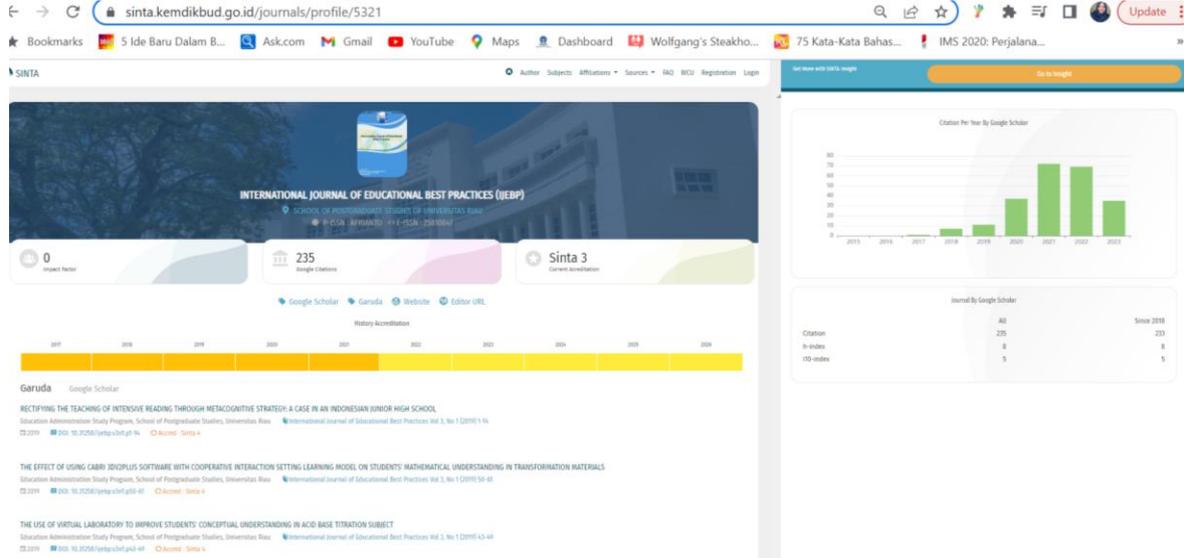


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CULTURE AND GENDER REPRESENTATION IN VISUAL AND VERBAL TEXTS: AN ANALYSIS OF NATIONALLY ENDORSED INDONESIAN EFL TEXTBOOKS FOR UPPER SECONDARY STUDENTS

Lelyana Syarif, Herri Mulyono

Abstract

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CULTURE AND GENDER REPRESENTATION IN VISUAL AND VERBAL TEXTS: AN ANALYSIS OF NATIONALLY ENDORSED INDONESIAN EFL TEXTBOOKS FOR UPPER SECONDARY STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the representation of culture and gender in visual and verbal texts in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks used by upper secondary school students. A content analysis was conducted on three EFL textbooks for upper secondary school students, using Xiao's (2010) framework to guide the analysis of culture “small-c” representation, and Brugeilles and Cromer's (2009) study to examine gender character according to their roles portrayed in the textbooks. The findings revealed that the highest number of visual illustrations was predominantly presented in the lifestyle aspect, followed by customs, values, holidays, hobbies, and food. It was also observed that gender representation was equally represented in the verbal text, but not proportionally in the visuals. The findings indicate that culture and gender awareness among students could be improved if textbooks provided a more balanced representation of various cultures encompassing source culture, target culture, and international target culture, and paid more attention to the equal treatment of genders.

INTRODUCTION

In English language teaching, textbooks are widely recognized as a key instrument in the teaching and learning processes. This is because textbooks provide significant contributions that aid teachers and students alike in supporting the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes (Ariyanto, 2018). Widodo et al (2018) argue that textbooks assist students in learning the proper ways of thinking, behaving, valuing, and existing in the world. In other words, textbooks are not only a means of achieving educational goals but also provide learners with the necessary knowledge to contribute to their development in the face of global challenges. Therefore, the development of EFL textbooks should be given great consideration

and considerable effort should be invested in producing high-quality textbooks that not only satisfy quality standards but also meet the needs of both teachers and learners.

