

# Cross-Cultural Teaching Construction in Textbook for Foreign Language Learning

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## ABSTRACT

The cultural aspect of learning a second/foreign language is directed at the introduction and cultural insight of the target language to learners so that they can use it as a background knowledge when they live in the target country/target language. Students are introduced to the target language culture in the form of cultural behaviour, cultural knowledge and cultural objects. This study investigates the cultural elements in Indonesian Language textbook used for junior high school following two major curriculum innovations in BIPA (Indonesian Language for Foreign Speaker). A total of 5 textbooks were investigated to find out the extent to which textbooks contain references to the source (Indonesia) culture, and the international target culture and based on BIPA curriculum in Indonesia. The present study is descriptive in design and is based on a quantitative analysis of the cultural elements. The overall results of the study indicate that textbook materials for Victoria state junior high school education are designed to foster learners' familiarity with the source, target and international target culture simultaneously at every stage of the Indonesian language learning experience. Findings of the study also give insights to teachers as users of textbooks in informing them of different cultural elements and assisting them to integrate different sources of culture into their teaching practice to achieve inclusive teaching practices.

**Keywords:** *Culture, cultural representations, Indonesian language for foreign learner, textbook*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

With the development of information and communication between nations, more people aim to master two languages, even three languages at the same time. The process of mastering two or more languages is related to the learning process. Second Language acquisition is an activity with two dimensions, those are learning the language itself and learning other aspects through language as the instrument. In looking at the relationship between language and culture, Kramsch (1998, as cited in Risager, 2006) sees language in its function of expressing, displaying, and symbolizing cultural reality. By using language, humans not only articulate experiences, facts, ideas and events to one another, but also convey attitudes, beliefs, and points of view. Language also represents cultural reality by helping humans to create experiences. These experiences become meaningful when language becomes the medium. Cultural experience is also symbolized by language. Language is a cultural symbol because, as a sign system, language contains cultural values.

Understanding the relationship between language and culture is important in teaching second and foreign languages. As stated by Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino, and Kohler (2003), language is not merely structural, but also communicative and social. Learning a new language, therefore, becomes more complicated in view of the complexity formed by the interrelationships between linguistic forms and their sociocultural aspects. The cultural aspect of learning a second/foreign language is directed at the introduction and cultural insight of the target language to learners so that they can use it as a provision when they live daily in the target country/target language. In teaching and learning activities to create good communication between learners and teachers, functional subject matter is needed. By using functional teaching materials, namely teaching materials that come from authentic materials, students will find it easy to master the language they are learning. In connection with this, in learning foreign languages, the ideal teaching material that can be used by learners must have competent linguistic competence and cultural competence.

Linguistic competence taught to foreign learners is the basic information that becomes the intake of cognition for foreign learners, its form and teaching is centred on the language forms themselves, while the sociolinguistic aspects that emphasize aspects of function are rarely expressed in teaching materials. Learners are not only taught "what is the target language?" but also "how the target language is used appropriately" in the sense that it is in accordance with the socio-cultural values respected by the native speakers. Examples of cases in learning Indonesian for foreign speakers, the use of greeting sentences for teachers, foreign students calling the teacher with the sentence "*Guru Ari* (Teacher Ari)" is grammatically correct but culturally the greeting word / sentence is not used in Indonesia. It is the same as in learning English for Indonesians, when students call Mr. Barack, grammatically it is correct, but the cultural element is less than acceptable because it should be Mr. Obama. Teaching materials are the most appropriate medium to provide information to foreign learners about the social content implied in the target language

The linguistic component and the cultural component cannot stand alone in the learning process. Therefore, it requires related learning devices, namely teachers and teaching materials. The teacher's role is the executor of the teaching material that will be given to students. Teaching materials are arranged based on a curriculum established by the government. Teaching materials for foreign language learning, in this case, the teaching material for learning Indonesian for foreigners has varied with different teaching material constructions. The contents consist of aspects of linguistic and cultural competences. Based on the rationalization above, this study focuses on the construction of cultural materials in Indonesian language teaching materials for foreign learners to help them. The first objective of this study stem from cultural understanding for learners who learn foreign languages as a counterweight to linguistic competence, the role of crucial teaching materials in the foreign language learning process, cultural content in Indonesian as a foreign language being studied, and the construction of cultural teaching in teaching materials. Indonesian as a foreign language studied in Echuca.

