UNCOVERING CULTURAL REPRESENTATION IN AN INDONESIAN EFL TEXTBOOK: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

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Abstract: The growing prominence of English as a global lingua franca in professional settings raises concerns about the adequacy of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks in representing the diversity of World Englishes. This study aims to assess the representation of World Englishes and intercultural awareness in an Indonesian junior high school English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook, with a focus on its contribution to enhancing students' professional communication competence. The study employed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze both textual and visual components, alongside the broader social context, to uncover embedded ideologies and power dynamics. The study revealed a primary focus on Inner Circle cultures and Level 1 (Basic Cultural Awareness), with insufficient representation of other English Circles and limited opportunities for critical intercultural engagement. The textbook provides fundamental cultural knowledge but fails to cultivate the intercultural competence required for diverse professional environments. The study signals implications that are examined in relation to textbook developers and teaching practices aimed at enhancing professional communication in a global context

PENDAHULUAN

Language serves a vital function beyond simple communication; it operates as a form of social semiotics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014) that both influences and is influenced by social behaviors. Language, from both theoretical and practical perspectives, fosters global connections, enabling individuals to navigate diverse cultures, societal norms, and daily life in multicultural environments. In professional settings, particularly when working abroad, language serves as a mechanism to bridge cultural differences and foster mutual understanding. In this context, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks are viewed as essential educational resources that equip students for intercultural communication and global participation, thereby enhancing their professional communication competence across diverse industries.

To begin with, prior studies have thoroughly investigated cultural representation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks. Setyono and Widodo (2019) examined the multicultural values in an Indonesian EFL textbook endorsed by the Ministry of Education, identifying four principal themes: 1) cultures from different ethnic and religious groups; 2) the respect cultures of indigenous people; 3) conflict avoidance; and 4) the appreciative culture of cultural products. Their findings suggest that English plays a crucial role in conveying multicultural messages, underscoring the need for innovative teaching strategies to effectively deliver these values to students.

Another study, Fauzi and Putra (2022), contrasted traditional and functional grammar exercises, concluding that the shift to functional grammar enhances the relationship between language learning and social semiotic resources, thereby strengthening the connection between language and social practices (Widodo, 2015). In a similar vein, Fauzi and Dewi (2024) analyzed the cultural representation portrayed in functional grammar exercises, highlighting that these activities provide a more substantial social function than conventional grammar drills. Their findings show that functional grammar challenges improve students' meaning-making capabilities, suggesting that teachers must explicitly clarify the cultural points in the exercises that are necessary.

In addition to the Indonesian context, Zhang et al. (2024) conducted a synchronic content analysis investigating the representation of cultures in three sets of national English textbooks used in China. Their research examined the representation of cultures and their depictions. Furthermore, Moghaddam and Tirnaz (2023) examined the depiction of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in Iranian English as a Foreign Language textbooks. Their analysis indicates that locally produced address series insufficiently addresses intercultural elements in comparison to the more globally-focused series, leading to restricted opportunities for students to cultivate genuine intercultural competence. Similarly, Gheisari and Akbari (2024) assessed cultural contextualization in two EFL textbooks in Iran, analyzing culture, ideology, and otherness through a social semiotic multimodal approach.

Despite offering valuable insights, previous studies have not applied Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to rigorously examine how intercultural elements are represented in the EFL textbook, nor have they assessed whether these representations support the development of students' professional communication competence for future global workplaces. Prior evaluations frequently concentrated on documenting cultural content or assessing intercultural exposure without critically analyzing the discursive structures that shape students' ability to engage in professional intercultural communication. Addressing this gap, the present study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine how an Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook represents intercultural dimensions and to evaluate its potential in fostering students' professional communication competence. These are the research questions that guide this study:

1. How are intercultural elements represented in the Indonesian junior high school EFL textbook?
2. To what extent do these representations support the development of students' professional communication competence for the future global workplace?