In the Indonesian context, the development of school textbooks, including those for English language teaching and learning, must comply with several requirements as stipulated in Article 2 of Regulation 8 of the Minister of Education and Culture year 2016. These requirements include positive values/norms related to society, and the avoidance of pornographic elements, extremism, radicalism, racism, violence, and gender bias. Furthermore, The Act of the Republic of Indonesia year 2003 concerning the National Education System (Article 36) specifies that educational elements should encompass religious principles, local wisdom, and Indonesian cultures. Even though Brown (2000) has proposed the imposition of the culture of the target language to aid learners in understanding the nature of the language and its use in day-to-day contexts, it is believed that the globalization of English will enable accommodation of the local culture in areas where it is used beyond its native-speaking environment. Consequently, the teaching of English in Indonesian classrooms should be based on local values and Indonesian ideology (Faris, 2014), encouraging the government to promote intercultural understanding and the relationship between language and culture at the onset of the new millennium (Lie, 2017).

In this paper, we recognize three patterns of cultures in EFL textbooks, as proposed by Cortazzi and Jin (Faris, 2014), including the source culture, the target culture, and the international culture. The source culture reflects the learners' culture and aims to increase their awareness of their own cultural identity. The imposition of source culture in the EFL textbook is believed to contribute significantly to communicating new cultural material and its diversity (Kobia, 2009). The source culture in the current study is the Indonesian culture, with its diverse ethnicities, such as Javanese, Sundanese, Balinese, and others. The cultural aspects in textbooks are portrayed through stories about Indonesian legends, pictures of Indonesian people, places, food, and other aspects. The target culture is concerned with the materials that represent the culture of the target language and such inclusion aims to expose learners to the cultural surroundings of the target language. In this situation, the target culture is that of the English native speakers from the Inner Circle Countries (ICC) such as The United States, The United Kingdom, and Australia. Finally, the international culture in the textbook is encouraged to portray a wide range of cultures from countries where English is not used as a first or second language, but as an international language, such as India, China, and Brazil (Faris, 2014). Faris (2016) also posited that the rationale for the inclusion of the international culture category allows learners who do not speak English as a first language to use it frequently in international situations.

Besides the recognized three patterns, culture in EFL textbooks can be identified through the "big-C" and "small-c" frameworks. This framework promotes a sense of culture that covers specific categories. According to Chastain (1988, cited in Sadeghi & Sepahi, 2018), "big-C" culture focuses on the products and contributions to society, such as politics, economy, history, geography, sciences, literature, art, cinema, theatre, song, and concert. Meanwhile, "small-c" culture, as defined by Xiao (2010), refers to everything in human life which is categorized by food, holiday, lifestyle, hobbies, body language, customs, and values. Additionally, Xiao (2010) asserts that "small-c" should be provided in EFL classrooms, as this cultural aspect will introduce language learners to the beliefs, ideas, and values of other societies. The table below shows detailed information about "small-c" culture.

In addition to the need to represent local culture, target language culture, and international culture in EFL textbooks, equal representation of gender should also be given much attention by textbook developers. Ariyanto (2018) believes that EFL textbooks should promote gender equality in the classroom by presenting equal amounts of each gender in all aspects of the textbooks. Such gender representation will affect how students react, behave, and think about gender (Lie, 2017). Brugeilles and Cromer (2009) suggest that gender should be represented through gender languages and visual materials, such as characters, occupational roles, performances, and attributes. In terms of gender characters, Brugeilles and Cromer highlight the importance of looking at gender from its social gender role, covering aspects such as actors, extras, and identifying characters. An actor refers to the main character who performs the action or possesses something, whereas an extra is a character who does not act but takes part in the situation of the actor, and an identifying character is a character who does not take part but helps to identify the actor/main character. In verbal texts, gender representation refers to the use of words, phrases, or expressions, such as the usage of generic pronouns such as he or she, her or him, derivational morphemes, compound nouns with generic words such as man/men or boy(s) with the feminine morpheme woman/women or girl(s), marital status titles such as Mr. for men, Miss for unmarried women, and Mrs. for married women, and other ways (Lee & Collins, 2010).

