Evaluation of Cultural Content on English Module of 9th Grade Students Published by Indonesia’s Government during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract
The Covid-19 Pandemic affects all of the sectors in every side of the world. The education’s side is also becoming one of the most affected areas due to this situation. Indonesia’s government made a regulation for conducting distance learning almost in the past two years. By creating this regulation, they also made a module for the teachers and students as the aim of facilitating the education field so it could achieve the materials planned in the general syllabus of Indonesia’s curriculum even though they have to do the distance learning. The cultural content is usually found in the English module or textbooks. Culture as one of the national identities should be taught to the students as young as they are. There are three categories of cultural content as follows: source culture, target culture and international target culture.

The descriptive qualitative method will be used in this study since it is aimed to classify and evaluate the cultural content found in the English module used by the 9th grade students in Indonesia and discuss the most appropriate culture that should be taught to the junior high school students when it comes to the education in the digital age. The findings of this study show that the most cultural categories occurred is from the target culture that is US and UK’s culture followed by the source culture. Then, the most cultural elements found in the English module are in a form of product, person and practice in a line. There is no perspective element found in this study. Since the aim of learning by using this module is for mastering the target language (English), it is acceptable when the target culture is easier to find compared to the source or international target culture. The need of module evaluation here hopefully can help the teachers to select the appropriate sources for the teaching and learning materials in the English classroom, especially in junior high school.

Keywords: Module evaluation, cultural content, cultural categories and elements.

1 INTRODUCTION
The Covid-19 Pandemic has brought a big impact to every sector of human life. The education field is also becoming one of the most affected fields due to this pandemic situation. Many countries started to create a regulation for conducting distance learning which means that the students and the teachers are not in the same places as the offline class before the pandemic. This also causes the traditional form of education moving to the use of digital platforms where the students are spending more time in front of their screen devices (Hoofman & Secord, 2021). The pandemic situation also affected the way for teaching methods and assessing the students’ work where all of the phases were done online (Tarkar, 2020). The new way of learning forces all the subjects of education starting from the materials, the teachers and the students have to adapt with ICT tools which influence them for almost three years. It also causes the time limitation when doing the online classes compared to the offline class. To sit in front of the screen devices is more challenging for a group of students. To do the task by using the online application and finding the materials in the online sites also takes time to be implemented during this pandemic situation. Husna et al. (2022) highlights the unexpected challenges teachers face in maintaining the integrity of the teaching and learning process as they strive to replicate the interactive dynamics of face-to-face classrooms. These challenges extend to the teaching of language skills, such as reading comprehension, where educators aim to cultivate students' proficiency in English reading.
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Cultural Content

Teaching English as the international language will always include teaching its culture as well. The cultural contents in textbooks or modules are divided into two parts which are the categories and elements. According to Cortazzi and Jin in Ayu (2020) the cultural categories include the source culture, target culture and international target culture. Source culture is defined as the learners’ own culture, in this situation, Indonesia culture is becoming the source culture in the module. The target culture is then described as the target language’s culture that must be learned by the learners while using the module, the UK and US’s cultures are included into this target culture and sometimes it is called the western culture. The last category was the international target culture which defined as none of including into the source and target culture. It might be from other countries’ cultures such as South Korea, Jordania, Thailand and others that English is not their first language.

According to Yuen (2011), the cultural content is also divided into four elements. The first cultural element which can be evaluated is the product. Product includes the physical form of a certain culture. It can be a song, historical site, folklores, foods, drinks and other man-made products. The second cultural element is person which refers to the figures or famous people that are being representative of any culture in the world. The person can be a singer, hero, poet, writer, national athlete and artists. Then, the third cultural element is the practice that occurs in the form of ritual activities, ceremonies, past traditional, or even the holiday celebration that represent a certain culture. The last cultural element is the perspective which refers to the difference of certain groups seeing something compared to other groups of people with different cultures.

Cakir in Wahyuni (2019) stated that the module or textbooks’ language should also provide the cultural elements that the foreign learners can reach the idea of a certain situation or topic appropriately by using the target language communication compared to their source culture. In reality, the Western culture as the target culture for Indonesia’s learners is quite different from their own culture (Eastern culture) (Tseng & Chao, 2012). In Indonesia, the people usually eat porridge, lontong, yellow rice or even soto for their breakfast time. But, in the Western countries, they may have sandwiches or smoothies for breakfast. From these eating habits, the different cultures have shown differently.
2.2 Module Evaluation

English is considered as a foreign language in Indonesia. It also becomes one of the basic materials for junior high school and senior high school. To facilitate the teachers while teaching English for the students, there are several instructional materials that can be used as the source of teaching and learning activities during the English time as follows: textbook, module, video, Internet sources, and so on (Ayu & Indrawati, 2019). All the materials can be in a printed and soft file version.

