Cultural Diversity and Classification of EFL Blended Learning Module in Higher Education

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The integration of culture and language has played an enormous role in the context of EFL teaching and learning materials in the higher education context. Therefore, evaluating whether the EFL learning materials have been designed to include culture-related content becomes crucial. This research qualitatively analyzed the presentation of an EFL blended learning module's source culture, target culture, and international culture. The result shows that source culture material is 67%, target culture 9%, and international culture 24%. The findings indicated that the EFL blended learning module is mainly dominated by source culture as the most frequently portrayed, while target cultures were the least frequently portrayed. The present study reveals a vivid imbalance in the exposure of cultural elements in the EFL blended learning module. This result should be well-considered by stakeholders regarding the purpose of the use of the blended learning materials.

INTRODUCTION

Blended learning has played an important role in higher education throughout the rapid technological development, including in the EFL teaching and learning context. According to Graham (2013, blended learning has become a promising alternative approach to resolve the limitations of face-to-face and online learning due to its strengths. Blended learning has reformed teaching and learning activities from teacher-centered to student-centered. English language teachers also display a generally positive attitude towards blended learning (Bijeikienė et al., 2011). Due to its plentiful benefits, more higher education institutions attempt to implement blended learning into their education system. Implementing blended learning must consider many aspects, including the learning materials used. Mortera-Gutierrez (2005) also mentions that

this learning method combines several different learning resources such as textbooks, Web sites, LMS, video, and other communication media. Consequently, the success of EFL blended learning relies heavily on the quality and accessibility of learning materials.

The close connection between culture and language contents has been a significant topic of discussion in recent research over the past decade. Several studies have explored how culture is represented in English learning resources (Faris, 2014; Gunantar, 2017; Kim & Paek, 2015; Muhsen Al Harbi, 2017; Setyono & Widodo, 2019; Silvia, 2015). The integration of language teaching and culture yields numerous advantages, as highlighted by Crozet & Liddicoat (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1997). Students will gain eternal benefits from their language-learning experience through this integration. Acquiring knowledge about a particular culture enables students to develop a positive attitude and increased tolerance toward other cultures (Nguyen, 2017). Furthermore, students can learn to communicate verbally and write culturally appropriately. Brown (2021) emphasizes that students exposed to the cultural context associated with a language are better equipped to engage effectively in language use.

Designing English-written learning resources, such as textbooks and learning modules, with cultural content is identified as a valuable approach to integrating culture and language. In fostering students' intercultural communicative competence, learning activities within English resources should incorporate more cultural content (Kim & Paek, 2015). Their research in Korea revealed certain inequities in the representation of culture-related content. Specifically, materials focusing on intercultural interaction (ICI), contributing to cultural awareness, were seriously under-represented. Additionally, they found that materials focusing on the 'little c,' referring to cultural traditions, were more prevalent in textbooks. Other studies, including those by Faris (2014) and Silvia (2015), have highlighted that integrating various sources of cultural information contributes to developing students' cultural awareness. Integrating cultural content into English learning resources plays a crucial role in the EFL teaching and learning process, allowing students to internalize the contents and enhance their competence. Recognizing the potential of cultural content in English textbooks to elevate the quality of English language teaching and learning, it becomes essential and interesting to further investigate this approach to the English learning module as the main resource for the English-intensive blended teaching and learning process.

The learning module is an independent learning material planned and designed to facilitate students in achieving specific learning goals (Wati et al., 2021). This model emphasizes student activity and encourages collaboration and interaction among peers and teachers, fostering a more dynamic learning process (Wahyuddin & Yusuf, 2020). Previous research indicates the advantages of utilizing learning modules in the educational process. Mangesa and Darma Dirawan (2016) highlighted the importance of learning modules in supporting teachers in facilitating comprehensive learning experiences, enabling students to master the material and achieve competency in knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Modules should be developed following the characteristics and needs of the student. In addition, learning modules should support self-study, so they must be equipped with clear self-study instructions (Susilo, 2016). The integration of culture into learning modules is considered crucial. Culturally oriented learning modules contribute to the development of intercultural communicative competence. Amalia and Wuryandani's (2020) research on EFL learning modules for Indonesian elementary students indicates that socio-cultural-based modules encourage students to engage in active learning, fostering an understanding of local culture. Exposure to both native cultural values and target culture values enhances identity and promotes cross-cultural understanding (Khalfi Masita et al., 2020). Therefore, incorporating instructional materials related to cultural content into English language teaching (ELT) learning modules is recommended.

