cultures. This domain has become the main focus of much of the content analysis research.

The third domain is the sufficiency of cultural information. Adequate information accompanying cultural topics in textbooks is required. Providing information on concepts such as stereotyping and generalization, for example, could be useful. Cited in Kiliçkaya (2004), Cunningsworth suggested that when identifying stereotyping in textbooks, observing "unrepresentative negative stereotypes, representation of women and men," and "gender differences" are of great importance (p. 91). In relation to generalization, Kiliçkaya (2004) emphasized that general socio-cultural values held and practiced within a particular social community do not simply exist without ever having been challenged. One must question why a particular value is widely embraced and has become a habit. Guest (2002) also contended that when interacting within a wider-scale cultural encounter, it is crucial to be well-informed of acceptable generalizations.

The fourth domain relates to Kiliçkaya's (2004) concern regarding offering activities in textbooks to aid in understanding and discussing cultural issues. In an

attempt to enhance learners' knowledge and understanding of various cultures, textbooks should be able to engage them in tasks and exercises that expose them to different cultural values.

The fifth domain corresponds to the clarity of cultural illustrations. It examines whether the illustrations accompanying cultural information are clear enough—in other words, it considers whether they are self-explanatory. It also assesses the suitability of the illustrations for learners' cultures and analyzes the extent to which the illustrations represent the values of the particular communities that practice them.

The sixth domain touches upon the characters represented in textbooks. A question as to which nationalities and/or local societies are represented needs to be answered in this case.

3. Methods and Materials

This study aimed to evaluate the pedagogical value of the cultural content presented in one of the most widely used Indonesian EFL textbooks for high school students: BBI. To achieve this objective, a mixed-method approach was employed. A quantitative analysis captured the participants' degree of agreement on the evaluated items listed in the questionnaire. Meanwhile, the qualitative analysis contextualized the results of the quantitative analysis. In other words, the participants' questionnaire responses were treated as primary data that were then triangulated with another set of data derived from the qualitative instrument, which was comprised of semi-structured interviews.

3.1. Instruments

An online questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used as instruments to collect data for the present study. The questionnaire was adapted from Bahrami (2015) following the guidelines for evaluating the pedagogical value of cultural content in textbooks proposed by Kiliçkaya (2004). The questionnaire listed 18 items covering six domains, including delivery guidelines for cultural aspects; representation of culture-related content; sufficiency of cultural information; cultural activities, tasks, and exercises; cultural illustrations; and cultural characters. Each item was evaluated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Three Thai EFL experts were consulted to validate all items in the questionnaire before they were translated into Bahasa Indonesia.

Semi-structured interviews in Bahasa Indonesia were conducted to gain insight into the information gathered from the questionnaire. The participants were invited to freely express their opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of the pedagogical value of the cultural content presented throughout the textbook. Based on their evaluations, they were further asked to provide suggestions for the future development of the textbook.

3.2. Participants

Sixty-eight Indonesian EFL teachers from sixty-

eight different public senior high schools in the country were conveniently invited to participate in the study. All of them held the status of government employees with various lengths of teaching experience from five to 25 years. Most importantly, they used BBI in their English classes as the primary source of teaching materials. One of the researchers obtained their contacts through his private network. Before participating in the study, they were informed about the research objective and how their identities were kept confidential. Written consent forms were obtained from all taking part in the study.

3.3. Data Collection

The online questionnaire was first piloted on thirty Indonesian EFL teachers with characteristics similar to those of the actual participants of the study. The result demonstrated Cronbach alpha values of 0.73, implying sufficient reliability of the questionnaire. Each potential participant was then contacted by the researchers and explained the study. Shortly afterward, consent forms were sent via their email addresses. Those who signed and submitted the forms were considered for the questionnaire distribution. The link to the questionnaire was given via email, WhatsApp, or Line, depending on the participants' preferences. Sixty-eight responses were finally collected by the submission deadline.

