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TRANSCULTURAL REPRESENTATION IN INDONESIAN EFL TEXTBOOKS: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract: This study investigated the comprehensive depiction of culture within the framework of Global Englishes, offering a fresh outlook in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. This perspective transitioned from admitting the supremacy of the English language to acknowledging the existence of International English and English as a global language. This development has profoundly revolutionized the domain of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. This study aimed to examine the cultural material found in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook, with a specific focus on how it is altered and influenced by the concept of transcultural flows. The predominant aim of research on cultural content has been to quantitatively delineate the proportion of said content. The investigations also explored the cultural categorization based on a wide range of cultural characteristics. They failed to analyse culture at the level of microcultures or the transfer of culture between various contexts. The study additionally examined the transcultural flows that occur across national and cultural boundaries, utilizing Pennycook's theory (2007) as a basis. The analysis uncovered dynamic interplays between the indigenous Indonesian culture and transcultural influences, notably focused on the act of borrowing and remaking in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook. The study highlighted the simultaneous presence and interplay of these borrowings and the indigenous Indonesian culture, offering pupils a chance to cultivate a comprehension of culture within a worldwide context. Moreover, this study revealed that the cultural depictions and their integration into Indonesian settings offer English education that beyond mere proficiency in the English language. The cultural representations and their position as borrowings offer opportunities for the advancement of English as a constituent of global Englishes.
Keywords: *cultural representations; transcultural flows; EFL textbook.*

INTRODUCTION

The role of culture in English language teaching (ELT) materials has been a central concern in language education research, particularly in response to increasing globalization and the growing recognition of English as an international language. Earlier studies on cultural representation in EFL textbooks primarily focused on identifying cultural content through national or ethnic categories and examining the balance between source, target, and international cultures (Byram & Morgan, 1994).

While these studies contributed significantly to understanding the cultural dimensions of language learning materials, they often conceptualized culture as a relatively fixed and bounded entity.

More recent scholarship has shifted toward dynamic perspectives of culture that emphasize interculturality, hybridity, and transcultural interactions. Within the framework of Global Englishes, culture is increasingly viewed as fluid, negotiated, and continuously reconstructed through cross-cultural encounters (Baker & Ishikawa, 2021). This perspective aligns with Pennycook's (2007) notion of transcultural flows, which conceptualizes culture as moving across linguistic, geographical, and social boundaries through processes such as borrowing, blending, remaking, and returning.

Research on Indonesian EFL textbooks has

demonstrated growing attention to cultural representation. Ariawan (2020) examined cultural dimensions in Indonesian EFL textbooks using Byram's cultural checklist and found that cultural content was primarily represented through observable cultural products and practices. Similarly, Riadini and Cahyono (2021) reported that Indonesian textbooks incorporated various cultural elements but tended to emphasize surface-level cultural information rather than deeper intercultural engagement. More recently, Saraswati et al. (2023) investigated the integration of Indonesian cultural content in senior high school textbooks and found an attempt to balance local and global cultural perspectives. Rismasari and Arsyad (2023) compared cultural awareness across general and elective English textbooks and highlighted differences in the depth and diversity of cultural representations.

Recent international studies have further emphasized the importance of examining cultural content from intercultural and transcultural perspectives. Agustina and Kencana (2023) found that Indonesian EFL textbooks contribute to intercultural communicative competence development but still present culture predominantly through static representations. Bahri and Agustina (2023) similarly reported that cultural content in Indonesian textbooks remains largely descriptive and requires greater emphasis on intercultural interaction. Alfaya et al. (2023) demonstrated that cultural representation in ELT textbooks often privileges certain cultural perspectives while marginalizing others. Furthermore, Faraj et al. (2024) and Oviedo-Gomez (2024) argued that contemporary EFL textbooks should move beyond cultural exposure toward fostering critical intercultural awareness and intercultural dialogue.

Collectively, these studies indicate an increasing scholarly interest in cultural representation within EFL materials. However, most investigations continue to examine culture through traditional cultural categories, cultural products, or intercultural competence frameworks. Comparatively little attention has been given to the dynamic circulation and transformation of cultural elements as conceptualized through transcultural flows.

Although previous studies have provided valuable insights into cultural representation in EFL textbooks, several gaps remain. First, existing studies have predominantly focused on identifying cultural categories, cultural products, and intercultural dimensions without examining how cultural elements move, interact, and transform across cultural boundaries. Second, many textbook analyses continue to adopt a "large culture" perspective that emphasizes national cultures while paying limited attention to everyday cultural practices and small-culture interactions. Third, few studies have applied Pennycook's (2007) framework of transcultural flows to textbook analysis, particularly within the Indonesian EFL context.