The studies of culture and gender representation in ELT textbooks have been discussed in various countries. Lee (2018), for instance, explored how male and female characters are represented in four Japanese EFL textbooks for high school students, using corpus linguistics tools to analyze the proportion of male and female appearances. The findings highlighted the presence of stereotypical images of men and women in Japanese textbooks, whereby male characters were depicted more often in social roles than females. This was mirrored in the research of Islam and Asadullah (2018), which revealed that the textbooks tended to show female stereotypes, with women being infrequently portrayed as main characters and often shown undertaking domestic tasks, while males were often displayed with power, strength, and wealth. However, gender equality does not have to be seen as a competition between men and women; it should start by providing equal opportunities for both genders to access employment and take on roles in society.

Previous textbook studies in school contexts in Indonesia have investigated the representation of culture and gender in various ways. For example, Syahri and Susanti (2016) conducted a content analysis of nine English textbooks for senior high schools in Palembang, based on KTSP and the 2013 curriculum published by several publishers. This research was adapted from Byram's (1993) framework to determine the percentage of local and target culture integration in each book. The results showed that the paragraphs in the reading passages of five books presented a higher percentage of local culture, whereas the four books presented a higher proportion of target culture. Moreover, a picture analysis revealed that six books of nine books promoted a higher percentage of the target culture. Ariyanto (2018) conducted research on gender bias or stereotypes in ELT textbooks for secondary school, which reported that the textbooks used for secondary school students based on the 2013 curriculum contained gender biases and stereotypes. Consequently, gender bias in textbooks may raise crucial issues concerning students' attitudes and may be consciously or unconsciously embedded in students' perspectives concerning gender social roles in society.

Drawing from previous literature, both globally and in the Indonesian context, we perceive that there are crucial issues regarding the imbalance of culture and gender representation in Indonesian EFL textbooks. The aim of this study is to conduct an in-depth analysis of the culture and gender representation in the visual and verbal texts of ELT textbooks. Two research questions were addressed below:

- 1) How is culture represented in the ELT textbooks of secondary schools through the use of visual and verbal texts?
- 2) How is gender represented in the ELT textbooks of secondary schools through the use of visual and verbal texts?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Under a qualitative research design, the current study employed two qualitative approaches, including analytical coding and corpus analysis. Analytical coding was used to classify the visual images related to culture and gender representation. The visual data was not only organized and categorized but the coding was also used to interpret the meaning of the visual images from the textbooks. The aim of analytical coding was to validate and ensure the consistency of the data. Additionally, in order to obtain validity in verbal texts, this study employed corpus analysis. Lee (2018) explains that the aim of a corpus study is to utilize automated word queries to organize the data effectively, providing the foundation of the study through numerical information from the start. Focusing on textbook analysis, this present study examines the cultural and gender representation in English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks through both visual and verbal texts.

Data Collecting Method

The data for visual and verbal texts in this study were obtained from three English textbooks for Upper Secondary Schools, used for grades ten to twelve, entitled 'Bahasa Inggris untuk SMA Kelas X, XI, and XII' (English for Upper Secondary Schools X, XI, and XII). These textbooks were chosen as they had been updated with the new 2013 curriculum in Indonesia and were endorsed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The representation of culture and gender in English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks were collected by selecting two chapters from each textbook. The data collected for the visual representations were obtained in multiple steps. Initially, the writer listed the presence of visual images in the selected units in the textbooks which depicted people, objects, places, or animals (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006). Afterward, the visual representation of culture was examined in terms of the 'small-c' type of culture, which refers to all aspects of human life, such as food, holidays, lifestyle, hobbies, body language, customs, and values (Xiao, 2010). Finally, the representations of culture were categorized according to the framework proposed by Cortazzi and Jin (Faris, 2014), into three themes: source culture, target culture, and international culture.