Semi-structured interview questions were also tested on three teachers participating in the questionnaire pilot. The result of this trial was used to revise the construction of the questions, making them clear to tap the issues being investigated. Of sixty-eight participants completing the online questionnaire, only six teachers welcomed the invitation for the interviews. For the interviews, they were asked to choose the platforms, i.e., Skype, WhatsApp, or Line call applications. Each session lasted for approximately twenty minutes and was voice-recorded.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaire were statistically processed using descriptive analysis with mean scores, and standard deviations became the focus. The means were identified to provide the researchers with the participants' degree of agreement on each of the questionnaire items. The means were then interpreted as follows:

Table 1. Mean interpretations

Means	Interpretations
4.21 – 5.00	The highest degree of agreement
3.41 – 4.20	A high degree of agreement
2.61 – 3.40	A moderate degree of agreement
1.81 – 2.60	Low degree of agreement
1.00 – 1.80	The lowest degree of agreement

The interview data were firstly transcribed. The participants were then asked to check their responses. Once they approved their transcribed responses, they were translated into English. The English version of the transcriptions was analyzed and categorized based on

the domains of the questionnaire. They were finally utilized to support the findings of the questionnaire.

4. Findings

Indonesian EFL teachers' views about pedagogical values of the cultural contents in BBI were their evaluations on several indicators. It includes cultural aspect delivery guidelines, representation of culture-related contents, cultural activities, the sufficiency of cultural information, clarity of cultural illustrations and cultural characters.

4.1. Cultural Aspect Delivery Guidelines

As shown in Table 2, the teacher's overall mean values of the two items related to the availability of information and suggestions about addressing cultural contents in the textbook were low. Their mean values of Items 1 (2.15) and 2 (2.19) were similarly low. These indicate that they discovered inadequate teaching and learning cultural aspects from the textbook.

Table 2. Cultural aspect delivery guidelines

Items	Statements	Teacher	
		Mean	SD
1	The textbook gives you information about how the cultural aspects may be handled.	2.15	0.63
2	The textbook suggests roles for teachers/ learners in teaching/ learning cultures in English classes.	2.19	0.63
Overall Mean		2.16	0.43

The information gained from the semi-structured interviews confirms such inadequacy. The participants expressed difficulties delivering culture-related contents from the textbook since it lacked instructions and an assistive manual that could help guide the delivery of its cultural contents. Some participants said,

Honestly, I do not know. I focus on what is evident, like reading and grammar. The instructions are clear, and I know how to teach them. So, as there is no clear instruction on teaching cultural aspects from this book, I seldom teach it (Teacher 1).

It is not easy to deliver aspects of cultures embodied in this book; there is no clear explanation about how to do that, even in the teacher's manual. So, mainly, I focus on skill, grammar, and vocabulary as they are explicitly presented (Teacher 6).

Due to the invisibility of the guidelines, the participants then emphasized building their learners' language proficiency and knowledge rather than touching on the cultural aspects of the textbook. It also made them propose a training program on how to utilize the textbook effectively and make the most use of it, not only its linguistic and skill-related contents but also its cultural aspects. A teacher-participant argued,

The purposes of teaching culture should be explicit: what culture to learn, why learn this particular culture, and how to learn it. Textbooks should state this information clearly. If not, teachers need to be trained about how to use the textbook, given ideal ways to use

it. This is one way to facilitate teacher's understanding and upgrade their skills to teach culture to their students (Teacher 2).

4.2. Representation of Culture-Related Contents

In relation to the representation of culture, the findings revealed that BBI was assessed to give limited representation of international cultures. The overall mean values of all the items related to the presence of international cultures from the participants scored low, with each single item's value ranging from the lowest (Item 8: 1.78) to low (Item 7: 1.88) degree of agreement. Table 3 presents the details.

Table 3. Representation of culture-related contents

Categories	Items	Statements	Teacher	
			Mean	SD
NES	3	The textbook clearly introduces NES cultures.	1.79	0.56
	4	The textbook presents more cultural topics and themes related to NES cultures.	1.87	0.48
	5	The textbook includes specific cultures such as American and British.	1.95	0.44
Overall Mean Indonesian	6	The textbook presents more cultural topics and themes related to Indonesian cultures.	1.87	0.34
World cultures	7	The textbook includes varieties of world cultures.	3.85	0.83
	8	The textbook provides a balanced view of world cultures.	1.88	0.53
Overall Mean			1.78	0.59
Overall Mean			1.83	0.48

In addition, the participants viewed BBI to lack aspects related to NES cultures, as can be observed from the mean scores of Items 3, 4 and 5 which received values below the moderate level of agreement. The mean values of Items 3, 4, and 5 were 1.79, 1.87, and 1.95, respectively. Surprisingly, as shown in the table above, a considerably high mean value was gained by an item related to the presence of dominant Indonesian cultures (Item 6: 3.85). The participants saw that the textbook contained more cultural topics and themes related to the cultures of Indonesia. Despite the fact that this finding signaled the Indonesia-centrism of BBI, its representation was still observed to be far from sufficient. Several participants stated,

It's really Indonesian. But, we need more content if we want to state that it is perfectly Indonesian. Maybe, for future development of the textbook, allocating some space to expose our history will perfect the textbook, I'm sure. We have a great history that we have to be really proud of. Our ancestors were great people. The world knows. So, we also have to let our students know it too (Teacher 1).