Based on the preceding description, it is evident that the writer should consider including a balanced representation of cultures in designing a good English learning module. It means that the learning module materials should perform culturally relevant content from the target, source, and international cultures as Cortazzi & Jin (1999) proposed. These cultural depictions strive to assist students in understanding and classifying the social environments they might come across, emphasizing cultural proficiency and consciousness development. As known, learning modules are frequently chosen as the primary resource in English language teaching and learning, it becomes crucial to evaluate whether the EFL learning module has been designed to include culture-related content. Learning module evaluation checklists are commonly

employed to evaluate the extent and quality of cultural representation. Various checklists exist, differing in their emphasis on culture and specificity. Byram's checklist, for instance, focuses specifically on cultural content (Byram, 1997). Byram examines the degree to which a learning module addresses each area outlined in Table 1. A research study conducted by Gunantar (2017) demonstrated that Byram's checklist is considered sufficient and comprehensive. The research highlighted that this checklist is driven by the concept of cultural learning and teaching as integral components of language education. The research findings indicated that English learning sources using this checklist mainly focused on Indonesian culture. Therefore, utilizing such checklists becomes essential in ensuring a thorough examination of the cultural context within English learning modules.

Combining the framework provided by Cortazzi & Jin's cultural information and Byram's checklist presents a comprehensive approach to evaluating an English learning module. The identification of written texts containing cultural information will be conducted through content analysis, employing Cortazzi & Jin's three sources of cultural information (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). These texts will then be coded under the eight categories by Byram (1997). Interestingly, this approach has not been widely explored in previous studies for evaluating an EFL blended learning module. To address this gap, the present research aims to analyze how cultural contents are portrayed in the materials of an EFL blended learning module designed for higher education. This study is expected to support the development of teaching and learning materials and enhance the overall quality of education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural contents are data or materials encompassing cultural values, including symbols or signs, letters, words, images or illustrations. According to Cortazzi & Jin (1999), the contents within English instructional materials are classified into three groups concerning their cultural contexts: source culture, target culture, and international culture. The target culture materials should encompass the cultures of countries where English is spoken as a first language, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. These materials mostly focus on aspects of life in these countries and provide learners with insights into native English-speaking cultures. According to Kim & Paek (2015), integrating elements of the target culture into textbook enhances students' enthusiasm and engagement in language learning. On the other hand, source culture refers to the learners' own culture as material. In the case of Indonesia, the materials primarily portray Indonesian society and culture, ensuring that learners are familiar with the content and have a great opportunity to possess it. Lastly, international culture materials should encompass cultures from both English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries, offering a diverse representation of global cultures. By including a range of cultural perspectives, learners can develop a broader understanding of the world around them and foster intercultural competence.

Learning resources in a second or foreign language are often expected to incorporate elements of the target culture. On the other hand, the representation of the target culture may vary across different modules. Some modules may largely feature a wide range of English-speaking cultures, while others may emphasize non-English-speaking cultures, highlighting international uses of the language. Hence, using learning evaluation checklists is common for figuring out the depth and quality of cultural representation in EFL materials. Checklists vary significantly in their emphasis on culture in EFL learning (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). Byram's (1997) checklist is one of the most comprehensive standards for evaluating learning materials, focusing specifically on cultural content, as illustrated in Table 1. This checklist investigates the extent to which a learning module emphasizes each cultural area and how it does so.

