

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOK ENTITLED *BAHASA INGGRIS TINGKAT LANJUT*: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji representasi *Intercultural Communicative Competence* (ICC) dalam teks bacaan pada buku ajar EFL *Bahasa Inggris Tingkat Lanjut* serta menganalisis distribusi jenis budaya yang disajikan. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain analisis isi kuantitatif deskriptif dengan menganalisis 13 teks bacaan berdasarkan kerangka ICC Byram (1997; 2021), yang meliputi lima komponen: *savoirs* (pengetahuan), *savoir être* (sikap), *savoir comprendre* (menafsirkan dan mengaitkan), *savoir apprendre/faire* (keterampilan menemukan dan berinteraksi), serta *savoir s'engager* (kesadaran budaya kritis). Konten budaya diklasifikasikan ke dalam budaya sumber, target, dan internasional. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa seluruh komponen ICC terdapat dalam buku ajar, namun tidak merata. *Savoirs* menjadi komponen paling dominan, diikuti *savoir être* dan *savoir s'engager*, sedangkan *savoir comprendre* paling rendah. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa buku ajar lebih menekankan pengetahuan dan nilai budaya dibandingkan keterampilan interpretatif dan interaktif. Budaya internasional paling dominan, sementara budaya sumber dan target relatif seimbang, meskipun kedalaman representasinya berbeda. Secara keseluruhan, integrasi ICC dalam buku ajar masih parsial dan belum seimbang, sehingga perlu penguatan dimensi interkultural untuk mendukung pengembangan kompetensi siswa sesuai Kurikulum Merdeka.

Kata Kunci: Kompetensi Komunikasi Antarbudaya, Buku Teks Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing; Analisis Isi; Teks Bacaan; Model Byram

ABSTRACT

This study examines the representation of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in the reading texts of the Indonesian EFL textbook Bahasa Inggris Tingkat Lanjut and analyzes the distribution of cultural types. Despite increasing research on ICC in EFL materials, limited studies have specifically investigated how ICC components are systematically represented in textbooks used under the Merdeka Curriculum. Using a descriptive

quantitative content analysis, 13 reading texts were analyzed based on Byram's framework (1997; 2021), which includes five components: savoirs, savoir être, savoir comprendre, savoir apprendre/faire, and savoir s'engager. Cultural content was categorized into source, target, and international cultures. The findings reveal that all ICC components are present but unevenly distributed. Savoirs is the most dominant, while savoir comprendre is the least represented, indicating a stronger emphasis on cultural knowledge and values than on interpretive and interactive skills. International culture is the most prominent, followed by a balanced presence of source and target cultures, although their depth varies. Overall, ICC integration remains partial and unbalanced. The study highlights the need for more comprehensive integration of intercultural dimensions to support students' holistic competence in line with the Merdeka Curriculum.

Keyword: Intercultural Communicative Competence, EFL Textbook, Content Analysis, Reading Texts, Byram's Model

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1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing interconnectedness of global societies has intensified the need for individuals to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries. In this context, language learning extends beyond linguistic competence to include Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), which enables learners to interact appropriately and effectively with people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Byram, 1997; 2021). ICC encompasses knowledge, attitudes, interpretive skills, and critical cultural awareness that are essential for meaningful intercultural communication.

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, textbooks play a central role in shaping learners' linguistic and intercultural development. As primary instructional resources, textbooks provide exposure to both language use and cultural representations embedded in texts and activities. However, previous studies indicate that the integration of intercultural elements in EFL textbooks remains uneven. For instance, Zahra (2016) and Rosyidi et al. (2017) found that textbooks tend to prioritize cultural knowledge while giving limited attention to interpretive and interactive dimensions of ICC. Similarly, Cakir (2014) argues that textbook materials often fail to provide opportunities for learners to critically interpret and relate cultural meanings. These findings suggest that existing textbooks may not fully support the development of holistic intercultural competence.