Moreover, the visual representation of gender was focused on the number of male and female appearances in the textbooks. Bruegilles and Cromer's (2009) framework was adapted in this study to examine gender issues through the character's social gender roles, such as actors, extras, and identifying characters. Following this, the criteria used to analyze the themes of social gender roles in EFL textbooks were divided into two categories: gender equality and gender bias.

Data Analysis Method

The data from verbal texts were collected from English texts comprising tables, dialogues, reading passages, and exercises. Similarly, to the visual representations, the corpus was analyzed to ascertain any texts related to the cultural verbal texts. Additionally, the gender representation in the verbal texts was identified based on the occurrences of words associated with the two genders. WordSmith online tool available at <https://www.lexically.net/wordsmith/> was then used to find the frequency counts of selected gendered words, both male and female, as well as their inflected forms (e.g. wife, husband, girl, boy, man, woman, etc.) and feminine pronouns (e.g. she, her, hers, herself) and masculine pronouns (e.g. he, him, his, himself).

FINDINGS

Representation of Culture in Visual and Verbal Texts of Indonesian EFL Textbooks for Upper Secondary School Students

As discussed earlier, two chosen chapters were evaluated from the three EFL textbooks and it was found that the visual representations which identified "small-c" culture were divided into six categories: food, holiday, lifestyle, hobbies, customs, and values, totaling 119 images. Unfortunately, visual representations which indicated body language were not featured in this study. The results of the analysis of the cultural representation are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Visual representation of culture "small- c" in ELT Textbooks

Textbooks	Unit	Task	Aspect of Culture "small-c"						Source Culture	Target Culture	International Culture
			Food	Holiday	Life Style	Hobbies	Customs	Values			
Grade X	Unit I Talking about Self	Transactional text: talking about identity	0	0	17	0	6	0	10	7	6
	Unit II	Transactional	0	0	2	0	22	0	19	4	1

	Congratulating and Complimenting Other	text: congratulating and complimenting									
Grade XI	Unit III Party Time	Types of invitations	0	0	2	0	11	0	14	1	1
	Chapter IV Natural Disaster An Exposition	Analytical exposition text	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0
Grade XII	Unit I May I help You?	Asking for and giving services	0	0	8	0	4	0	9	1	2
	Unit II Why Don't You Visit Seattle	Planning future activities; Giving suggestions, advice, and instructions	0	0	9	0	4	0	3	8	0
Total			0	0	41	0	47	0	55	23	10

In Table 1, it is demonstrated that there was a higher total of lifestyle aspects compared to other aspects of the culture of "small-c". There were at least 34 visual representations illustrating lifestyle aspects across both selected chapters which the writers analyzed. Furthermore, lifestyle aspects were also portrayed in various cultural aspects, such as source culture, target culture, and international culture. According to Xiao (2010), lifestyle refers to how a person or a group of people lives and works, specifically interpersonal interactions and social activities, family lifestyles, and forms of entertainment, consumption, and fashion. The lifestyle aspect which represented source culture was also depicted through dialogue or conversations between two speakers, indicating interactions and social activities. There were two speakers which introduced themselves to each other and the visual representation of their interaction revealed the regions of Indonesia.

The lifestyle aspects were also presented to the target culture. As mentioned earlier, target culture refers to the materials which present the cultural aspects of the language that the learners study, intending to expose them to the cultural contexts of the target language. The visual illustration of culture in the Indonesian textbooks reflects the interaction between pen pals of two female students from different countries with their names identified as common names from the United States and Malaysia. The presentation of international culture and lifestyle aspects also can be seen through the situation at the clinic/hospital; the visual illustration showed the doctor examining the patient, with the nurse assisting shown in a visual background similar to that of the Middle East.