LITERATURE REVIEW
Kachru's World Englishes and Cultural Representation in EFL Textbooks

Kachru's (1985, 1988, 1992) model of World Englishes provides a foundational framework for understanding the global dissemination of English and its cultural implications in English language teaching (ELT) resources. This approach categorizes English into three concentric circles: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding Circle. The Inner Circle comprises nations where English is the native language, including the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. The Outer Circle encompasses nations such as India, Singapore, and Malaysia, where English serves as an institutional second language due to historical colonization. The Expanding Circle includes nations where English is the predominantly used foreign language for global communication, lacking a colonial or official context. This concept contested conventional native-speaker standards by affirming multiple English variations and acknowledging the political, identity, and legitimacy concerns associated with the global utilization of English (Sadeghpour & D'Angelo, 2022). Cultural learning within this approach entails acknowledging the diversity of English across different regions and understanding how it reflects local cultures and communication practices (Widodo et al., 2022).

The proliferation of English within these three circles has considerable implications for the curation of cultural content in EFL textbooks. Historically, educational resources have predominantly favored Inner Circles cultures, representing English communication primarily via British or American perspectives. As English increasingly serves as a global lingua franca, experts contend that textbooks should reflect cultural norms from Outer and Expanding Circle countries (Rashidi & Meihami, 2016). Incorporating multiple views equips students for authentic communication that extends beyond native-speaker contexts. According to Graddol (2006) and McKay (2003), the primary objective of English language acquisition today should be to facilitate effective intercultural communication, rather than merely emulating the norms of the Inner Circle. Consequently, the examination of textbooks must rigorously evaluate whether cultural depictions accurately represent the contemporary reality of worldwide English usage.

Intercultural Awareness and Levels of Cultural Engagement in EFL Textbooks

The concept of intercultural awareness (ICA) has garnered considerable attention within the domain of English language teaching (ELT), as it highlights the dynamic interactions of language learners with diverse cultural environments. Baker (2011) delineates the progressive development of intercultural awareness through three levels: Level 1, Basic Cultural Awareness, where individuals recognize their own culture (C1) and its impact on communication; Level 2, Advanced Cultural Awareness, which entails a sophisticated understanding of diverse cultures as fluid, contextual, and relative, highlighting the capacity to mediate between varying cultural perspectives, and Level 3, Intercultural Awareness, the highest level, where learners critically engage with cultural references and practices that surpass specific cultural or national confines, especially within the framework of English as a global lingua franca. These levels delineate a developmental trajectory that illustrates the enhancement and broadening of cultural awareness in reaction to more intercultural interactions.

Mulyani et al. (2024) emphasize that Baker's model indicates the advancement

through these levels is not always linear, with individuals potentially developing ICA at different stages based on their background and experiences. This is especially pertinent when examining EFL textbooks, which significantly influence learners' cultural understanding. Textbooks frequently illustrate these levels in various ways, ranging from basic representations of cultural norms (Level 1) to more intricate and dynamic cultural portrayals (Level 2), and ideally to more critical transcultural depictions (Level 3). The levels to which textbooks integrate these levels can profoundly influence students' development of intercultural competence. Additionally, Mulyani et al. (2024) noted that the design of EFL materials should transcend superficial cultural representations and foster critical engagement with diverse cultural contexts among learners. This approach corresponds with the idea that intercultural competency is essential for effective communication in a professional context.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in Language Textbook Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a methodological framework that examines how language textbooks reflect, perpetuate, and challenge societal power structures, ideologies, and cultural norms (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). The entails examining linguistic selections, narrative frameworks, and visual depictions to reveal underlying ideologies in textbooks. The multi-level methodology of CDA, which explores both micro-level linguistic elements and macro-level social settings, elucidates how textbooks influence students' perspectives and perpetuate societal biases and stereotypes (Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018). The multimodal characteristics of modern textbooks, integrating text and images, facilitate meaning-making and ideological transmission (Smith & Sheyholislami, 2022).

This study employed Fairclough's (2001) three-dimensional framework for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which encompasses textual analysis (linguistic attributes), discursive practice (the production and distribution of the text), and social practice (the broader social context). This methodology facilitated a comprehensive analysis of how textbooks convey cultural content and underlying power structures, uncovering both overt material and ideological statements inherent within. CDA offers significant insights for detecting biases in textbooks and guiding adjustments to foster a more inclusive and critical educational framework (Gheisari & Akbari, 2024).