Despite the growing body of research on ICC, most studies focus on general textbook evaluation or cultural content without critically examining how ICC components are systematically distributed. In particular, there is still limited research investigating the balance among ICC components within specific textbooks used in the Indonesian context. Furthermore, studies rarely address how cultural types, such as source, target, and international cultures, contribute differently to the development of intercultural competence. This lack of specificity indicates a gap in understanding how ICC is operationalized in actual classroom materials.

In the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes flexibility and student-centered learning, teachers are given greater autonomy in selecting instructional materials. One of the widely used textbooks is *Bahasa Inggris Tingkat Lanjut*. Although this textbook is designed to support communicative competence and cultural awareness, its representation of ICC has not been systematically analyzed. Without such analysis, it remains unclear whether the textbook provides balanced opportunities for learners to develop intercultural knowledge, skills, and critical awareness.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the representation of Intercultural Communicative Competence in the reading texts of the textbook *Bahasa Inggris Tingkat Lanjut* and to examine the distribution of cultural types presented in the textbook.

2. METHODS

The primary data consisted of 13 reading texts selected from the textbook. Reading materials were chosen because they provide explicit cultural narratives and contexts that can reflect intercultural elements. The analysis was guided by Byram's ICC framework (1997; 2021), which comprises five components: *savoirs* (knowledge), *savoir être* (attitudes), *savoir comprendre* (interpreting and relating), *savoir apprendre/faire* (skills of discovery and interaction), and *savoir s'engager* (critical cultural awareness). These components were used as analytical categories to identify and code intercultural elements within the texts.

Data were collected through document analysis. Each reading text was carefully examined to identify segments containing cultural references, intercultural situations, or implicit cultural meanings. These segments were recorded in a coding checklist developed based on Byram's ICC components and cultural categories proposed by Cortazzi and Jin (1999), namely source culture, target culture, and international culture.

The coding procedure was conducted systematically in several stages. First, all reading texts were read repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of the content. Second, relevant text segments were identified and coded according to predefined ICC categories. Third, each segment was assigned to one dominant ICC component based on its primary function. To ensure consistency, the coding criteria were clearly defined prior to analysis and applied uniformly across all data.

To enhance the validity of the study, the coding framework was derived from established theoretical models (Byram, 1997; 2021), ensuring conceptual alignment between theory and analysis. In addition, peer checking was conducted by involving another researcher to review a sample of the coded data and confirm the accuracy of categorization.

Reliability was ensured through repeated coding and cross-checking of the data. The researcher re-examined the coded segments multiple times to maintain consistency in classification. Any discrepancies identified during the review process were resolved by referring back to the coding guidelines and theoretical definitions. The data analysis involved calculating the frequency of each ICC component and examining their distribution across the reading texts. The results were then interpreted descriptively to identify patterns of ICC representation and the distribution of cultural types within the textbook.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The analysis of 13 reading texts in the textbook *Bahasa Inggris Tingkat Lanjut* reveals that all five components of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), as proposed by Byram (1997; 2021), are present. However, their distribution is uneven. *Savoirs* (knowledge) is the most dominant component, appearing in all texts (100%), followed by *savoir être* (attitudes) (84.6%) and *savoir s'engager* (critical cultural awareness) (76.9%). *Savoir apprendre/faire* (skills of discovery and interaction) appears in 69.2% of the texts, while *savoir comprendre* (interpreting and relating) is the least represented (38.5%).

The dominance of *savoirs* is evident in texts that present cultural knowledge explicitly. For example, a source culture text describes traditional practices through statements such as "Whenever the tifa is played, the Kamboi people would gather," which introduces learners to cultural artifacts and communal practices. Similarly, target culture texts provide geographical and cultural references, while international culture texts include global knowledge, such as references to international organizations.

The representation of *savoir être* is reflected in texts that promote attitudes such as empathy and responsibility. In contrast, *savoir comprendre* appears less frequently and is mostly implicit, requiring learners to interpret deeper meanings without explicit guidance. Meanwhile, *savoir apprendre/faire* is associated with practical actions and interaction, although these are not systematically supported through structured activities. Finally, *savoir s'engager* is represented through texts addressing ethical and global issues, but often without guided reflection.