This particular book is more Indonesian compared

to the other textbooks I used in the past. However, I just feel like many things are missing. Maybe, we need more Indonesian stories or legends. Also, many need to be improved such as the varieties of Indonesian cultures presented in the textbook and so on (Teacher 3).

The participants' responses confirmed not only the fact that BBI is Indonesia-centric but also the need to add more content of Indonesia-centrism to the textbook. To do this, they proposed the inclusion of the country's history, stories, and legends in the textbook.

4.3. Sufficiency of Cultural Information

The inadequacy of information contained in each cultural topic was strengthened by the data from the questionnaire. Overall, the mean value of the participants was at a low-level agreement (2.14). Items 9 and 10 scored 2.26 and 2.01, respectively. These details can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Sufficiency of cultural information

Items	Statements	Teacher	
		Mean	SD
9	The cultural contents contained in the textbook are generalizable.	2.26	0.68
10	The textbook provides sufficient information about the cultural topics.	2.01	0.68
Overall Mean		2.14	0.59

Besides the content of Indonesia-centrism in the textbook, participants expressed the need to incorporate more cultural sources in the textbook. These could be international and NES cultures. The following excerpts best portray this emerging demand:

It may be important to provide more topics on the cultures of people from countries around the world. Because, in the future, our students will much more frequently experience cross-cultural communication. They will use English with so many people. We, as teachers, think that we have to prepare them. And the textbook, as the main source of materials for classroom learning activities, needs to facilitate us for this purpose (Teacher 2).

The textbook is really poor when presenting cultures. If there's any, what I could see the most is our culture. I understand this choice. But the worst part is that even with the way our culture is represented, it is also difficult to digest. I also want to suggest that various international cultures be added to the book in order to improve learners' knowledge and understanding of our diverse world (Teacher 3).

To me, the textbook doesn't seem to give an equal degree of importance between language and culture. I see Indonesia-centrism, but the Indonesia-centrism that I see is still far from enough. As a suggestion, I'd like to see more cultures in the textbook. It could be African, European, other Asian countries and NES cultures. Culture is unique and interesting. Presenting more cultural aspects will attract learners' attention and motivation to study the book (Teacher 5).

4.4. Cultural Activities: Tasks and Exercises

With regards to the activities designed for the textbook, its tasks and exercises were found to be less likely to attract learners' to actively communicate different cultural values and further increase their knowledge and understanding of various cultural issues. In addition, the participants agreed that the tasks and exercises of the textbook were not created to help learners practice English or to discuss cultural issues. These were all reflected in low mean scores of each item under the "cultural activities – tasks and exercises" category as shown in Table 5. Items 11, 12, and 13 gained mean scores of 2.59, 2.48, and 2.53, respectively. In addition, the overall mean score of the category fell under a low degree of agreement (2.53). The details are as follows:

Table 5. Cultural activities – tasks and exercises

Items	Statements	Teacher	
		Mean	SD
11	The tasks and exercises promote students' active participation in communicating different cultural values.	2.59	0.87
12	The tasks and exercises help increase knowledge about and understanding various cultural issues.	2.48	0.82
13	The tasks and exercises are designed to help learners practice cultural issues in English.	2.53	0.74
Overall Mean		2.53	0.66

The data displayed above might also indicate that BBI was not designed to provide learners with tasks and exercises necessary to increase their cultural knowledge, grow their cultural awareness, and further develop their cultural understandings. The participants further expressed their lack of enthusiasm to use it. They argued,

BBI would be fun and more interesting if it had texts about cities in countries worldwide, unique celebrations in some other countries, or things people in particular countries do in their routines (Teacher 1).