METHOD

This study employed a mixed-method approach to examine cultural representation and intercultural perspectives in language learning materials. The primary data source was the "English in Mind Second Edition - Student's Book 1 for Junior High School Grade 8", an officially mandated textbook for Indonesian public schools. The 14-chapter textbook, created by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in collaboration with Cambridge University Press, aims to improve students' reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills. The study primarily focuses on evaluating how the textbook equips students for intercultural and professional communication, notably at the junior high school level.

The investigation utilized Kachru's (1985) Three Circles of English model to evaluate the representation of English varieties across the Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles. Additionally, Baker's (2011) Classification of intercultural awareness, comprising Basic

Cultural Awareness, Advanced Cultural Awareness, and Intercultural Awareness, was employed to examine the textbook's support for fostering intercultural competencies. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), based on Fairclough's (2001) three-dimensional framework, was employed to examine the cultural representation within the texts, focusing on linguistic features, discursive practices, and social contexts. A combination of quantitative (frequency analysis) and qualitative (discourse analysis) methods was used to identify biases, assess the inclusivity of cultural representation, and determine whether the materials promoted intercultural understanding or reinforced stereotypes.   In the analysis phase, specific inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to evaluate the cultural content. Materials that explicitly facilitated cultural learning, promoted cultural awareness, and encouraged critical engagement with cultural context were included. In contrast, those that lacked cultural integration or focused solely on linguistic mechanisms were excluded. This ensured that the analysis concentrated on the most relevant content for fostering intercultural awareness.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings regarding the material categories related to the four language skills, along with their corresponding cultural circles and levels of intercultural awareness. The analysis reveals that the textbook includes 134 materials covering reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills. Writing materials are the most prevalent, accounting for 44 out of the 134, followed by reading materials with 42, speaking materials with 35, and listening materials with 13.

Table 1. A quantitative summary of the language materials related to language skills, cultural circles, and intercultural awareness levels

Language Skills	Number of Materials	Circle of Culture					Level of Intercultural Awareness (ICA)		
		Inner	Outer	Expanding	Neutral	Mixed	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Reading	42	15	1	5	0	21	25	17	0
Listening	13	9	0	1	0	3	9	4	0
Writing	44	12	0	6	5	21	37	7	0
Speaking	35	3	0	16	8	8	22	12	1
Total	134	39	1	28	12	54	93	40	1
Precentage		29.1%	0.8%	20.9%	8.9%	40.3%	69.4%	29.8%	0.8%

Writing Materials

The analysis of the writing materials indicates a diverse distribution throughout cultural circles and levels of intercultural awareness (ICA). Drawing on Kachru's (1985) model of World Englishes, the 44 materials were categorized with 47.7% belonging to the

Mixed Circle, 27.3% to the Inner Circle, 13.6% to the Expanding Circle, and 11.4% to the Outer Circle category. A significant majority (84%) of these resources are categorized as Level 1 ICA, focusing primarily on fundamental cultural comprehension and basic language application. In comparison, the remaining materials (16%) are classified as Level 2, addressing more complex cultural matters. Regarding cultural circle representation, Level 1 Inner Circle materials primarily emphasize vocabulary, grammar, and surface-level cultural references. These texts frequently reference nations or traditions commonly associated with the Inner Circle, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, but do not explore deeper intercultural complexities (Kachru, 1985).

Conversely, Neutral materials promote personal reflections through subjects such as opinion essays or creative writing, facilitating comparisons between local and global cultures, so enhancing language abilities without an intense emphasis on cultural particulars. On the other hand, Expanding Circle materials highlight local cultural contexts in Indonesia, including social norms, customs, and issues, which foster students' awareness of their own culture through the lens of English language learning. Materials from the Mixed Circle (47.7%) are notable for prompting students to reflect on their behavior in foreign cultural contexts and to juxtapose their experiences with those of others, which helps improve professional communication competence (Baker, 2015b). For instance, Figure 1 asks students to imagine themselves as non-English speakers enrolled in a language school in the United Kingdom or the United States. This assignment encourages students to reflect on cultural misinterpretations and classroom disparities, thereby enhancing intercultural comprehension by engaging with diverse cultural situations, identifying potential communication obstacles, and documenting them in an email.

b Imagine you are doing an English course at a language school in Britain or the USA. Write an email to an English-speaking friend. Think about these questions.