## **1.1. Theoretical Framework**

### **1.1.1. Culture**

It is difficult to give the exact definition of culture (Spencer-Oatey, 2012) as the term "culture" consists of many aspects. Some experts have stated their opinion about the definition of culture. Those definitions agree on the fact that culture consists of something that is shared and/or learned by a group of people, but the content of the culture varies in different definitions (Birukou, Blanzieri, Giorgini, & Giunchiglia, 2009). However, it is too

difficult to teach all those materials in a language class. The materials consist of seven aspects, namely social organization, customs and traditions, language, arts and literature, religion, forms of government, and economic system. So, what is "culture" as used in this study?

### **1.1.2. Intercultural Competence**

Intercultural competence is closely related to the ability of foreign language. Learners can tell the difference between their own culture and the target culture they are studying. Intercultural competence is the ability to function effectively across cultures, to think and act appropriately, and to communicate and work with people from different cultural backgrounds - at home or abroad (Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014). Learners can recognize this by engaging directly in real situations, so they can develop strategies for how they can tolerate the habits of other cultures. This ability can prevent foreign language learners from misunderstanding, eliminate difficulties that may arise, and make communication more perfect. Intercultural competence raises two traditional concepts that are important for teaching foreign languages, namely: knowledge of the target language community's social institutions and competence in foreign languages.

Alred and Byram (2002) state that intercultural competence can change learners' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior to be more open and flexible to other cultures. This is reinforced by Huang, Rayner and Zhuang (2003) who state that a person with intercultural competence can build relationships with people from other cultures, resolve complex conflicts by overcoming barriers created by cultural differences, and have the ability to interact with people. - people from other cultures.

According to Lüsebrink (2012) intercultural competence focuses on (1) behavioural competence; (2) communication skills (apart from language skills in a narrow sense such as non-verbal dimensions of communication, namely: gestures, facial expressions and proxemics (movement in space), and paraverbal factors which include intonation and speaking speed); and (3) comprehension competence which involves the ability to read symbolic signs of other cultures, understand and be able to interpret literature about daily rituals to dress codes and media space. Intercultural competence is based on affective aspects which include empathy, awareness of foreign cultures, and related social skills. In addition, intercultural competence is usually related to general psychosocial skills for successful interactions in multicultural contexts. Intercultural competence is an invaluable asset in an increasingly globalized world where we are more likely to interact with people from different cultures and countries who have been shaped by different values, beliefs and experiences.

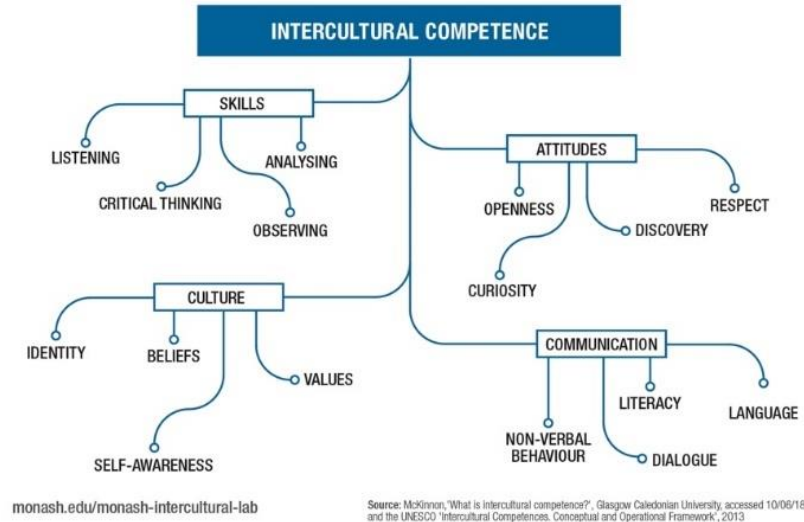


Figure 1 Plot of intercultural competence.

