

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Framework

1. Cultural Values

Culture refers to all meaningful aspects that reflect human life. Cultural representation is the process of depicting or producing meaning from a culture. Hall (1997) explains that culture operates within a “circuit of culture,” which consists of five interconnected elements: representation, regulation, identity, production, and consumption. These elements work together in producing meaning through the portrayal of identities and events, the application of rules, the patterns of consumption, and the processes of meaning-making, all of which are ultimately tied to representation (Ida, 2014).

Taylor (in Watloly, 2001) defines culture as a complex whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs, as well as the abilities and habits acquired by humans as members of society. This definition suggests that culture covers all aspects of human life. It is often viewed as a “text”, meaning everything in reality that can be interpreted. Koentjaraningrat (2004) also offers a definition of culture and classifies its universal elements into seven categories:

- a. Religious systems and ceremonies include both the values and rituals of a religion.
- b. Social organization system refers to the patterns of interaction within a community, guided by norms and values, whether written or unwritten. For example, *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) and *tenggang rasa* (tolerance).
- c. Knowledge systems encompass human understanding of nature, living beings, the human body, and social life, gained through interaction with the environment, with others, and through inherited traditions.

- d. Language is fundamental to cultural development, as language is the primary medium for communication and the transmission of values.
- e. Technology and tools system refer to the instruments created and used by humans to sustain life, including production tools, transportation, weapons, ornaments, and other material objects.
- f. Arts are the creative expressions of human aesthetic sense, combining imagination and skill to produce works that embody beauty and cultural identity.
- g. Livelihood system cover the ways people earn a living and meet their needs, such as through agriculture, trade, or industry.

Based on the explanations above, this study views cultural values as socially constructed meanings that are represented through both textual and visual elements in textbooks. The framework proposed by Koentjaraningrat (2004) is considered relevant because it provides clear and systematic categories to identify cultural values embedded in everyday practices. In the context of an elementary ELT textbook, these cultural elements are often presented implicitly through simple narratives, characters, and visual representations. Therefore, this research focuses on identifying which cultural elements are most prominently represented and how they are constructed to suit young learners' cognitive and social development.

2. Cultural Values in ELT Textbook

The relationship between language and culture is a fundamental aspect in language learning, especially in the context of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) (Banaruee et al., 2023). Language is not only a means of communication but also a reflection of culture which includes the values, norms, and viewpoint on life of its speakers. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) as cited in Rahmannia (2020) stated that language learning materials in textbooks play a role in connecting students with various aspects of culture. They identified culture in teaching materials into three main categories: source culture, target culture, and international target culture. Through this

framework, textbook can be analyzed to see how culture is represented and how textbooks can be a vehicle for developing students' cultural awareness.

The source culture category includes teaching materials that introduce local culture or native culture of the students. Teaching materials focusing on this culture help students understand and appreciate their own cultural identities. For example, by learning about local customs, traditions, or cultural symbols, students can learn more about the unique aspects of their culture. In addition, materials that emphasize local culture also prepare students to speak about their culture to foreigners. This strengthens their ability to introduce and preserve local culture at an international level.

The target culture category refers to teaching materials that introduce the culture of native English-speaking countries, such as the United States and the United Kingdom. This material aims to familiarize students with the culture that is the context of the language they are learning. By understanding target culture, students not only learn the language, but also understand the culture behind it. This helps them recognize cultural differences that may arise in international communication. This is important for building cultural competence, so that students can understand the cultural values in the context of a native English-speaking country.

The last is the international target category includes teaching materials that introduce diverse cultures from countries where English is used as an international language, not as a mother tongue. This teaching materials serve to enrich students' intercultural insight by introducing them to a wider variety of cultures outside the source culture and target culture. Through this teaching materials, students can get to know various socio-cultural contexts throughout the world, which is very important in the current era of the globalization. This awareness of international culture is expected to strengthen students' cross-cultural communication skills and prepare students to interact in various intercultural contexts where English is used as an intermediary language.