- Where are you writing from? (London, New York, Cambridge?)
- Do you like the English course? What kind of things are you doing in class?
- Who is your teacher?
- How many students are in your class? Where are they from?
- Is your English better now? How? (Is your grammar better? Do you know more words? Do you understand better?)

Start like this:

Dear _____,

I'm writing to you from [name of place]. I'm doing an English course here. The course is …

Figure 1. English in Mind Second Edition - Student's Book 1 for Junior High School Grade 8, p. 71.

Reading Materials

Table 2 indicates that reading materials constitute the second largest segment among all examined resources, with 42 out of 134 entries. Within cultural circles, 50% of the reading

materials are attributed to the Mixed Circle, followed by 35.7% from the Inner Circle, 11.9% from the Expanding Circle, and merely 2.4% from the Outer Circle. A comparable tendency is evident in writing materials, where the majority likewise originates from the Mixed Circle. This signifies a deliberate amalgamation of cultural components from multiple contexts, rather than focusing on a single cultural background (Kachru, 1985).
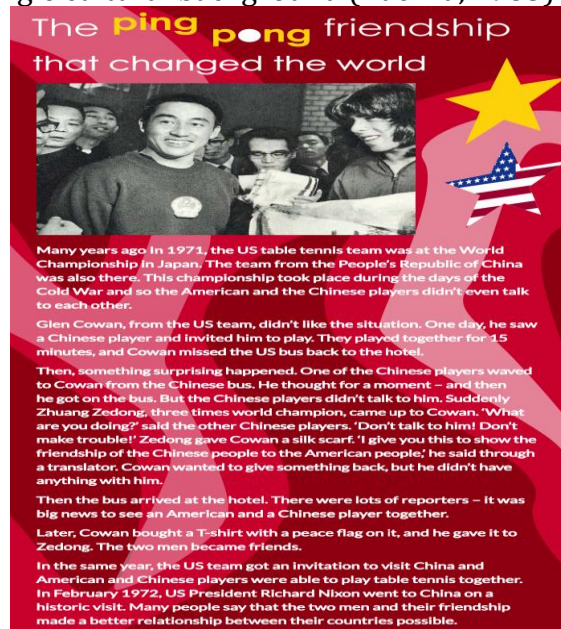

Figure 2. English in Mind Second Edition - Student's Book 1 for Junior High School Grade 8, p. 38.

Figure 2 illustrates Level 2 of Advanced Cultural Awareness, conveying 'The Ping Pong Friendship That Changed the World', which emphasizes how personal relationships between American (Inner Circle) and Chinese (Expanding Circle) players facilitated the bridging of political divides. The text advocates for Level 2 and suggests Level 3 by confronting cultural preconceptions and highlighting reciprocal understanding (Baker, 2011, 2015b). Conversely, the majority of Inner Circle materials are categorized at Level 1, presenting events such as Martin Luther King Day and New Year's Eve in Times Square. However, certain modified pictures, including those of women adorned in hijabs, indicate an awareness of the Expanding Circle among Indonesian students (Kachru, 1985). The presence of the Outer Circle is negligible, confined to a cursory reference to France.

The bulk of reading materials exhibit Level 1 ICA, emphasizing fundamental exposure to diverse cultures (Baker, 2015a). The prevalence of Mixed Circle resources promotes cultural comparison; nonetheless, it is essential to enhance the representation of Expanding and Outer Circle situations and to provide additional materials aimed at advancing higher levels of ICA (Level 2 and Level 3). This would enhance students' proficiency in the abilities required for more profound and adaptable intercultural communication (Baker, 2015b).

Speaking Materials

Thirty-five speaking tasks were identified from the analysis of 134 resources in the textbook (see Table 2). Consistent with the results in the reading part, most speaking tasks

exhibit a fundamental level of intercultural awareness, predominantly highlighting students' comprehension of their Indonesian culture. Consequently, the majority of materials (45.7%) are located within the Expanding Circle (Kachru, 1985). An example of a speaking task on everyday routines is the question, "Do you have to get up at the same time as on weekdays?" followed by pictures of women in hijabs, representing Indonesia's Muslim-majority environment (see Figure 3). Moreover, numerous pictures depict individuals with tanned skin tones, which corresponds to many Indonesians' physical characteristics and maintaining a culturally recognizable context for learners (Kachru, 1985).