With increasing global diversity, intercultural competence is a topic of immediate relevance. The ability to understand and interact with people from different cultures in an authentic and positive way is a topic worth discussing. Figure 1 is an intercultural competence chart sourced from Monash Intercultural Lab. Based on the Victorian Curriculum, the topics used in learning at Echuca College for elementary level students in grade 7 consist of four topics in each term. In term 1, the topic used is self-identity, in term 2 the topic used is school, in term 3 the topic used is ceremonies and celebrations, while in term 4 the topic used is health. Learning takes place in accordance with the themes formulated by the subject teacher.

2. METHODS

This research is based on literature review of the related subjects in intercultural competence. A literature review discusses published information in a particular subject area, and sometimes information in a particular subject area within a certain time period. A literature review can be just a simple summary of the sources, yet it usually has an organizational pattern and combines both summary and synthesis. A summary is a recap of the important information of the source, but a synthesis is a

re-organization, or a reshuffling, of that information. It might give a new interpretation of old material or combine new with old interpretations. Or it might trace the intellectual progression of the field, including major debates. Depending on the situation, the literature review may evaluate the sources and advise the reader on the most pertinent or relevant. In this research, the subject area is culture, especially cross-cultural understanding in Indonesian language textbook. The researchers collected primary resources on cross-cultural understanding and brought this theme into Indonesian language textbook which related to the foreign learning topic.

The sources are the articles which discussed cross-cultural understanding in foreign language class, as we can see in Table 1. From the collected data, the researchers analysed those findings and then tried to give some new insights regarding the using of these findings in the general context because mainly the theme of cross-cultural understanding is only applied in the international target context. The data analysis used in this research in narrative analysis. Narratives can help construct individual or group identity, persuade, rationalize, make an argument, teach a lesson, remember, mobilize, offer perspective, entertain cope with or make sense of events/misfortune (Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994).

Table 1. Indonesian textbooks used in Echuca College (Why were these book chosen? What were the selecting criteria?)

Name of the Book	Grades	Author(s) & Publication Date
Kenalillah Indonesia 1	7	Hibbs, Fergusson, and Ure (2007)
Bersama-sama lagi	7	Clarke, Day, and Hardie (2007)
Saling-silang	7	Gould, Fenton, Yang, and Harsojo (2013)
Lentera Indonesia 1	7	Tim BIPA (2004)
Bagus Sekali 1	7	Newnham, and Soehodo (2000)

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Identifying Cultural Content

A study was carried out to identify cultural references in each textbook under examination. To carry out the cultural analysis, the total number of units in each textbook was examined with respect to cultural representations both visual (pictures, maps, photographs, illustrations, etc.) and written (names of characters and places, theme of the written texts, etc.), and a list of different cultural references in each textbook was compiled. The next step involved categorising those cultural references into two categories: the source (Australian), and the target (Indonesian), in accordance with the framework proposed by Cortazzi and Jin (1999). Those visuals and written texts that had no direct reference to any culture, some referring to general categories such as students, teachers, doctors, etc., were considered as *culture-free statements* as they did not represent any particular culture and were therefore not included in the cultural analysis.

References to culture in general were manifested in various forms, such as dialogues, pictures, illustrations, activities and short texts. Considering the cognitive developments of learners in same grades, the content of Indonesian culture was presented in situations and topics relevant to learners' daily life experiences. The cultural elements in relation to the source culture were usually introduced through simple topics, including *family, artefact culture, environment, celebration and ceremony, traditional music, dress, etc.* References to the source culture were manifested in various forms. Firstly, in Kenalilah Indonesia's book, they put shortening pattern's name for example the full name is Hartono to Tono, culture of bargaining in traditional market, shop opening hours that different with Australian, for example in Indonesia they open at 8.00-12.00 and second term at 17.00-21.00. The use of "*bak mandi*" which is part of artefact cultural also they explain about the way Indonesian people take a bath. Traditional music such as angklung and gamelan from Java and Bali. Giving the name of Baliness such as Wayan, Made, Ketut and Nyoman. Style of houses part of cultural environment in Minangkabau, Toraja, Bali dan Jakarta. All about Bali island (music, dance, art and craft, volcanoes, religion, live, grow in Bali, ceremony and celebrate). Traditional dress for the used sarung.

