

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of this study. It covers nine sections which are: background of the study, statement of problem, aims of the study, scope of study, research methodology, clarification of key terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background

Culture has a lot of definitions. Many linguists have pointed out what culture is, observed from surface and deeper level. One of the definitions has been stated by Rogers and Steinfatt (1999) who point out that culture refers to “the the total way of life of people composed of their learned and shared behavior patterns, value, norms, and material objects.” Therefore, culture influences the way how the community lives, behaves, thinks, and speaks. Additionally, language and culture have intricate significance that makes the two impracticable to separate (Brown as cited in Magogwe, 2009). In other words, language and culture are indivisible.

Moreover, the inseparability of language and culture has become a rich source of investigation in the field of English language Teaching. In this relation, one possible topic to focus lies on how culture takes its place in English language learning material (in this study, refers to English language textbook). According to McGrath (2002) language learning materials can carry cultural content. The culture the materials can attach could represent Source Cultures, Target Culture, or International Target Culture. Source Culture refers to learners’ own culture.

Target Culture address to the culture in which the target language is spoken as first language or mother tongue. And International target culture refers to various cultures in English or non-English speaking countries which use English as an international language (Cortazzi and Jin: 1999). In other words, English has been considered as belong to wider a community of various speakers.

When talking about English textbooks, a large number of various textbooks can be obtained in the market. However, the presence of local cultural content in the books is still questionable. Apparently, the awareness of introducing the target language culture as an effort to learn target language well, which mainly refers to western culture, is more considered important than preserving local culture. This is in line with what Zakaria and Hashim (2009) have found in their study. They found that there was insufficient number of local culture presented in English material in Malaysia. Whereas, promoting the context familiar to the learners will help learners to make use English in a meaningful way.

There are considerable studies concerning on evaluating and identifying cultural elements in English textbooks. Norrizan (1993), Abdullah and Chandran (2009) investigated the cultural elements in English textbooks in Malaysian context. They suggested that the presence of local or source culture needed to be integrated in English textbooks. Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990) in their study on investigating the teaching material in Morocco found that there was a less benefit gained by including western culture in the textbooks. They argued that Introducing Western culture would result in a tendency for cultural comparison

which would cause dissatisfaction among learners with their own culture. However, this notion is in contrast with Suemasa (2004) who argued that comparison between the native culture and foreign cultures is an important way of raising awareness of both culture. Thus it remarks another perspective regarding to the inclusion of foreign culture content in English textbook.

Additionally, another finding from Olajide's study (2010) showed that English textbooks in Nigeria had integrated cultural content. The books, however, did not provide any information on how those cultural content would be used in cultural context. The findings of those studies in many nations indicate that the presentations of local culture still lack in quantity and quality. In general, they indicate that western culture is used to introduce stereotypes presenting differences between western and local culture. Considering this fact, this present study intends to explore local cultural content in English textbooks for primary school in Indonesia.

1.2 Statement of Problems

The problems in this study are formulated in the following research questions:

1. Whose culture do the textbooks disseminate?
2. How is the culture disseminated in the textbooks?

1.3 The Aims of Study

This study is aimed to:

1. Reveal the cultural content disseminated in a series of English textbooks for primary school.
2. Reveal the dissemination of cultural content in a series of English textbooks for primary school.

1.4 Reasons for Choosing Topic

There are several considerations underlying the selection of the topic of this study. First, the study concerning on cultural aspect in primary English textbook is considered limited in terms of quantity, especially in English department of education of UPI. Moreover, the current evaluation process on primary English textbooks has mainly focused on gender biases. Thus by conducting the present study, the writer wishes to promote new aspect in the scope of primary English textbook evaluation to consider. Last, the topic is considered appealing to the writer since it reveals the actual phenomenon found in books used in the community.

1.5 The Significance of Study

The result of this study hopefully could offer some suggestions to benefit the English language teachers and educators in selecting textbooks to use. Moreover, a detailed analysis of the books can provide valuable insight into the current teaching of culture from the standpoint of which culture is considered important in Indonesian education.