Customs were frequently portrayed in the two chapters that the writers analyzed. Customs, related to the culture, are also known as traditions; common activities which people do, and have done for a long time. There was a total of 12 visual illustrations that portrayed customs. The visual representations of customs mostly appeared on congratulatory cards. Three categories of cultural content proposed by Coratzi and Jin (1999) were present in this aspect. For example, the congratulatory card illustrated the region of Indonesia - Padang - showing a situation to congratulate a sister on her graduation from a culinary arts course. In addition, the target culture was represented on the congratulatory card, with a group of people throwing the graduation cap. This is a tradition of graduation ceremonies at every college and university in the US. An example of international cultural customs was present in a congratulation card, referring to the situation of writing a wedding congratulation card - such as "*your aunt has got married to a man she loves; they met when they were involved in a medical mission in the Middle East*" (Bahasa Inggris, 2017, p.31).

At the lowest proportion, one of the aspects of small-c culture was food. As discussed earlier, Xiao (2010) defined food as the things that people or animals consume; particularly types of food or etiquette when people eat. In relation to culture, food is seen to play an important role as an expression or symbol of ethnicity. In the two selected chapters of three English textbooks for secondary school students, the writers found that visual representation portraying food was only presented in the textbook for Grade X, particularly in Unit 1 which discusses identity. The visual image depicted a group of people in a queue to collect food and was located in Italy which the writers assumed to be categorized as international culture.

The results of the analysis of both visual and verbal texts revealed differences in the representation of culture in Indonesian EFL textbooks. In the verbal text, it was shown that the representation of culture was broken down into two categories - "small-c" culture, such as lifestyle and customs aspects - which were identified. Based on the data collected, customs aspects demonstrated a higher number of appearances, consisting of 47 words, followed by lifestyle aspects with 41 words. Another finding of the analysis was that the representation of culture "small-c" in verbal texts demonstrated a higher concentration in source culture compared to target and international culture. In this study, customs aspects were represented by the names of people and the tradition of invitation, as shown in the following extract:

Extract 1

Edo: Hello. I am Edo. May I know your name, please?

Slamet: Sure, I am Slamet. I am from Jepara. What about you?

Edo: I am from Raja Ampat. I work in a tourism resort.

Slamet: I work for a furniture company. Have you heard about Jepara engraving?

Edo: Yes, and I want to know more about that.

Slamet: It's a specific carving pattern created in Jepara.

(Source: Textbook Grade X, p. 17)

The example of the conversation above between *Edo* and *Slamet*, who are meeting for the first time at a party, reflects the use of Indonesian names: *Slamet* is an Indonesian name, specifically from *Jepara* which has a Javanese origin. Customs aspects are largely reflected in the names of Indonesian people. Other customs that are related to the naming of people in the student culture include *Nyoman*, *Wayan*, *Bejo*, *Rudi*, *Tuti*, *Yuni*, *Situmorang*, *Pujiyanto*, *Joko*, *Widodo*, *Budi*, *Ariyanto*, *Suharto*, *Yanti*, and so forth. In general, the author of the

textbook is attempting to demonstrate to students that members of their own culture can converse in English. Additionally, the content and topics presented in the textbook were familiar to the students' real-life contexts.

Lifestyle aspects were presented across several topics, including the names of places, figures, organizations, or the way a person or group of people live and work. The following text was taken from the textbook used for the tenth-grade Unit 1 and was found in an example of a pen pal letter. Pen pal correspondence is an example of a lifestyle, which informs the way in which these teenagers present themselves to one another. It is important to remember that such verbal texts provide learners with an opportunity to become familiar with the target language, by interpreting the contexts from another culture and incorporating them as new knowledge.

Extract 2

I'm 16 years old and I attend Thomas Edison High School here in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA.

(Source: Textbook Grade X - Unit 1, p. 4)

Extract 3

As for hobbies, I'm really into songs and music. My favorite band is One Direction. My favorite Malay singer is, of course, Siti Nurhaliza. I also like watching movies, especially comedies. The actor I like best is Tom Cruise.