To address these gaps, this study investigates the representation of transcultural flows in three Indonesian government-published EFL textbooks. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following research questions: RQ1. Which concepts of transcultural flows (borrowing, blending, remaking, and returning) are represented in Indonesian EFL textbooks? RQ2. How are the identified transcultural flows distributed across cultural categories represented in the textbooks? RQ3. To what extent do Indonesian EFL textbooks reflect the dynamic and fluid nature of cultural interactions as conceptualized in Pennycook's (2007) theory of transcultural flows?

This study offers several contributions to the existing literature. First, it applies Pennycook's (2007) transcultural flows framework to the analysis of Indonesian EFL textbooks, an approach that remains underexplored in textbook studies. Second, unlike previous investigations that primarily focus on large cultural categories, this study adopts a small-culture perspective that highlights everyday cultural interactions and the dynamic movement of cultural elements across contexts. Third, the study systematically examines the presence of borrowing, blending, remaking, and returning within textbook content, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of how culture is represented in educational materials.

The findings are expected to contribute theoretically by extending the application of transcultural theory to textbook analysis. Practically, the study may inform textbook authors, curriculum developers, and policymakers regarding the need for more dynamic representations of culture in EFL materials. Pedagogically, the findings can support teachers in developing students' intercultural competence and critical cultural awareness using textbooks that better reflect the complexity of contemporary cultural interactions.

METHOD

The data were collected from the three textbooks through several steps. The steps are explained in the following.

The very first step was selecting Indonesian

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook. The researcher opted to utilize three English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook that were released by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. The selection was made based on several considerations. First, the textbooks were published by the government, thus to a great degree, impacting the English learning widely in Indonesia. Second, the textbooks represented a complete series of three secondary levels, allowing sufficient room for exploring culture representations.

The textbook content selection for the data was conducted based on Adaskou et al. (1990) who proposes eight (8) types of cultural information. They consisted of descriptive text, cultural note, dialogues for habitual action, contextualized writing task, idioms and collocation, realia, sound recording, and visual illustration.

Of these eight types, the researcher was restricted to only five (5) categories- descriptive text, cultural note, dialogues, idioms and collocation, and visual illustration. The exclusion of the three types was based on these reasons. In relation to writing tasks, this type heavily focused on the task itself, putting aside the cultural aspects in the tasks so they were not suitable to include. As for the audio type, the textbooks were not accompanied by the audio materials, so it was excluded. Lastly, regarding the realia, this type overlapped highly with visual illustrations, so the researcher only included the visual illustrations. The operationalization of these five types of cultural information from Adaskou et al. (1990) is described in the following table.

Table 1. *Cultural information types*

No	Cultural Information	Definition	Sample Data
1	Descriptive text	Informative texts which provide the readers with information about certain culture	Taj Mahal
2	Cultural note	Any notes or texts which focus particularly on how people from different cultures see and react to certain issues	The text about bullying
3	Dialogues for habitual action	Natural dialogue or conversation among interlocutors which mention cultural elements	Dialogue between Santi, Bayu, and Riri
4	Idioms and Collocation	Some words whose meaning is different from the written form. They usually belong to target culture	Letter from Saidah to Alia
5	Visual Illustration	Some visible illustrations representing any culture	

This study employed a qualitative content analysis design (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) to examine cultural representations and their reflection of transcultural flows in three Indonesian EFL textbooks. The unit of analysis consisted of cultural representations found in descriptive texts, cultural notes, dialogues, idioms and collocations, and visual illustrations.

The analysis was conducted in four stages. First, all cultural representations identified in the textbooks were categorized using Byram and Morgan's (1994) cultural framework, consisting of social identity and social groups, social interaction, belief and behavior, socio-political institutions, socialization and the life cycle, national history, national geography, national cultural heritage, and stereotypes and national identity.

Second, each cultural representation was coded according to Pennycook's (2007) four concepts of transcultural flows: borrowing, blending, remaking, and returning. Borrowing refers to the adoption of cultural elements from another cultural context; blending refers to the combination of elements from different cultures into hybrid forms; remaking refers to the adaptation or reinterpretation of borrowed cultural elements in local contexts; and returning refers to cultural elements that circulate globally and subsequently re-enter their original cultural contexts in transformed forms.