Consequently, by integrating Cortazzi & Jin's cultural information with Byram's checklist, this research seeks to examine how cultural content is presented in the EFL Blended learning module at higher education. The current research aims to determine whether the English learning module has been intentionally designed with culture-related content. The expectation is that the cultural contents identified will meet the students' needs, enhancing their intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and cultural awareness.

TABLE 1
CATEGORIZATION OF THE CULTURAL CONTENTS

No.	Cultural Content Category
1.	Social identity and social groups (social class, regional identity, ethnic minorities)
2.	Social interaction (differing levels of formality)
3.	Belief and behavior (moral, religious beliefs, daily routines)
4.	Social and political institutions (state institutions, health care, law and order, social security, local government)
5.	Social and political institutions (state institutions, health care, law and order, social security, local government)
6.	Socialization and the life cycle (families, schools, employment, rites of passage)
7.	National history (historical and contemporary events seen as markers of national identity)
8.	Stereotypes and national identity (what are "typical," symbols of national stereotypes)

(Byram, 1993 cited in Cortazzi & Jin, 1999, p. 203)

METHOD

Qualitative content analysis is utilized to accomplish how the culture-related contents are presented in an English learning module entitled "English Language for Indonesian Module" designed for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students at a higher university level. The study incorporates the three sources of cultural information outlined by Cortazzi & Jin (1999: target culture materials, source culture materials, and international culture materials. To classify the written texts into these sources, Byram's checklist is employed during the content analysis process (Byram, 1997). This checklist instrument determines the extent of cultural content and how well it aligns with the requirements of cultural content in the context of English language teaching. The selected research object is the "English Language for Indonesian Module," used by approximately 5000 freshmen annually at an Islamic higher university as the main resource for the English-intensive blended teaching and learning process. This comprehensive module is distributed into 10 units across 54 pages, aligning with the development of students' communicative competence. The analysis encompasses reading texts, dialogues, and quotes for evaluating an EFL blended learning module.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The EFL blended learning module entitled "English Language for Indonesian Module" designed for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) blended learning at a higher university level. The module provides ten units covering four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and English components such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Most units contain written texts, including all the reading texts, dialogues, and quotes. The cultural content in the module is categorized into three types: source culture, target culture, and international culture according to Cortazzi & Jin's (1999) categorization. Source culture materials are based on the student's culture, while target culture materials focus on the cultural aspects of a country where English is the first language. International culture materials encompass a broader range of cultures where English is neither the first nor second language. Table 2 outlines the availability of these three cultural information categories (source culture, target culture, and international culture) in the English module, along with their frequency (f) and percentage (%). This table likely provides a comprehensive overview of how the cultural content is distributed throughout the EFL blended learning module.

TABLE 2
THE DEPICTION OF CULTURAL CONTENTS IN THE EFL BLENDED
LEARNING MODULE

Category Code	Sources Culture		Target Culture		International Culture		Total (f)	Total (%)
	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Code 1 (Social identity and social groups)	3	14	-	-	1	13	4	12
Code 2 (Social interaction)	3	14	1	33	2	25	6	18
Code 3 (Belief and behavior)	2	9	-	-	-	-	2	6
Code 4 (Social and political institutions)	2	9	-	-	1	13	3	9
Code 5 (Socialization and the life cycle)	4	18	2	67	2	25	8	24
Code 6 (National history)	2	9	-	-	-	-	2	6
Code 7 (National geography)	1	5	-	-	1	13	2	6
Code 8 (Stereotypes and national identity)	5	23	-	-	1	13	6	18
Total	22	67%	3	9%	8	24%	33	100%

Following the analysis of the ten units, it was observed that cultural content was present in almost all units, except for Unit 4 in the English learning module. According to Cortazzi & Jin's (1999) classification of cultural information, source cultures emerged as the most frequently portrayed materials, while international cultures were the least represented. Table 2 illustrates that source cultures were featured in 22 written texts, with eight written texts presenting international cultures as the second most frequently depicted materials, and target culture being the least presented. It's noteworthy that not all chapters included every type of cultural information. For instance, in Unit 1, written texts addressed both source and target culture, but none touched upon international cultures. Furthermore, the EFL blended learning module did not cover all cultural categories from each source of cultural information uniformly. The table highlights that the module showcased cultures in Code 5 (Socialization and the life cycle) most frequently. The research findings show an imbalanced presentation of cultural information in this module.