1.6 The Scope of Study

This study is limited to investigate only whose culture is disseminated in the English textbooks for primary school and how the culture is disseminated. It also probes into the presence of local culture in the textbooks. The investigation is conducted on three English textbooks “Grow with English” (book four to book six). It focuses on written texts. Written texts in this sense are limited to reading passages for they are believed to be a medium to disseminate culture.

1.7 Research Methodology

1.7.1 Research Design

This study is a content analysis study to reveal the cultural content in English textbooks for primary school. This study is descriptive qualitative in nature. It employs a systematic technique for analyzing message content and message handling. It is research tool for observing and analyzing the overt communication behavior of certain communicators. However, this study also employs the element of quantitative in the form of how the data are recorded in percentages.

The text will be categorized and analyzed based on the framework of Culture in Four Senses proposed by Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990).

1.7.2 Data Collection

The sources of the data for this study are three English textbooks for primary school entitled “Grow with English” book four to six published by Erlangga. The selection of the data sources is mainly influenced by two important considerations: practicability and usability. Practicability in this sense means that the sources of the data are not difficult to find, while usability means that the

textbooks are used in a real teaching situation in elementary school classrooms, especially in Bandung area. Therefore, by evaluating these books, the research wants to know also what kinds of books are used in the community.

The data for the study are in the form of written texts and illustrations that may accompany the text of reading passages. The data are collected by analytically selecting potential sources of data. Selected parts of the books have been determined to be further analyzed to answer the previously formulated research questions. The investigation involved careful isolation of the cultural content available within each text.

17.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis consists of two main stages. First, to see the presence of cultural content, the texts are investigated by employing the concept of culture in four dimensions. Reading passages were analyzed in terms of content. Content refers to the ideas contained in the text and the way they are handled in the context of author. Content reading passages are classified in terms of Local culture, which refers to Indonesian culture and Non-local culture which refers to the foreign culture. Those classifications are based on Kachru's Circles of English concept of English diverse cultural context (1991). Culture in this context will be perceived in terms of Aesthetic Sense, Sociological sense, Semantic Sense, and Pragmatic (Sociolinguistic) Sense (Adaskou, Briten, and Fahsi, 1990). Second, after classifying and recording the cultural loads in the text, the frequency of each dimension of culture is then converted to percentages for comparison purpose.

These percentages are then analyzed to determine which culture disseminates in the books and which dimension of culture occurs the most frequently. Findings are then presented in the form of tables and graphs. The findings are then discussed qualitatively to retort the research questions.

1.8 Clarification of Key Terms

1. Content: the sum of range of what has been perceived, discovered, or learned.
2. Local: belonging to or connected with the particular place or area that you are talking about or with the place where you live. (Oxford Advanced Learners).
3. Culture: the total way of life of people composed of their learned and shared behavior patterns, value, norms, and material objects (Rogers and Steinfatt, 1999).
4. Content analysis: content analysis is a systematic technique for analyzing message content and message handling. It is research tool for observing and analyzing the overt communication behavior of certain communicator. (Ma. Lour des S. Bautista and Stella P. Go, 1985).
5. Textbook: A formal manual of instruction in a specific subject, especially one for use in schools or colleges.
6. Four cultural dimensions: Culture which is separated into four meanings; the Aesthetic Sense, The Sociological Sense, The Semantic Sense, and The Pragmatic/Sociolinguistic Sense (Adaskou, Britten & Fahsi, 1990).

1.9 Organization of the Paper

This paper is organized into the following five chapters:

Chapter I : Introduction

This chapter covers Background of the Study, Statement of Problem, Aims of the Study, Reason for Choosing the Topic, Significance of the Study, Scope of Study, Research Methodology, Clarification of Key Term, and Organization on the Paper.

Chapter II : Theoretical Foundation

In this chapter, the writer provides relevant theoretical frameworks related to the study. It includes the theory of Culture and Its Dimensions, Local Culture, English Textbooks, and Content Analysis.

Chapter III : Methodology

This chapter covers the statement of the problem, research design, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter IV : Findings and Discussion

In this chapter, the writer presents all collected data and findings by analyzing and interpreting the data in detail. Further discussion of the data is also presented in this chapter.

Chapter V : Conclusions and Suggestions

This chapter reports the conclusions drawn from the writer's interpretation of the result of the study and her suggestions for readers about related issues and further studies.