Third, the coded data were compared across the three textbooks to identify recurring patterns and dominant forms of transcultural flows. Frequencies and percentages were calculated to support the interpretation of qualitative findings.

Finally, representative examples from the textbooks were examined in greater depth to understand how transcultural flows were

manifested through textual and visual representations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study presents the findings and discussions on the following research question: How do these three EFL textbooks reflect transcultural flows? The summary of key findings was explained in the following:

Firstly, the concept of borrowing was predominantly seen in the three textbooks under the cultural category of belief and behaviour. However, the other three concepts of transcultural flows: blending, remaking, and returning were not captured in the textbooks. This is since the textbooks did not have enough cultural contents especially regarding the global culture as the basic concept of transcultural flows.

Secondly, the concept of borrowing was captured in the form of food, clothing, music, lifestyle, as well as in the belief or religious symbols. These representations of culture were mostly found in the texts and visual illustrations. The example of the concept of borrowing and remaking can be found in the picture of a headscarf. Headscarf was borrowed from the Middle East and remade in Indonesia becoming a religious symbol.

Thirdly, the cultural representations considering the concept of transcultural flows were mostly depicted in the form of borrowing under the category of belief and behaviour. They were represented by the presence of cultural notes with the quotes in it.

The following table showed the reflection of transcultural flows seen from the nine cultural categories.

Table 2. *Transcultural flows in the three Indonesian EFL textbooks*

No	Cultural Categories	Concepts	Grade X	Grade XI	Grade XII	Total	Percen-tage
1	Social identity and social groups	Borrowing	1	2	1	4	14%
2	Social Interaction	Borrowing	3	-	-	3	10%
3	Belief and Behavior	Borrowing and Remaking	-	-	1	1	3%
		Borrowing	11	-	3	14	47%
4	Socio-political Institutions	Borrowing	-	2	1	3	10%
5	Socialization and the life cycle	Borrowing	1	-	1	2	7%
6	National history	-	-	-	-	-	
7	National geography	Borrowing	-	-	1	1	3%
8	National cultural heritage	Borrowing	-	-	1	1	3%
9	Stereotypes and national identity	Borrowing	1	-	-	1	3%

There were many different cultural categories that were dominated by the concept of borrowing. These categories included social identity and social groups, social interaction, belief and behavior, socio-political institutions, socialization and the life cycle, national geography, national cultural heritage, and stereotypes and national identity. When it comes to the investigation of cultural categories, this demonstrated a consistent strategy that involved absorbing aspects and influences from the outside world.

The data revealed that different cultural categories were given varying amounts of importance. Although belief and behavior stood out as having a strong focus that made use of both borrowing and remaking concepts, other categories, such as national history, did not have any specific concepts, which may indicate that there was a potential gap or that the emphasis had been lessened.

The utilization of the notion of borrowing was indicative of an understanding of the interconnection of cultures as well as the dynamic character of cultural occurrences. Because of the strong emphasis placed on belief and behavior, it was implied that there was an acknowledgment of the influence that external cultural factors have on individual and collective behaviors.

The limited focus placed on certain categories, such as national history and stereotypes, raised doubts regarding the extent to which cultural inquiry in these areas was comprehensive.

As for the key findings based on the qualitative analysis, it can be found in the following explanations.

Firstly, the concept of transcultural flows was not really captured in the three textbooks, resulting in the limited perception of cultural fluidity, emphasizing that cultures are not static entities but continually evolve through interactions and exchanges.

Secondly, the concept of transcultural flows was further strengthened by the more complex investigation of belief and behavior, which made use of notions that were borrowed as well as conceptions that were remade. It reflected an

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understanding that cultural materials not only become borrowed but also have the potential to undergo modifications, which contributed to the cultural landscape that is constantly evolving. This emphasis on qualitative aspects recognized the complex ways in which cultural processes flow, adapt, and alter individual and group actions across different countries.

Thirdly, there was a lack of analysis of national history, which raised questions about the extent to which the materials were able to capture the intricacies of transcultural flows. An investigation of national history that is more extensive and an approach to tackling stereotypes that is more nuanced would lead to a more complete understanding of how cultural narratives and biases flow across societies, altering perceptions in a variety of different ways when they are taken into consideration.

The following is the discussion based on the key findings found in the textbooks. Firstly, the concept of borrowing was predominantly seen in the three textbooks under the cultural category of belief and behavior. However, the other three concepts of transcultural flows: blending, remaking, and returning were not captured in the textbooks.