Rather than relying on teachers to spell out every word and narrate stories, it would be great if BBI were also accompanied with a CD-ROM for listening practices. So, learners would get to know some possible English accents, not only their teachers' monotonous English (Teacher 2).

The above interview excerpts unveiled that BBI is less attractive and practical to make both teachers and learners engaged, particularly in teaching and learning cultural aspects in Indonesian EFL classrooms. Therefore, having some additional tasks and exercises was proposed.

4.5. Cultural Illustrations

As far as the cultural illustration is concerned, although the overall mean of the participant scored at a moderate level, the findings of each related item demonstrate teachers' varied views about the illustrations used to represent the cultural aspects in the

textbook.

Table 6. Cultural illustrations

Items	Statements	Teacher	
		Mean	SD
14	The cultural illustrations are self-explanatory.	2.16	0.59
15	The illustrations are appropriate to learners' native cultures.	3.84	0.72
16	The illustrations reflect the values of the adopting social groups.	1.97	0.60
Overall Mean		2.66	0.42

The participants assessed that the illustrations were less self-explanatory. Further, they disagreed that the illustrations could be considered appropriate reflections of cultural values embraced and practiced by those performing social groups presented in the textbook. These could be observed through the mean values of Items 14 (2.16) and 16 (1.97), which received a low degree of agreement. Related interview data strengthens these survey findings.

Although they are good, most of the illustrations are a bit hard to understand and explain. Sometimes, they have nothing to do with cultures, only pictures with no specific reference to a particular culture. It is sometimes hard to understand what some illustrations are trying to tell. Sometimes, I have to interpret it myself. Sometimes, I ask my students. Most of the pictures are simple cartoon drawings which, I think, are awkward. I wonder why the book does not use pictures of real Indonesian people wearing their traditional clothes (Teacher 4).

I think the textbook tries to focus more on Indonesia and the Indonesian. However, to understand more about Indonesia or to increase learners' knowledge about Indonesia, it would never be enough to let them see that through so many unrealistic cartoon pictures that might purposely be used to describe the rich culture of Indonesia (Teacher 6).

Few illustrations were assessed to not associate with any cultures, which could be classified as culture-free. The participants also experienced difficulties understanding the cultural aspects and values that needed to be explained to their students. Besides the fact that this textbook is not accompanied with sufficient information on how to handle cultural aspects and values, another factor might be the presence of unobvious supporting illustrations. This suggests the use of more realistic pictures to perfectly showcase the country distinguished with cultural richness and provide teachers with clearer insights on what to deliver. Despite these rather pessimistic assessments, the illustrations used, however, were seen as suitable for the learners' cultures. It was proven by the mean value of Item 15 (3.84), which received a high degree of agreement.

4.6. Cultural Characters

As Table 7 shows, the textbook characters were homogeneous on the national and international scales. It

could be depicted from the overall mean scores of the category, which gained a low degree of agreement from the participants (2.03). The participants' mean scores of Items 17 (1.95) and 18 (2.10) were low.

Table 7. Cultural characters

Items	Statements	Teacher	
		Mean	SD
17	The characters represent different nationalities.	1.95	0.56
18	The characters represent different local societies.	2.10	0.60
Overall Mean		2.03	0.51

These findings are strengthened by the interviews. The teachers said,

To me, it is obvious that this textbook is more about Indonesia. However, the pictures of Indonesia represented in the book could not best portray how big and unique Indonesia is. It is because the book is dominated by major and popular social groups only, I think (Teacher 1).

The above response implies that the Indonesia-centrism of BBI was rather imbalanced. Most of the characters contained therein were filled only with the cultures of well-known local Indonesian communities. This might mean that the characters were solely representations of particular limited groups of people from the country, probably those of majorities.

5. Discussion

The present study was conducted to primarily find out Indonesian EFL teachers' views on the pedagogical aspects of the cultural contents in a MONEC-endorsed EFL textbook, BBI. Findings derived from the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews demonstrate that the teachers involved in the present study perceived BBI as being Indonesia-centric. It strengthens the findings of Dewi (2016), Kirana and Methitham (2018), Setyono and Widodo (2019), who reported that most culture-related contents of BBI primarily represented Indonesian cultures. Significant inclusion of Indonesian cultures becomes an effective attempt not only to help the preservation of local cultures but also to ensure learners' improvement of the language. Context familiarity with learners' cultures could contribute to the success of their English language learning achievement. Carlson (2019) proved it through his research finding. Focused on improving English listening comprehension, he discovered that learners who were presented with listening passages enriched with localized contents gained better comprehension than those presented with passages loaded with culturally unfamiliar contexts.