In the second book entitled *Bersama lagi*, the cultural content written by the author is integrative. Cultural content is among the learning materials. One example is the topic of the Giri Family, the introduction of family figures such as grandparents, fathers, mothers, etc. The integrated cultural content is traditional clothes, in the material Giri's grandfather wears traditional Balinese clothes, the writer explains about Balinese clothing

culture right beside the picture of Giri's grandfather. Descriptions of Balinese traditional clothing is conveyed in English because of their informative nature, so that students can more easily absorb the cultural information. The third book entitled *Saling-silang* also has the same concept as book 2, the material content is integrated in the middle of the learning material, even very explicitly in the text / dialogue that is presented to students. As one example is the topic / learning material welcome to my house, the first learning is reading. The content of the dialogue was that two Indonesians were visiting one of their friends, then there was a part where they took off their shoes before entering the house. Taking off shoes before entering the house is part of the cultural material integrated in the book.

The fourth book entitled *Lentera Indonesia* explains several cultures, namely KTP, history and uses of the Jaksa Street Inn, traditional food (*nasi gudeg, nasi udug, gado-gado*). The culture of sitting on the floor, namely Lesehan when eating together at a restaurant or at home, as well as several other activities. All about *batik, wayang* performances in several regions and their philosophy. Culture uses *pangsi* clothes. Social culture when talking to friends and asking "are you married? Do you have children?". Introduction to tourist attractions, namely TMII. Traditional show (*reog, kuda lumping*). Traditional transportation is *dokar*. Using Wayan, Made, Nyoman, and Ketut for name in Bali region. The last book, namely the fifth book entitled *Bagus Sekali 1*, explains several cultures, namely the face of Indonesia and where Indonesia is positioned. A tourist spot that is often used for surfing by Australians. Cultural artifacts, namely stalls. A tourist spot called Waterboom Park. Some body language that is often used by Indonesians and their meanings. Special activities / extracurricular activities at school. School rules until Saturday. Several celebrations in Bali. The use of the sarong and its meaning.

#### 3.2. Cultural constructs in textbooks

Book 1 *Kenalilah Indonesia* has two styles of authorship construction, the first style of writing is the information contained in one column located between several learning materials, marked with the title "In Indonesia...." Then explain the culture in a concise, clear and concise manner. Spoken in English except cultural names and terms. The discourse is conveyed in no more than three paragraphs, while the second style is written in one full page, marked with the title "Kenalilah Indonesia". Spoken in English except cultural names and terms. Book 2 *Bersama lagi* has a writing construction style that is presented in the middle of the learning material, including pictures and information in addition to pictures. Information in the form of discourse is not more than one paragraph. Spoken in English except cultural names and terms. Book 3 *Saling-Silang* has the same writing construction style as the previous book, cultural content

is integrated into learning material, the form can be in the form of dialogue texts, monologues, discourses and in the form of evaluation / training. Inserted an image beside the text. Cultural material blends with linguistic material, in one learning material there are sentences that contain cultural elements, and of course conveyed in Indonesian.

Book 4 *Lentera Indonesia* 1 construction of writing cultural material in this book is presented at the end of the material, the material is marked with the title "*Catatan Budaya*". Cultural information is presented only in text in the form of discourse, and there is no visualization. Spoken in English except cultural names and terms. Book 5 *Bagus Sekali* 1 construction of writing cultural material is presented at the end of the material, presented in a communicative and figurative form, the cultural material is marked with the title "*Indonesia Asyik*", also given additional visuals in the form of images and delivered in English except for names and cultural terms.