In terms of cultural representation, the textbook includes international culture (38.4%), source culture (30.8%), and target culture (30.8%). While this distribution appears relatively balanced, the depth and function of intercultural elements vary across cultural types.

Overall, the findings indicate that ICC is incorporated in the textbook; however, its implementation remains partial, with a stronger emphasis on knowledge and values than on interpretive and interactive competencies.

DISCUSSION

The dominance of *savoirs* reflects a knowledge-oriented approach to culture, where cultural elements are primarily presented as information rather than as processes for critical

engagement. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Zahra, 2016; Rosyidi et al., 2017), which report that EFL textbooks tend to prioritize cultural knowledge over other ICC components. While this supports learners' awareness of cultural diversity, it may lead to superficial and static understandings of culture.

Similarly, the strong presence of *savoir être* indicates an emphasis on moral and character values, particularly in source culture texts. This finding supports Sercu (2005), who highlights the importance of attitudes in intercultural competence. However, the results of this study extend previous findings by showing that these attitudes are often presented in a prescriptive and binary manner, limiting opportunities for deeper intercultural reflection.

In contrast, *savoir comprendre* is significantly underrepresented, confirming earlier findings by Cakir (2014) and Hamiloglu and Mendi (2010), which indicate that EFL textbooks often lack opportunities for learners to interpret and compare cultural meanings. This limitation may hinder the development of analytical skills necessary for meaningful intercultural communication.

The representation of *savoir apprendre/faire* suggests that interaction and practical skills are present but mostly implicit. This finding aligns with Byram's (2021) argument that intercultural competence requires active engagement rather than passive exposure. However, this study further shows that the absence of structured activities reduces the pedagogical effectiveness of these components.

Meanwhile, *savoir s'engager* is relatively well represented, particularly in texts addressing global issues. This supports recent perspectives on intercultural competence that emphasize critical awareness and global citizenship (Byram, 2021). However, the findings also reveal that critical engagement remains text-based rather than learner-driven, indicating a gap between content and pedagogical practice.

Finally, the distribution of cultural types reveals that each category contributes differently to ICC development. Source culture texts emphasize moral values, target culture texts offer more complex narratives, and international culture texts focus on global issues. This finding extends previous research by demonstrating that not only the presence of cultural content but also its depth and function influence the development of intercultural competence. Therefore, ICC development in the textbook appears fragmented rather than holistic, as it lacks balanced integration across components (Byram, 1997).

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the representation of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in the reading texts of the textbook Bahasa Inggris Tingkat Lanjut based on Byram's model (1997; 2021) and analyzed the distribution of cultural types. The findings reveal that all five components of ICC are present; however, their representation is uneven. *Savoirs* (knowledge) emerges as the most dominant component, followed by *savoir être* (attitudes) and *savoir s'engager* (critical cultural awareness), while *savoir comprendre* (interpreting and

relating) is the least represented. This indicates that the textbook emphasizes cultural knowledge and moral values more than interpretive and interactive intercultural skills.

In terms of cultural representation, the textbook includes source, target, and international cultures, with international culture being the most prominent. Although the distribution appears relatively balanced, the depth and function of intercultural elements vary across cultural types, with source culture focusing on moral values, target culture providing more complex narratives, and international culture addressing global issues.

Overall, the integration of ICC in the textbook remains partial and unbalanced. This finding confirms that the development of intercultural competence in EFL materials is still largely knowledge-oriented and insufficiently supports interpretive, interactive, and critical dimensions. Therefore, a more comprehensive integration of ICC components is needed to foster learners' holistic intercultural competence. Pedagogically, teachers are encouraged to complement textbook materials with activities that promote interpretation, interaction, and critical reflection, while textbook developers should ensure a more balanced and explicit incorporation of intercultural elements in alignment with the Merdeka Curriculum.

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