It is noteworthy that the textbooks place a prominent emphasis on the idea of borrowing within the cultural category of belief and behavior. This is in line with the theoretical framework of transcultural flows that was outlined by Pennycook (2007). To demonstrate how parts of culture from other places are absorbed into the context of the local environment, this emphasis shows that a purposeful choice was made. Borrowing, as a concept, is frequently more straightforward to express and may match with the educational aims of introducing students to other cultural traditions.

The absence of the notions of blending, recreating, and returning in the textbooks, on the other hand, raises questions about the depth and complexity of the cultural representation that is contained within the textbooks. It is important to note that Pennycook's theory emphasizes the multiple character of cultural contacts. This theory encompasses not only the borrowing of materials but also the blending of varied cultural aspects, the remaking of cultural practices in new contexts, and the cyclical return of cultural elements.

Blending, for example, is the process of combining cultural aspects from a variety of sources, which ultimately results in hybrid forms. As a result of the textbooks' lack of comprehensive coverage of blending, there is a possibility that they may miss an opportunity to demonstrate the richness and diversity that results from the intersection of cultures. Remaking, on the other hand, refers to the process of creatively adapting cultural practices. The absence of remaking shows that there may be a potential constraint in depicting how cultures actively shape and reinterpret aspects that have been borrowed in new and unique ways.

According to Pennycook's idea, the concept of returning emphasizes the cyclical movement of cultural materials around the world and their return to their place of origin in a manner that is different from how they were originally. There is a possibility that students' comprehension of the ever-changing nature of cultural expressions, as well as the ways in which these expressions circulate and influence cultures on a global scale, may be hindered by the absence of portrayal of returning in the textbooks.

While it is possible that this selective concentration on borrowing serves specific educational aims, it does raise broader problems about the extent to which students are supplied with a cultural education that is comprehensive. Not only does the assimilation of foreign materials contribute to the complexity of cultural dynamics, but the subtle processes of blending, remaking, and returning also play a role in this richness. This is what is meant by the concept of transcultural flows. It is possible that a more nuanced and comprehensive knowledge of the dynamic nature of cultures and the interactions between them might be established via the investigation of these new notions. There is a chance to widen the spectrum of cultural representation by rethinking the educational content. This would provide students with a more comprehensive and internationally oriented view on the cultural flows and exchanges that take place.

Secondly, when it comes to the cultural representations of food, dress, music, lifestyle, and religious symbols that are included in the textbooks, the manifestations of borrowing and recreating create a rich tapestry of examples that are in line with Pennycook's theory of transcultural flows (2007). The fact that cultural elements are not bound to set categories but rather continuously flow, adapt, and restructure in response to a variety of stimuli is demonstrated by these instances, which exemplify the complicated and dynamic nature of cultural relations.

The adaptability of cultural materials is highlighted by the depiction of borrowing and remaking in a variety of cultural dimensions. In the sphere of food, for example, culinary practices and recipes can be taken from one culture and remade in another, which might result in a fusion of flavors

and culinary traditions thanks to the process of cultural exchange. This instance of culinary transculturation shows how food may become a concrete symbol of cultural interaction, which in turn reflects the dynamic interplay of transcultural flows.

In a similar vein, styles of clothes can be borrowed and rebuilt with the intention of reflecting changes in fashion and preferences within a culture. Because music is a form of cultural expression, it is possible for it to absorb components from a variety of musical traditions, which can result in the development of hybrid genres that are not limited by national characteristics. The assimilation of lifestyle choices from many cultures is another factor that adds to the dynamic nature of transcultural flows. These flows shape the way in which individuals live and interact in a variety of global situations.

A vivid illustration of how borrowing and remaking function in visual and symbolic expression is provided by the example of the headscarf. The headscarf, which was originally imported from the Middle East, goes through a transformation in Indonesia, where it acquires new levels of significance and becomes a symbol of religious belief. Not only does this demonstrate the adaptability of cultural aspects, but it also emphasizes the fact that cultural symbols can take on multiple meanings depending on the situation in which they are used.

The theory of Pennycook emphasizes that transcultural flows are not limited to fields but rather penetrate a variety of facets of human life. The multimodal nature of cultural connections is brought to light by the presence of these representations in both written texts and visual illustrations. Because it goes beyond linguistic expressions to capture the visual, symbolic, and sensory components of cultural borrowing and remaking, the visual illustration becomes a powerful instrument for portraying the complexity of transcultural flows. This is possible because the visual illustration extends beyond linguistic expressions.