### 3.3. Cultural analysis in the Indonesian and Victorian curricula

Cultural aspects in the Indonesian curriculum (SKL Permendikbud Nomor 27 2017 (Jakarta)) indicators of achievement for students are that students can show an attitude of respect for the customs and culture of themselves and others and show an attitude of respect for the diversity of cultures, views, beliefs, and religions as well as the original opinions / findings of others. Concrete forms of cultural aspects in SKL include the attitude of getting to know Indonesians, the use of identity cards, culture and the meaning of having a back. Rituals and culture of family gatherings, places of worship in Indonesia, traditional batik clothing, wayang golek and motorcycle taxis in Indonesia and tourist and economic spots, floating markets. Based on this topic, which can be seen in Figure 2, a synchronization analysis of cultural aspects appeared in textbooks with SKL Permendikbud.

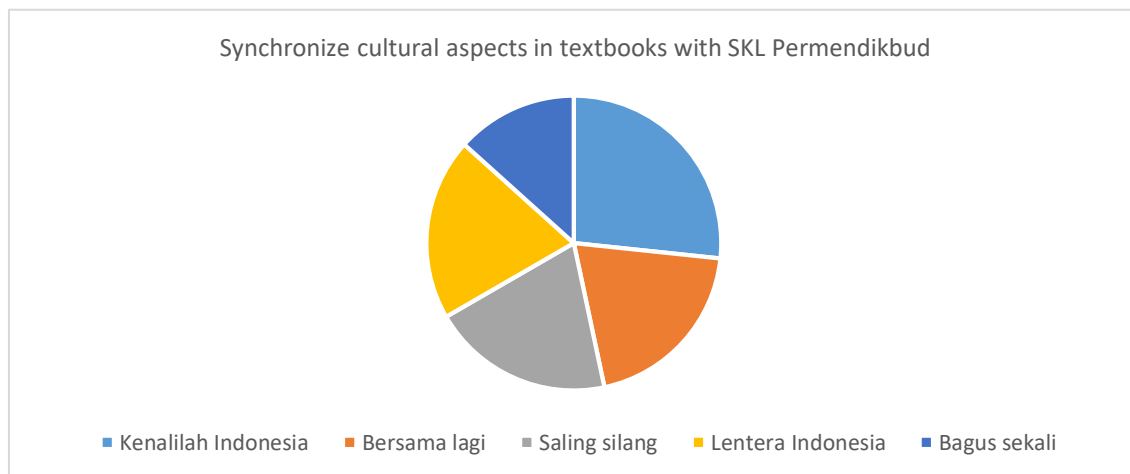
Book 1 *Kenalillah Indonesia* achieved 60% synchronization, book 2 *Bersama lagi*, book 3 *Saling-Silang*, book 4 *Lentera Indonesia* 80% and book 5 *Bagus Sekali* 40%.

In the cultural aspects of the Victorian curriculum, students are focused on issues of intercultural understanding, namely students learn to communicate meaningfully across culture systems. Develops language use and intercultural awareness and understanding; 2) develops understanding of how culture shapes and extends learners understanding of themselves, their own heritage, values, beliefs, culture and identify; 3) notice connections between language and culture in intercultural language use, recognizing how words and expression may be culture specific. Concrete forms of cultural aspects in the Victorian curriculum are self-identity, cultural artifacts (dipper, rickshaw, warung), environment (rice fields, villages, lizard) and celebrations (Eid). Synchronize cultural aspects in textbooks with SKL Permendikbud. Book 1 *Kenalillah Indonesia* achieved 60% synchronization, book 2 *Bersama Lagi*, book 3 *Saling-Silang*, book 4 *Lentera Indonesia* 80% and book 5 *Bagus Sekali* 40%.

### 4. CONCLUSION

The cultural content contained in the BIPA textbooks at Echuca College varies, as a whole it is adjusted to the topic of learning. The construction of cross-cultural teaching is generally presented in the form of separate texts with learning materials and using English as the target language (learner). 80% of the cross-cultural teaching in the textbook refers to the Victorian curriculum and an average of 50% refers to SKL Permendikbud 27. The main reason it refers to the Victorian curriculum is that the BIPA curriculum was only published in 2017 in Indonesia.

Figure 2 Synchronize cultural aspects in textbooks with SKL Permendikbud.



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