Module is an important tool in facilitating the teaching and learning process. It also can be seen as the same as a textbook which is being the learning media for the teachers and students. Facing the digital age and the forces to do distance learning, the Indonesia’s government created the electronic module (e-Module). It is in a PDF form which can be accessed and downloaded by all people that need it freely. The module position here also represents the textbook itself. The minimum size of the PDF file is also become the matter that hopefully all the learners and the teachers can have it into their own devices.

The importance of the module is also mentioned by Tomlinson (1998) that it provides the learning guidance for the teacher and students so that they can understand what topic they are going to learn and what materials they have learnt in the past. When a teacher teaches by using no instructional materials, it will give the difficult time for the learners. Even though the materials were designed properly and follows the general syllabus in the present curriculum, there is probably some parts of the materials that may not served the students’ background, cultural background or fulfilled their needs during the learning process, this is why the module evaluation as one of the additional things in education needs to be done so the teacher could find the best materials for their students (Dos Santos, 2020). When the students are learning English as the foreign or second language, it also brings the cultural content from the origin language (UK and US countries). The evaluation needed in order to match and fulfil the students’ need and the appropriateness of certain materials contained in the module. By conducting a module evaluation, the teacher can also choose the cultural content that will represent the other cultures as a new insight for the learners.

Facing the digital age where all the things are done in online, it also causes the changing of how the generation nowadays is more familiar with the soft files rather than the printed one. The students are also more interested in searching for a new knowledge by using the Internet machines such as Google, Youtube, and so on. That is why the Indonesia’s government also served and spread the English module online and can be downloaded freely in a PDF form, so hopefully the teacher and the students can learn using it anytime and anywhere. The form of e-module also brings the interesting face because it can be seen in colorful pictures and can be zoomed in or zoomed out. Implementing this into a module is also considered the proper materials for the learners to achieve the learning goals even though they have done all the classes and do the examinations online.

3 METHODOLOGY

This study is using a descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive research uses several ways to gather the data that describes the events and after that organises it, tabulates, depicts and then describes the data which have been collected during the study (Glass & Hopkins, 1984). The data were taken from the English module for the 9th grade students published by the Indonesia’s Government for the first and second semester of 2021/2022 academic year. The data analysis was started with observing the module, analysing the module’s pages contain the cultural categories and elements, deciding the elements whether it is included into the source culture/target culture/international target culture, doing the module evaluation’s checklist proposed by Yuen (2011), and then counting the percentage of cultural content found in the module as the last step before describing it into the findings part. The cultural content is divided into two parts for the findings, they are: the cultural categories and the cultural elements. The limitation of this study is only observed the English module in PDF form used by the 9th grade students in Indonesia. All the English modules are downloaded online from the link https://ditsmp.kemdikbud.go.id/download/.

4 FINDINGS

The results of this study answer the classification of cultural contents found in the English module of 9th grade students published by the Indonesia’s government during the Covid-19 pandemic and discuss the appropriate cultural content that should be taught to them especially in this digital age. The cultural contents are divided into two parts as the result of this study as follows: the cultural categories and the cultural elements. The cultural categories are then also divided into three as follows: the source culture, target culture and international target culture. While the cultural elements are divided into four groups which are products, person, practice and
perspective.

Figure 1: The percentage of cultural categories.

From figure 1, it can be seen that the evaluation of cultural categories in the English module of 9th grade students from the first and second semester shows the target culture (TC) is the most categories found in the module’s materials and followed by the source culture (SC) then the international target culture (ITC). The target culture is from the Western culture as the target language learning got 48% which having 71 items from the 148 items in total cultural categories. The next cultural category is 35.1% which has 52 items from 148 found in the source culture. This is from Indonesia’s culture as the learners own culture to be learnt in this module. The last one is having 16.9% with 25 items from 148 that represent the international target culture, it comes from the other culture that is not included into the target and source culture. All of these cultural categories are coming from the cultural elements found in the English module used by the 9th grade students in Indonesia. The writer observed the categories spread in each page of the module and then put it into the checklist of classifying.

Figure 2: The percentage of cultural elements.