In a society that is becoming more international and where cultural contacts are becoming more commonplace, it is essential to have a solid understanding of the relationships between borrowing and remaking. Educators can help students develop an appreciation for the dynamic and linked nature of culture by including examples like these into teaching materials. Not only does this technique improve cultural literacy, but it also stimulates critical thinking about the ways in which cultural aspects are negotiated, modified, and adapted within the intricate network of transcultural flows.

Thirdly, the cultural representations considering the concept of transcultural flows were mostly depicted in the form of borrowing under the category of belief and behavior.

Each of the three textbooks offers a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which cultural elements in this domain undergo dynamic modifications by placing an emphasis on the concept of borrowing within the cultural category of belief and behavior. Pennycook's theory emphasizes that cultural borrowing is not a process that occurs in a single direction but rather a process that is reciprocal and ever-changing. This is especially visible in the sphere of belief and behavior.

Through the presentation of examples of borrowing within the cultural categories of belief and behavior, the textbooks encourage readers to investigate the intricate ways in which cultural ideas and practices are transmitted, altered, and incorporated into one another. As an illustration of the dynamic nature of transcultural flows, consider the following scenario: the textbooks depict storylines or scenarios in which ethical concepts or moral values from one culture are absorbed into the behavioral standards of another society.

The notion of cultural purity is called into question by this dynamic interaction, which also brings to light the fluidity with which different cultural aspects interact with one another and influence one another.

In addition, the frequency of borrowing in the cultural category of belief and conduct implies that there is an acknowledgment of the interdependence of cultures as well as the porous nature of cultural boundaries. It reaffirms the notion that beliefs and behavioral norms are not fixed entities that are bound to certain cultural settings but rather are susceptible to ongoing negotiation and reinterpretation as they move through different cultural areas.

Furthermore, according to Pennycook's idea, borrowing is not only about the transfer of cultural aspects; it also entails the creative modification and remixing of these elements in new cultural settings. This makes borrowing more than merely the transfer of cultural materials. This may take the shape of the assimilation of rituals, moral ideals, or social norms from one culture into another culture, resulting in hybrid forms that are reflective of the diversity and flexibility of human cultures. This may take place in the context of belief and behavior.

To sum up, Pennycook's theory of Transcultural

Flows is consistent with the fact that the concept of borrowing is emphasized the most within the cultural category of belief and behavior in the textbooks. It gives a thorough depiction of how cultural elements associated to ideas and behavior are in constant motion, circulating, merging, and reshaping as they interact across diverse cultural spheres. More specifically, it shows how these elements are always changing. By cultivating an understanding for the dynamic and linked character of cultural manifestations within the realm of ideas and actions, this emphasis on borrowing contributes to the enrichment of the educational experience.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how transcultural flows are represented in three Indonesian government-published EFL textbooks using Pennycook's (2007) framework and Byram and Morgan's (1994) cultural categories. The findings indicate that the textbooks predominantly reflect the concept of borrowing, particularly within the category of belief and behavior. Other dimensions of transcultural flows, namely blending, remaking, and returning, were largely absent from the textbook content.

The dominance of borrowing suggests that the textbooks acknowledge the movement of cultural elements across contexts; however, they provide only a limited representation of the dynamic and multidirectional cultural interactions emphasized in transcultural theories. Cultural representations were primarily manifested through food, clothing, religious symbols, lifestyle practices, and visual illustrations. These findings suggest that the textbooks tend to portray culture as transferable rather than as continuously negotiated, transformed, and recreated through intercultural encounters.

The findings contribute to the growing body of research on Global Englishes and intercultural language education by demonstrating the applicability of transcultural flows as an analytical framework for examining EFL textbooks. The study also highlights the need for textbook developers to incorporate more diverse and dynamic representations of cultural interaction that extend beyond simple cultural borrowing.

This study has several limitations. First, it focused only on three government-published textbooks used in Indonesian secondary schools. Second, the analysis was restricted to textbook content and did not investigate how teachers or students interpret and use these cultural representations in classroom practice. Future studies may expand the scope by examining commercial textbooks, classroom implementation, and learners' responses to transcultural representations.

Overall, the study underscores the importance of developing EFL materials that better reflect the complexity, fluidity, and interconnectedness of cultures in contemporary global communication.

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