Figure 3. English in Mind Second Edition - Student's Book 1 for Junior High School Grade 8, p. 49.

Neutral and Mixed Circles are evenly represented throughout the eight speaking activities. Simultaneously, the second-largest category of speaking materials pertains to Level 2 Advanced Cultural Awareness (34.3%), where students are prompted to critically connect with both local and global viewpoints (Baker, 2011). A Level 2 task requires students to formulate three future predictions, one of which must be an improbable prediction designated as "crazy". This task enhances critical thinking by enabling students to connect their ideas with local cultural contexts and broader global experiences, thereby promoting a more dynamic interaction with English as an international language (Baker, 2015b).

Only one speaking activity was identified as fostering Level 3 Intercultural Awareness within a Neutral Circle situation. This job involves explaining Jimmy Cliff's song "Wonderful World, Beautiful People," which conveys a universal theme of unity, love, and global collaboration. The lyric encourages individuals from diverse cultures to transcend conflict, hatred, and misunderstanding, advocating for universal human ideals that are independent of any particular cultural background. This activity promotes a global view on communication and cross-cultural interaction, aligning with the highest level of intercultural awareness (Baker, 2011, 2015b).

Listening Materials

This investigation identified merely 13 listening materials among 134 total language learning resources in the textbook (see Table 2), suggesting that listening skills receive little attention. Most resources are restricted to fundamental comprehension activities, such as completing blanks or repeating after the teacher. The audio content is primarily presented by native English speakers, categorizing most materials inside Kachru's (1985) Inner Circle. This corroborates studies suggesting that listening is frequently overlooked in language teaching, despite its essential function in language acquisition and cultural understanding (Barjesteh & Ghaseminia, 2023).

Figure 4. English in Mind Second Edition - Student's Book 1 for Junior High School Grade 8, p. 104.

Nonetheless, four materials exhibit characteristics of Baker's (2011) Level 2: Advanced Cultural Awareness. Figure 4 illustrates a listening exercise featuring characters Kate and Ashley in conversation with their parents, which highlights a Western familial structure. Visual and verbal indicators, including names, hair color, and gender presentation, reveal foreign cultural norms, such as fluid gender roles and youth autonomy, exemplified by attending a midnight party. With suitable teacher guidance, such material might prompt students to contemplate cultural differences and avoid stereotyping.

Furthermore, one job involves speakers from Italy and Argentina, both representing the Expanding Circle, who share their experiences in learning languages, including English. Students are asked to list the language mentioned, promoting involvement with multilingualism and cultural exchange. This resource, classified as Mixed Circle, promotes intercultural learning by highlighting diverse global identities. Nevertheless, the majority of

the listening exercises in the textbook are predominantly at a basic level, emphasizing the reinforcement of local cultural comprehension rather than promoting extensive intercultural awareness.

Cultural Representation and Intercultural Awareness in Textbook Materials for Professional Communication Competence

This study's findings offer significant insights into the presentation of cultural information in an Indonesian junior high school English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook co-developed by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture and Cambridge University Press. The textbook primarily addresses Level 1 ICA, with 69.4% of its content dedicated to fundamental cultural exposure. This level often encompasses factual knowledge and basic comparisons, which are suitable for the developmental stage of junior high school students. This emphasis corresponds with the trend noted by Setyono and Widodo (2019) in Indonesian EFL materials, which promote fundamental cultural literacy over critical intercultural engagement. These materials frequently culminate in generalizations or stereotypes, neglecting the intricacies and dynamism of real-world cultural interactions.

The textbook embodies institutional priorities influenced by its collaborative origins. The collaboration with Cambridge University Press resulted in significant Inner Circle cultural bias (29.1%), especially for Anglo-American references. This approach familiarizes students with prevalent English-speaking environments while simultaneously perpetuating native-speaker standards, a concern highlighted by Zhang et al. (2024), who observed analogous biases in several Asian EFL curricula. The dominance of the Inner Circle may hinder students' readiness for English as a global lingua franca, when interactions frequently include speakers from Expanding or Outer Circle backgrounds.