However, as far as the Indonesia-centrism of BBI is concerned, its load was inadequate. It was strengthened by the participants' assessment which scored low on the sufficiency of cultural information accompanying the culture-related content of the textbook. To compensate for such deficiency, most participants agreed with the idea of adding more varieties of Indonesian cultures

accompanied by adequate information. They suggested Indonesian history and local stories also be included in the textbook.

The participants also discovered that the characters presented in the book solely comprise very limited local societies. Most are those of the popular ones. This makes the presentation of Indonesia-centrism in the textbook disappointing as it does not represent the heterogeneity of the country. Guest (2002) argues that establishing cultural stereotypes through solely invigorating popular cultural communities and making such cultures monolithic and static entities could lead to failure. Instead, culture should be presented as a dynamic entity.

Another finding unveiled that the illustrations suited the learners' cultures. However, they were viewed as less self-explanatory, making it challenging to interpret what messages they attempted to convey. In addition, they were evaluated to be less successful in reflecting the values of the adopting social groups. Concerning this issue, the interview findings indicated the frequent use of similarly unrealistic cartoon drawings throughout the book as the affecting factor. Moreover, Indonesia's multilingualism and multiculturalism reflected through hundreds of local languages and the cultures of their associating ethnic groups (Zein, 2019) cannot be simplified with unrealistic cartoon illustrations throughout the book. The presence of visual illustrations in EFL textbooks is supposed to facilitate learning the language (Elmiana, 2019). Notably, related to the context of the present study, they are expected to accommodate learners to obtain cultural knowledge and understanding attached to them. Luo and Lin (2017), Wardini et al. (2021) believe that passages accompanied by visual illustrations can be better understood than those that are not. Despite the urge to see cultures as values rather than as symbols, the use of more realistic pictures was strongly desired to help teachers and learners comprehend the illustrations, including the messages attached to them.

Tasks and exercises provided in the textbook were also less challenging and interesting to draw learners' attention and attract their active participation to communicate different cultural values. Teachers are urged to be more creative and innovative, implying the importance of being less textbook-oriented. They could employ active learning activities and use supplementary materials from sources outside of the book. Young (2018) contends that the use of active learning activities such as group projects or discussions, writing portfolios, and journals could promote creativity, analytical, and critical thinking. It is then expected that through the use of such activities, learners can get more engaged in cultural activities while at the same time boosting their thinking skills.

Other possible sources of cultural materials such as social media, YouTube (Rohmani & Andriyanti, 2022), VDO clips (Alshraideh, 2021; Bajrami & Ismaili, 2016; Hanoum, 2017), songs (Ayuthaya, 2018; Shayakhmetova et al., 2017), stories (Ratminingsih &

Budasi, 2018), literature (Ilyas & Afzal, 2021), realia (Anderson, 2016), movies, and the internet can also be integrated into the classroom activities. Several activities that could be implemented in the teaching and learning of cultural aspects in EFL classrooms include story-telling (Stevenson, 2018), games (Mendez, 2017), role-play, simulation, information gap (Cheewasukthaworn & Suwanarak, 2017), and cultural quizzes. In order to trigger learners' active participation in cultural discussions, teachers are then expected to consider the use of the above sources of cultural information and the implementation of the recommended activities.

The needs and wants of the participants to have more sources of cultures included in the textbook were identified. Besides prioritizing the presence of Indonesian cultures, they also expressed a strong eagerness to have international and English NS cultures in the textbook. The participants acknowledged the global status of English, which has made it the most widely used language people worldwide utilize to communicate. They realized that including those sources of cultures could help prepare themselves for more diverse multinational cross-cultural communications. Therefore, the delivery of cultural aspects in EFL classrooms needs to be re-evaluated to meet and satisfy the needs for international communication. Thus, exposing learners to those three sources of cultures through the textbook could aid in actualizing local culture preservation and preparing them to become world citizens.

As for the cultural aspect delivery guidelines, the participants were observed to show a great need for sufficient guidelines to help them deliver cultural aspects of the textbook. They stated that cultural aspects are not easy to be incorporated into classroom discussions. The insufficient presence of cultural aspects delivery guidelines and the complexity of teaching cultural aspects made them avoid conducting such practice. After all, these made them decide to focus on language skills and linguistic knowledge.