In this research, ELT textbooks are viewed as language learning

materials that function as cultural artifacts carrying particular values and ideologies. Cultural content in textbooks plays a significant role in shaping students' perspectives toward their own culture as well as other cultures. For elementary school students, cultural values are often introduced through familiar topics such as food, friendship, and daily activities. Therefore, analyzing cultural values in ELT textbooks is important to understand how intercultural awareness is gradually developed through simple and accessible representations.

3. *Merdeka* Curriculum

The Indonesian government has implemented the *Merdeka* Curriculum as a replacement for the 2013 Curriculum to simplify learning materials, strengthen character development, and prioritize student competencies. This curriculum was applied at all levels of education, from elementary school to university, with several significant changes, especially in English language learning in elementary schools. In the 2013 curriculum, English was only a local content, but in the *Merdeka* Curriculum English is appointed as a compulsory subject. However, its implementation can be adjusted to the conditions and needs of each school.

In elementary school, learning English is expected to help students in developing communication skills as part of life skills (Artita et al., 2023). According to the decree of the head BSKAP (Badan Standar Kurikulum dan Asesmen Pendidikan), the main objective of learning English in the *Merdeka* Curriculum includes four important elements, one of them is to develop students' intercultural competence to understand and appreciate Indonesian and foreign cultures. This competency is expected to foster students' intercultural awareness, help them recognize and appreciate the cultural diversity that exists in the world, and improve students' ability to communicate effectively in a global context.

As part of the implementation of the independent curriculum, the government provides English textbooks that comply with curriculum standards. One of the textbooks used is "My Next Words Grade 3", a

package book designed for grade 3 elementary school students. This book refers to the *Merdeka* Curriculum and aims to build students' English language competence communicatively and contextually. The book "My Next Words Grade 3" consists of several chapters that cover the themes of daily life and culture that are close to students. This book not only focuses on linguistic aspects, but also integrates cultural values from source culture, international target culture, and target culture. With the cultural elements in this book, it is hoped that students can develop intercultural competence in accordance with the vision of the *Merdeka* curriculum.

In addition, this book adopts a multimodal approach by combining text and visual elements in presenting the material. The pictures in textbook not only function as illustrations, but also have a role in conveying cultural meaning and helping students understand the context of language use in real situations (Hidayat et al., 2023). Therefore, a multimodal analysis of the book "My Next Words Grade 3" is relevant in this research to identify how cultural values represented through a combination of text and visuals.

4. ELT Textbooks

Textbook is an important component in English Language Teaching (ELT) in the classroom, becoming the main component in the learning process. Teachers use textbooks as a guide to plan and deliver lesson material, while students rely on textbooks to understand linguistic content and learn the language models presented (Vitta, 2023). As stated by Awasthi (2006) in Rahmannia (2020), textbooks are a central aspect in the teaching and learning process. Through textbooks, teachers can present English as a subject that students are expected to master at school. In this case, the views of Cortazzi and Jin (1999) quoted in Rajabi and Ketabi (2012) emphasize that textbooks act as teachers, maps, resources, authorities, and ideologies in the delivery of English material, which functions to direct and instilling cultural and linguistic understanding in students.

Furthermore, textbooks play a role in helping the learning process to achieve the instructional goals that have been set. Pamungkas, (2010) stated

that textbooks are one of the teaching material media used in the learning process. Textbooks are generally written in a structured and concise manner, so that they present material in an organized and easy to understand form. Teachers and students use textbooks as the main source that provides direction and framework for teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Textbooks not only present language material but also present learning patterns and sequences that help students and teachers follow the learning process effectively.

In Indonesia, the curriculum is an important factor that influences the selection and preparation of material in textbooks. The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture has decided that education in Indonesia should implement *Merdeka* Curriculum, which aims to build students competency in more flexible and contextual learning environment. As part of implementing this policy, the English textbooks currently used have been adapted to the *Merdeka* Curriculum. This textbook not only conveys English language material but also integrates cultural values that are in line with the curriculum vision, namely developing students' intercultural competence, fostering an understanding of both Indonesian and foreign cultures.

5. Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA)

The concept of multimodality describes the various sources used in communication, it refers to the combination of various modes such as text, images, gestures, layout, and others (Kristina, 2018). Multimodality focuses on the relationship between text and the meaning it conveys. In line with this, the concept of multimodality in EFL textbooks integrates text and visual images to illustrate the meaning contained in the text. This concept is closely related to the effectiveness of the learning process (Fitriana & Wirza, 2021). Students are encouraged to understand the real-world picture through locations, situations, and characters presented through visual images in EFL textbooks. Visual images are seen not only as decorative elements, but also as a tool for conveying learning material. In this way, students can relate visual images to learning content in more depth (Weninger, 2020).

4.1 Visual Grammar

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2020), Visual Grammar consists of three main visual meta-functions. First, the representational focuses on the way images depict various actions, events, and relationships between objects or figures in the image. This function shows how these visual elements are represented in the context of the image world, creating an understanding of the action or interaction that occurs in the image. For instance, in the analyzed textbook, the image of Made and Alfonso standing together in front of a house demonstrates a conceptual process, where their interaction symbolizes friendship across cultural backgrounds. Similarly, the image of Alfonso smiling while eating pizza represents a narrative process, showing his active engagement and preference for Western food through action.

Second, the interactive looks at the relationship between the image and its viewer. Elements such as the angle of view, the distance, and the presence of eye contact in the image affect how the viewer interacts with and experiences the image. For example, a higher point of view can make the object appear lower or vulnerable, while a closer distance can create a feeling of intimacy. In the textbook data, when Alfonso makes direct eye contact with the viewer while expressing his food preference (demand), it creates a personal connection that invites students to engage with the cultural content. In contrast, when the mother character directs her gaze toward the satay rather than at the viewer (offer), students are positioned as observers of cultural practices, allowing them to witness without direct involvement.

Third, the compositional focuses on the layout and arrangement of visual elements in the image. This aspect looks at things such as the balance between elements, emphasis on certain areas, and how information is arranged visually to attract the viewer's attention. For example, a symmetrical composition can create a sense of stability, while the use of certain colors can draw the viewer's attention to certain

parts of the image. In the analyzed chapter, Alfonso is consistently placed on the right side (new information position) when introduced with pizza, emphasizing his foreign food preference as new knowledge to be learned. The framing of separate panels for each character and their food choices helps students organize and categorize different cultural preferences systematically.

Aspects	Description
Representational	Relationship between participants
Interactive	Relationship between image and viewer
Compositional	Relationship between elements of the text and aspects of the image

Table 1 Kress and van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar

Source: Kress and van Leeuwen (2020).

4.2 Transitivity

Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) identified six types of processes in language: mental, verbal, relational, material, behavioral, and existential.

Mental processes relate to verbs that describe mental activities such as thinking, seeing, feeling, and wanting. These processes are used to convey opinions, feelings, thoughts, or desires (Alfiana, 2012). For example, verbs such as "think", "feel", or "want" are into this category, as they help speakers express their views or feelings about something. In the analyzed textbook data, mental processes are frequently used to express food preferences, such as in the clause "He likes pizza and spaghetti" where "likes" is a mental process of affect, "He" (Alfonso) is the Senser experiencing the feeling, and "pizza and spaghetti" is the Phenomenon being liked. Similarly, "He doesn't like rice" uses the same mental process structure to express dislike, positioning cultural food preferences as personal feelings rather than objective facts.

Verbal processes refer to the act of speaking that involves conveying information or verbal communication. This process includes utterances

that clearly provide or direct information, such as speaking, telling, asking, or explaining (Saragih, 2010). In this case, the verb functions to indicate the relationship between the speaker and the recipient of the information. While verbal processes are not predominant in the analyzed chapter, they may appear in dialogues elsewhere in the textbook, such as when characters tell each other about their preferences or ask questions about food.

Relational processes are concerned with social relationships, focusing on the concepts of "being" and "having". This process is used to define or describe a subject. For example, in sentences such as "I am a teacher" or "he has a car", the verbs "is" or "has" are used to identify or describe the entity. In the textbook data, relational processes establish cultural identity and social connections. For instance, "Alfonso is Made's friend" is a relational identifying process where "Alfonso" is the Token being identified and "Made's friend" is the Value, establishing their social relationship across cultures. Another example is "Alfonso is from Italy," which uses a relational circumstantial process to identify Alfonso's cultural background, where "Alfonso" is the Token and "from Italy" is the Value that defines his national identity.