(Source: Textbook Grade X - Unit 1, p. 5)

Lifestyles that are embedded in the source culture were also present in the textbooks used for Grade XII. However, lifestyle aspects were only identified in Unit 3 of the textbooks. In this chapter, the lifestyle aspects were presented through the example of an invitation card, mentioning the names of places in Indonesia such as Gatot Subroto and Gedung Soekarno. Lifestyle aspects were also indicated in international cultures by the names of places such as the Dubai Airport, Spazia Tower in Italy, and the singer Maher Zein, who is considered to be part of international culture.

Representation of Gender in Visual and Verbal texts of Indonesian EFL Textbooks for Upper Secondary School Students

Brugeilles and Cromer's (2009) framework was adapted to evaluate the representation of gender in three selected textbooks, with a focus on the gender of the characters, including gender appearance (i.e. male, female, and bias) and gender role (i.e. actor, extra and identifying character). Table 2 below summarises the evaluation of these two types of gender analysis.

Table 2. Visual representation of gender “small- c” in ELT Textbooks

Textbook	Unit	No. of Tasks	No. of Images	Gender Appearances			Quantity of Gender Role		
				Male	Female	Bias	Actor	Extra	Identifying Character
Grade X	Unit I Talking about Self	16	7	7	7	2	13	3	0
	Unit II Congratulating and Complimenting Other	16	22	25	15	5	31	14	0
Grade XI	Unit III Party Time	7	8	2	2		4		0
	Chapter IV Natural Disaster An Exposition	8	8		5		5		0
Grade XII	Unit I May I help you?	8	12	13	17	5	24	11	0
	Unit II Why Don't You Visit Seattle	13	13	7	7	2	11	4	0
Total		68	70	54	53	14	88	32	0

Based on the table above, gender appearances portrayed males and females as being treated almost equally, with 54 and 53 illustrations, respectively. The gender appearances that act as an actor were found in at least 88 illustrations. Both male and female characters presented an actor role. However, the writers found that male characters depicted as actors performing physical and successful activities are more prevalent. The visual illustration of the actor aspect showed a small boy and his father holding a fishing rod. Another picture of a male character illustrated two adult males, one of whom was injured and wrapped in bandages. Furthermore, male characters tended to be portrayed as more powerful and performing an action with a specific attribute.

Unfortunately, gender bias was identified in the visual text which depicted a situation in a hospital, where a male character was acting as the doctor examining the patient and a female character was portrayed as the nurse assisting the doctor. This is particularly indicative of gender bias as the female character can be seen to be performing a secondary role, without taking part in any actual action. This illustration may have passively reinforced students' pre-existing perceptions of gender-based occupational roles, where doctors are commonly depicted as male characters and nurses as female characters. Other illustrations were also

found to promote gender bias; for example, females were restricted to occupations such as being students, teachers, and sellers in the market. Most of the teachers in these chapters were portrayed by female characters, while males were portrayed in jobs such as businessmen and chefs.

Texts and visual representations provided different types of information. In verbal texts, genders can be distinguished from their actions, and the results showed the differences between gender representation in visual and verbal text. The widespread use of gender words addressed female characters more often than male characters when analyzing selected chapters from three textbooks. Females were more likely depicted in familial roles (e.g. mother, mom) than males (e.g. husband, father), which suggests that female characters were more dominant in the family than male characters. However, the title Mr was widely used more than the titles Miss, Ms or Mrs. This imbalance reveals stereotypes, with the title Mrs often being accompanied by Mr. For instance, an invitation card addressed the two main characters as Mr and Mrs, while Mr was used independently in dialogue (e.g. Mr. Budi, Mr. Suharto). The representation of verbal text that was presented as an extra, revealed in 46 words, was presented by the names of people and both male and female pronouns. The extra character was also present in the example of a pen pal letter between the characters named Hannah and Alia. In this example, Hannah was an actor who introduced herself, whilst Caroline was mentioned as an extra as this character did not directly perform the action, but took part in the situation, introducing Hannah to Alia and thus forming a connection between them.