The lack of materials on international and English NS cultures, the low cultural information load, unavailability of cultural aspect delivery guidelines, less supportive tasks and exercises, and the fact that some culture-free materials were spotted led to a conclusion that BBI was not entirely designed for culture-based language learning.

6. Conclusion and Implications

The present study focused on revealing what Indonesian EFL teachers thought about the pedagogical values of the cultural contents in a locally-made Indonesian EFL textbook, BBI. All participants viewed the book as being Indonesia-centric regardless of the low load of its cultural information. Thus, they suggest adding more Indonesian culture-related content such as history and local stories into the textbook. Additionally, they expected to have world and English NS cultures incorporated into the textbook. However, implied from

their responses, the priority remains in Indonesian cultures. As far as the characters used throughout the book are concerned, they are assessed as being homogeneous, representing only those popular local societies. This fact gives enough dissatisfaction since the participants complain that these characters cannot reflect the country's heterogeneous linguistic and cultural constellation.

Regarding the illustrations, while they are evaluated to suit learners' cultures, they are also seen as less self-explanatory and less successful in reflecting the values of the adopting social groups. The frequent presence of similarly unrealistic cartoon drawings throughout the book is the triggering factor. As a result, the adoption of more realistic pictures is urged to assist learners in better understanding the cultural values embodied in the illustrations. The tasks and exercises are also less attractive to promote the teaching and learning of culture in the classrooms. These require teachers to seek more exciting techniques and alternative materials to enliven cultural aspects delivery in Indonesian EFL classrooms. Supported by the evidence that BBI lacks cultural aspect delivery guidelines, we conclude that this particular locally-made Indonesian EFL textbook is not designed for culture-based EFL instruction.

The study findings have emerged as a solid and obvious indication that incorporating culture and the three sources of cultures, i.e., Indonesian, international, and English NS, is desired and needed in Indonesian EFL classrooms. Providing the country's cultures acts as a serious attempt for local culture preservation. Besides, it also functions to facilitate context familiarity in FL learning which is believed and proved to have several positive impacts on learners' language learning progress. Meanwhile, including international and English NS cultures helps prepare learners for broader cross-national intercultural communications in today's globalized world and their future. Because textbook use does not seem to fulfill these wants and needs, teachers are then expected to seek some possible ways to bridge this gap. For example, they can utilize supplementary materials from other learning sources such as the internet, magazines, newspapers, clips, and songs which contain cultural issues that can be discussed in the classrooms. In addition, this fact also urges the future development of locally-made Indonesian EFL textbooks to consider the distribution of the three cultural sources.

The study findings give constructive feedback for the improvement of the textbook. Some components that have attracted the participants' critical attention include the load of cultural information. The participants suggest that supporting information related to the cultural topics being discussed should be added, especially that related to the country's culture. It is crucial to strengthen the notion if the book is wanted to be claimed as Indonesia-centric. Similarly, the presence of various local characters is wanted to depict the heterogeneity of the country. To complement the portrayal of culture in general and the Indonesia-centrism of the textbook in particular, the participants

further recommend using more realistic images throughout the book. Furthermore, the tasks and exercises must be reformulated to make teachers and learners more engaged in cultural discussions. Lastly, to help teachers and learners better understand how to teach and learn cultural aspects of the textbook, there should be some clear guidelines that the textbook should possess. Considering the feedback in improving the textbook is vital to produce a better textbook that could suit the expectations of teachers and learners who will use it as the primary source of classroom teaching and learning materials.

The study enriches the literature in evaluating pedagogical values of cultural contents in EFL textbooks, which are rare, particularly in the Indonesian EFL context. However, it was only limited to exploring the views of a small number of government-employed Indonesian EFL teachers of 12th-grade students in the language program of public senior high schools about the pedagogical values of the cultural contents in *Buku Bahasa Inggris* (BBI) for Grade 12. As only BBI for Grade 12 became the object of this present study, the result could not be applied to the rest two textbooks used for the 10th and 11th. Also, it would not apply to the contexts other than that investigated in this particular research, e.g., vocational high and private secondary schools. Thus, to gain a more comprehensive insight, future research is advised to investigate the rest two textbooks and involve more participants from different school types and programs.

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