Material processes relate to physical actions or activities carried out by a person. This process involves a subject carrying out an action that can have an impact on other people or objects. In this process, there is usually an actor (doer) who carries out an action (process), and often this action targets another object. Although the analyzed text segment focuses more on states and feelings, material processes appear in the visual narrative, such as when Made hands rice to Alfonso (action of giving) or when Alfonso eats pizza (action of consuming). These material actions complement the mental and relational processes in the text to create a complete multimodal representation of cultural food practices.

Behavioral processes include various physiological actions or psychological, such as breathing, purring, or listening. These actions relate to physiological or psychological responses that directly involve the subject, but are not necessarily directed at other objects. In the context of elementary ELT textbooks, behavioral processes might appear in sentences describing characters smiling, laughing, or showing physical reactions to food.

Existential processes are related to statements regarding the existence or occurrence of something. This process is used to show that something exists or happened. The existential process indicates the reality or truth regarding the existence of an entity or event. While existential processes do not appear in the analyzed text segment, they might be used elsewhere in textbooks to introduce cultural elements.

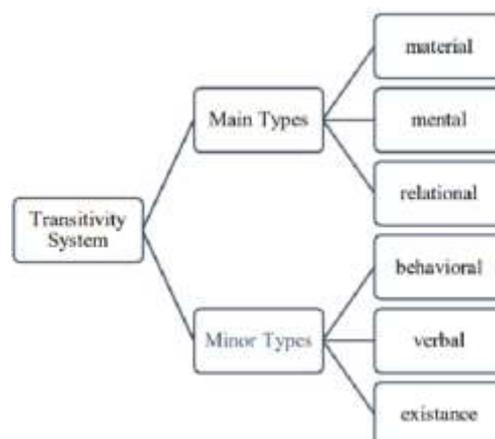


Figure 1 Halliday's Transitivity Verbal System

The mental processes (affect) and relational processes (identifying and circumstantial) are the dominant process types used to represent cultural values. Mental processes allow students to understand cultural differences as personal preferences and feelings, making cultural diversity relatable and non-threatening. Relational processes establish cultural identities and social relationships, creating the foundation for intercultural understanding. This combination of process types reflects the textbook's pedagogical approach of humanizing cultural differences while maintaining respect for distinct cultural identities.

B. Study of Relevant Research

There are several studies that examine cultural representation in ELT textbooks. Prihatiningsih et al. (2021) used a multimodal analysis approach to examine cultural representations in EFL textbooks for grade VII students. This study reveals that there is an imbalance in the representation of cultural types, where the source culture (Indonesian culture) is more dominant compared to the target culture and international culture. These findings indicate that textbooks tend to prioritize students' identity and character education, but can limit their opportunities to improve students' intercultural competence.

Another research conducted by Septiyana et al. (2022) analyzed the cultural content in *English on Sky* textbooks for middle school students in Indonesia. Using Corazzi and Jin's theory, this research found that the source culture is more dominant with 46 cultural elements, compared to 14 target cultural elements and 12 international cultural elements. This study emphasizes the importance of a balanced representation of cultural elements to increase students' cultural knowledge and awareness of cultural diversity.

Furthermore, Roohani and Hosseini (2021) examined the vision textbook series used nationally in Iran. Using the semiotic framework of Wenninger and Kis, this study finds that source culture (Iran) appears more often than target and international culture. These findings highlight the importance for ELT material developers to include more culturally diverse visuals and textuales to improve EFL students' intercultural competence.

Based on these studies, it can be concluded that ELT textbooks in various contexts tend to provide limited cultural representation, often emphasizing local culture or source culture. However, research also underlines that diverse cultural representations, both through text and visual elements, are essential to help EFL students develop intercultural competence and understand the use of English in global contexts. These findings are relevant to the research that will be carried out on investigating cultural values in ELT textbooks using Multimodal Discourse Analysis approach.