DISCUSSION

The current study aimed to analyze the representation of culture and gender in visual and verbal texts in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks used by upper secondary school students. Two frameworks proposed by the literature; namely, those of Xiao (2010) and Brugeilles and Cromer (2009), were employed to examine the representation of “small-c” culture and gender character in three Indonesian nationally-endorsed EFL textbooks – one for each grade. In addressing the first research question - 'How is culture represented in the ELT textbooks of secondary schools through the use of visual and verbal texts?' - it was found that the highest number of visual illustrations focused on the lifestyle aspect, followed by customs, values, holidays, hobbies, and food. It was also observed that the culture presented in the textbook was more about the source culture, rather than the target and international cultures. The lifestyle aspect that was presented from the source culture was represented by interactions and social activities, while the customs aspect was presented by the invitation card tradition and names of people. In other words, the textbooks were more likely to promote students' own cultures when learning English.

The findings corroborate the previous studies suggesting the need to include culture in Indonesian textbooks, among others Faris (2014), Sulistiyo et al. (2021), and Syahri and Susanti (2016). Particularly, the current study confirms the earlier studies (Faris, 2014; Sulistiyo et al., 2021; Syahri & Susanti, 2016; Triastuti et al., 2022) that suggest the need to promote local culture in the textbooks, in addition to the culture from the target language i.e. English. Although those earlier studies have suggested embedding character and moral values

as part of Indonesian cultures to learn and put more emphasis on the local cultures than the international and target cultures. The findings of this study corroborate the previous studies suggesting the need to include culture in Indonesian textbooks, such as those of others Faris (2014), Sulistiyo et al. (2021), and Syahri and Susanti (2016). In particular, the current study confirms the earlier studies (Faris, 2014; Sulistiyo et al., 2021; Syahri & Susanti, 2016; Triastuti et al., 2022) which suggested the need to promote local culture in the textbooks, in addition to the culture from the target language, i.e. English. These earlier studies have proposed embedding character and moral values as part of Indonesian cultures to learn, and placing more emphasis on the local cultures than on international and target cultures. The emphasis on local cultures, characters, and moral values is in line with the Indonesian regulation in article 2 of Regulation 8 of the Minister of Education and Culture year 2016, and in particular, the Act of the Republic of Indonesia year 2003 concerning the National Education System (Article 36) the urge of promoting religious principles, local wisdom, and Indonesian cultures.

In addition to the presentation of culture, findings of the current study revealed that gender was equally represented in the verbal text, but not proportionally in the visuals. Gender bias was identified in the visual texts showing more portion on particular gender types in some images. Such bias was depicted in visual texts describing daily activities covering their roles and actions. In other words, gender stereotypes have been depicted; male characters have been shown to have a variety of occupational roles (doctor, businessman, school principal) and to engage in physical activity, whereas female characters have been depicted as extras. Furthermore, in contrast with the verbal text, there were more female words mentioned, the majority being 'she', female familial roles such as 'mother' or 'mom', and female names. These results reveal an imbalanced representation of male and female roles portrayed in school textbooks, with one particular sex being predominant. This finding corroborates previous research conducted by Ariyanto (2018), which found that, through visual artifacts, there was an obvious gender disparity in terms of male and female character depictions. Male characters were represented as actively engaging in occupations and physical activities, whereas female characters were generally portrayed as being passive extras in conversations regarding dress codes and discussing the preparation of parties or vacations. These findings might exemplify gender bias or stereotype, depicting male characters as enthusiastically active and female characters as having a passive role.

CONCLUSION

To summarise, the three nationally endorsed Indonesian EFL textbooks evaluated in the present study have demonstrated the promotion of cultures and gender within them. However, an imbalance of the relative proportions of local, target, and international cultures represented in the textbooks was observed. Moreover, the endorsed textbooks still depict stereotypical portrayals of a particular gender. The findings suggest that further improvement of the books is required, with an emphasis on a balanced representation of cultures and genders in both verbal and visual texts. It should be noted that the current study was limited to a small number of textbooks evaluated; thus, the findings cannot be generalized to all Indonesian EFL textbooks nationally endorsed by the government. Consequently, further studies involving more textbooks from more publishers are encouraged in order to substantiate the findings of the current study.

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