The most cultural elements found in the English module used by the 9th grade students is from the products, person, and practices and there is no data related to the perspective from the cultural elements. The module has 68.2% of products in SC, TC, and ITC. It has 101 items from 148 items in total. The products found are as follows: the songs’ title, the folklores, places, foods and drinks, and poetry. The next cultural element is having 27% with 40 items from 148 comes from the person. This includes the names of figures in folklores, artists, and singers. Then, the practice has 4.7% with 7 items from 148 items in total. It comes from the ceremonies, certain sports or activities and hobbies. The writer did not find the perspective in the cultural elements while observing the English module here. Since the total percentage of perspective is 0.0%, so the diagram shows no additional information with this point. The perspective here bringing the different views of a certain group of people when they see something that is not really familiar with their habits.

5 DISCUSSION

The English module used by the 9th grade students in Indonesia during the distance learning has shown that the most cultural categories found are from the target culture, then followed by the source culture and the international target culture. The target culture here including all the cultural elements started from the products, person and practices which represent the UK and US’s culture. It is usually called the Western culture. The module puts several songs, foods and drinks, names, and also folklores that are identified as the Western’s. The examples of target culture found are as follows: Mulan (p. 198), We Are The World (p. 172), The Princess and Dragon (p. 144), Michael Jackson, Cinderella, and others. It can be acceptable when the target culture is the most cultural categories found in this module since the aim of learning by using the module is for mastering English as the foreign language for the students. The target culture also served with the pictures which are interesting for the students as they tried to recognize the new materials which represent the different cultures with their own culture. But, there are also several songs that the writer thinks not really familiar for the students since the songs for their generation nowadays are more updated and spread in the social media. Some figures are also too old but it does not matter since it still has a big influence on the music industry.

The source culture which comes from Indonesia’s culture has the second highest percentage among all the findings found in the English module used by the 9th grade students in Indonesia. It also represents the products, person and also the practices which are familiar with the Indonesia’s people such as the songs’ title, folklores, someone’s name, places and also certain activities. The examples of source culture found in this module are as follows: fried rice, Timun Mas and Buto Ijo, Malin Kundang, The
The need of module evaluation is not only for giving the input for the teacher as the facilitator in the classroom, but also for the students who are learning a new language including its culture. By doing the module evaluation, it can give the choices for the teachers to use certain materials or not inside the module. The English module of the 9th grade students which is published by the Indonesia’s government provided for helping them to face the distance learning due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. From the evaluation of the first and second semester materials on the module, the writer found that the most cultural categories found in it come from the target culture. The target culture itself represents the UK and US’s culture or generally known as the Western culture. It is acceptable when the goal of learning English for the Indonesia’s students is for mastering the foreign language so the culture brought from its origin countries are also needed to be learnt. By knowing the target culture, it will help the students to understand and appreciate the differences between their culture and what they just learn from other cultures.

The source culture that represents Indonesia as the students’ own culture got the second highest categories in the module evaluation. The narrative and procedure text materials got the most elements found to prove the source culture in the module. Simple yet deeply explanation on how the module put the source culture here makes the materials more familiar and understandable for the students. The lower differences of total percentage between the target and source culture inside the English module are proving that this module brings the appropriate cultural content for the 9th grade students. Then, the international target culture also becomes the category that mentioned its elements in the module so the students are able to recognize the other cultures beside their target language culture and their own culture.

In addition, the cultural contents are needed to be spread in each lesson inside the module because when learning English, all the cultural elements are also learnt by the students. The cultural contents can also spread in a balance within each learning materials inside the module so the teacher can explain and giving the example of each content easily.

7 REFERENCES


Hoofman, J., & Secord, E. (2021). The Effect of

Legend of Banyuwangi, Yogyakarta, Bandung, Bagimu Negri, Jaka Tarub, Nyai Pasir, Mah Bongsu, and others. All of the examples of source culture found in the module are quite familiar for the students because it is closely related to their environment. The module’s creators also served the stories or songs with interesting pictures, so it will be more understandable for the learners to learn the materials. When it comes to the procedure text materials as the example, the recipe is also followed by the picture of its food or drinks. Even though the students may not know the vocabularies at first, but when they focus on the pictures it will help them to understand the main idea of the text.

The third category found in the module is from the international target culture. As the representative of none both the source and target culture, this international target cultures are from the other countries that English is not being their first or second language. It can be from countries in Africa, Arab, and another Asia’s country. The international target culture has 16.9% from total cultural categories in the module. This is the representative of several products, person and also practices from the other region. The examples of this cultural categories found in the English module are as follows: *Ramayana (the stories from India), Aladdin (from Jazira Arab), manga (the comic from Japan), Thailand Song’s Lyrics, rice ramen noodle* and so on. These international target cultures also bring a new sight for the learners when they learn the materials inside the English module, that English is not only about UK and US things, but it can also introduce other cultures but in English language.

6 CONCLUSION