Notwithstanding its Inner Circle inclinations, the textbook integrates a significant proportion (40.3%) of Mixed Circle content, amalgamating aspects from both local (Indonesian/Expanding) and worldwide (predominantly Inner) cultures. These materials generally promote intercultural comparison and are the most significant endeavor in cultivating intercultural awareness. They frequently depict cultures as static and homogeneous, rather than dynamic and intersecting—a constraint that aligns with Baker's (2015b) critique of essentialist models in English Language Teaching (ELT). Mulyani et al. (2024) have observed that Indonesian textbooks frequently unintentionally perpetuate rigid concepts of national identity, although advocating for intercultural learning.

The textbook exhibits a notable deficiency of Outer Circle representations, comprising only 0.8% of the content. The prevalence of global English, particularly in professional and international contexts, renders this exclusion detrimental to students' preparedness for interacting with various English dialects and viewpoints. Moghaddam and Tirnaz (2023) emphasized that a comparable issue in Iranian textbooks is that cultural representation is biased towards Inner Circle standards, neglecting the diversity of actual English speakers.

An examination of the distribution of intercultural information across skills further elucidates the textbook's pedagogical inclinations. Writing materials, frequently situated in Mixed Circle situations (47.7%), predominantly reside at Level 1 ICA (84%), emphasizing superficial comparisons rather than profound analysis. This aligns with the study by Gheisari and Akbari (2024), who noted that many local EFL materials fail to foster thoughtful or critical intercultural engagement. Simultaneously, listening resources (9.7%) demonstrate a

pronounced Inner Circle bias, perpetuating exposure to native-speaker variants while inadequately capturing the linguistic diversity that defines contemporary global English usage. A singular Level 3 ICA speaking material emerges as an exception - an encouraging example of a higher level.

The textbook demonstrates both strengths and weaknesses when evaluated in light of the overarching objective of professional communication competence. It effectively establishes fundamental intercultural frameworks and introduces comparative analysis, serving as a robust starting point for adolescent students embarking on their intercultural education. Nonetheless, its dependence on Level 1 ICA, insufficient representation of Outer Circle cultures, and restricted emphasis on native-speaker norms constrain its capacity to cultivate the adaptable, critical, and inclusive communication skills necessary for global professional environments.

Although the textbook demonstrates notable efforts to incorporate diverse topics and align with students' developmental needs, it ultimately lacks sufficient intercultural breadth. Zhang et al. (2024) and Baker (2015b) argue that EFL materials should extend beyond basic information to incorporate dynamic, pluralistic representations that reflect the complexities of real-world English usage. This textbook provides an essential basis; however, more curricular support and modifications are required to adequately equip students for professional communication in an increasingly interconnected world.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed at examining the content of an Indonesian junior high school EFL textbook, specifically evaluating its representation of World Englishes and Intercultural Awareness (ICA) in enhancing students' professional communication competence. The findings revealed that the textbook predominantly focuses on Basic Cultural Awareness (Level 1), heavily relying on Inner Circle representations, hence constraining exposure to other global English variations. Although Mixed Circle materials offer limited opportunities for intercultural comparisons, the entire content falls short in adequately cultivating the Advanced Cultural Awareness (Level 2) required for professional communication in globalized environments.

Given these findings, the implications of this study indicate that textbook developers ought to provide a more balanced representation of all circles within World Englishes, transcending the predominant emphasis on Inner Circle cultures. This approach would better represent the multilingual and multicultural aspects of global communication, providing students with exposure to diverse English varieties and intercultural perspectives. This is essential for preparing students with the skills required to navigate various professional settings where English serves as a lingua franca. Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of English teachers being motivated to complement textbooks with varied cultural references to bridge the gap between classroom content and real-world professional communication.

However, this study has limitations, particularly its focus on a singular textbook, which may not adequately address the diversity of EFL materials utilized in Indonesian classrooms. Future research could address this limitation by analyzing a broader range of textbooks or incorporating teacher and student perspectives to evaluate the practical

application of intercultural awareness in pedagogical procedures.

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