

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides conclusion of the whole present study conducted to investigate cultural contents in a 9th grade junior high school English textbook used in Indonesia. This part also presents some recommendations for teachers, textbook developers as well as researchers interested in cultural study of language teaching and learning.

1.1 Conclusions

The present study attempted to analyse a 9th grade English textbook used in Indonesia in terms of cultural contents contained in the textbook. Two theoretical frameworks were used to analyse the types of cultural contents and to find out the culture that they represented. The first was the theory of cultural dimension that divides culture into five dimensions: products, practices, perspectives, communities and persons (Moran, 2001). The latter was a theory of cultural representation that believes English teaching and learning is effective when source, target and international culture are taken into account. An interview to the author was also carried out in order to obtain his insight regarding cultural issue in the textbook development. The interview also served as a way to check whether the analysis was in line with the author's general assumption of cultural contents in the textbook.

In general, the results of the analysis revealed that all dimensions of culture were found in the textbook. The cultural contents were present in every chapter in different manners. They can be found in pictures, passages, dialogues, expressions, idioms, etc. The biggest proportion of cultural contents was occupied by cultural products referring to cultural contents. Which means that culture is mostly represented in concrete objects rather than abstract or intangible objects. The majority of those cultural contents were found to represent source culture. There were also many target culture references but there were only a few references to international culture found. Target culture was mostly found in product and practice

dimension of culture. In fact, most of practice dimension was found to contain reference to target culture. In contrast, community dimension was mostly found to not refer to a specific group of culture. Hence, many of them were categorized as neutral culture. Meanwhile, person dimension was dominated by references to source culture with a few references to target and international culture. The characters in the textbook are mostly designed as Indonesian people from different cultural background.

There are many ways of how cultural contents are presented in the textbook. One of them is through pictures. Pictures play an important role in presenting culture in the textbook. There are many pictures that contain cultural values found in the textbook. Those pictures represent not only source culture but also target culture. This kind of cultural contents is easy to spot because they contain both pictures and texts. However, the pictures are often not clear enough. If they are not accompanied with texts, it will be difficult to recognize the pictures. Furthermore, many cultural contents are also found in words or phrases included in different types of texts such as dialogues, narrative texts, procedure texts, different kinds of tasks, song lyrics, etc. Those texts contain cultural products such as the names of places, foods and people.

These findings are in line with what the author conveyed during the interview. He mentioned that the textbook tries to deliver contents that are rich in local contents without fully ignoring foreign cultures so that students are not only able to communicate in English but also to talk about their own culture with people who do not speak Indonesian language. This can also be seen in the results of cultural contents analysis that found the contents to be dominated by local culture. The characters were purposefully designed so that they resemble Indonesian people from different areas in Indonesia. The topics which communications revolve around them are mostly closely related to the life of Indonesian people, such as the food, clothes, traditional games, school life, etc. For instance, in exemplifying how to give complement in English, the textbook presents some Indonesian students complementing other students about their school achievements.

Lastly, it can be said that this textbook is an Indonesian English textbook. At a single glance, readers can tell that the textbook is developed by Indonesian authors for Indonesian audiences. It focuses so much on including enough Indonesian culture in the contents. Some textbooks may prefer target culture, and others may prefer international culture. We cannot simply

judge the worth of a textbook, whether it is a good or not so good textbook, solely because it favours a certain culture compared to other cultures. They are developed on different underlying purposes, by different authors and for different audiences. What can be said is that textbook has been designed to integrate local culture and the analysis really did find local culture in many different parts of the textbook.

1.2 Recommendation

The results of the present study reveal that there are still things that can be improved in the textbook. After all, a textbook is by no means can be perfect. It needs to be always continuously updated and revised to cope with changes and to pursue the best it can deliver. It is why we almost always see new textbooks each year. As with the textbook analysed in this study, it is also continuously revised. Since it was published in 2012, it has been revised several times with minor and major changes. If it is to be revised again later, the authors may want to consider including cultural products that students are not familiar with. Including contents that students are familiar with can be beneficial because students can easily relate the contents with their own life. However, it does not promote curiosity. By including contents that students may have not heard before, it is hoped that it can encourage students' curiosity towards the contents. For instance, the authors can consider including traditional Indonesian food that are not commonly consumed by the majority of students.

For the teachers using this textbook in their classroom, the existence of cultural contents should be taken into account as it is one of the main purpose of its development. However, there is a limitation of what can be put in the textbook, teachers may want to consider looking for additional authentic materials that are rich in cultural contents that can be used in the classroom. Those materials can be found in the movies, videos, newspaper and other media.

Finally, this study was limited to analysing a textbook in terms of cultural contents. It did not take the students and teachers' view into account. Therefore, for researchers interested in investigating this issue, it may be vital to take into account the students and teachers' view regarding this issue. Finding out what they perceive as the proper cultural contents can possibly be a significant input for the development of the textbook. It can also be considered to see how culture takes place in real English teaching and learning in the classroom by directly observing the

classroom, especially in relation to activities based on the textbook. This study also did not interview all authors participating in the development process of the textbook. So, further studies are needed to gain insights from all of the textbook authors. The interview questions also need to be improved so that more meaningful information regarding cultural contents can be obtained from the authors. In addition, a research of the teacher's book developed to accompany this particular textbook might be informative in regard to the guidelines that teachers are provided with.