Meanwhile, the distribution of cultural sources becomes evident when considering the percentage of each cultural type, as outlined in Table 2. Findings result exists a notable contrast in the representation of cultural content across the various types. From the largest percentage, 67% are the source culture, 24% are the international culture, and only 9% are the target culture. Further elaboration on the specifics of each identified cultural information will be performed upon in subsequent sections.

Source Culture

In the ten units, source culture plays an enormous role in the cultural contents of this English Learning Module. The data shows that cultural contents were portrayed in all categorization. Five of the twenty-two data indicated cultures from the source language (L1) that describe stereotypes and national identities. As stated in Table 1, source culture refers to a specific symbol or sign of national stereotypes, national identity, famous people, famous monuments, and famous folktales. For example, "The Story of Sunan Ampel" becomes one of the Islamic Indonesian famous stories.

Moreover, this story also indicates what is mentioned in the third category, belief, and behavior. This category measures the cultural materials conveying specific attitudes, values, and beliefs while guiding people's social actions. It was identified that this story led students to know about the particular perceptions, values, and beliefs that would guide their behaviors. The story of Sunan Ampel built people's perspectives on how Sunan Ampel spread Islamic knowledge in Java. However, it is based on people's beliefs. They

may believe the stories or not. It is all about the perspectives to the stories and the reality that exists today. It is important to emulate the meaning contained in the story.

Next, source cultures from the fifth category (socialization, and the life cycle) became the second most presented in this EFL blended learning module after the eighth category (stereotypes and national identity). It categorized the culture from the source language (L1) regarding family, school, employment, media, ceremonies, art, food, relationship, and sport. A passage told us about "Gado-Gado" is one of the examples as the traditional food in Indonesia. This passage introduces students to the cultural significance of Gado-Gado and explore the ingredients and directions on how to make Gado-Gado in daily life.

In this EFL blended learning module, cultural content sourced from the seventh category, National Geography, has emerged as the least represented aspect. This category typically encompasses geographical factors deemed significant by members of a culture. Geographic features such as landscapes, climate, and natural resources often shape a region's traditions, lifestyles, and societal norms, making them integral components of cultural understanding. Only one text related to travel and shopping destinations around Senayan became the example that provides readers with a sensory experience, allowing them to visualize and appreciate the interplay between geography and culture in Senayan. Therefore, incorporating more content from National Geography could enrich students' comprehension of how geography influences cultural diversity and dynamics worldwide.

Target Culture

The least presented culture in the EFL blended learning module is the target culture. Cultures that are described in Socialization and the life cycle, the fifth category, are the most frequently presented in this learning module. This category encompasses aspects such as families, schools, employment, and rites of passage. The frequency with which these cultural dimensions are presented reflects a deliberate effort to provide learners with a comprehensive understanding of societal structures, interpersonal relationships, and significant life events within the target culture such as in the text entitled Jamie Cullum in the EFL blended learning module. The text also emphasizes cultural elements in terms of social interaction. the module provides learners with valuable insights into the nuances of interpersonal relationships. Understanding the cultural dimensions of social interaction, including communication styles, etiquette, and societal norms, is crucial for learners to navigate and engage effectively in real-life situations within the target culture.

The study yielded another notable finding, indicating that the representation of the target culture in the first, third, fourth, sixth, seventh, and eighth categories remains minimal within this EFL blended learning module. Recognizing this deficiency, it is recommended to incorporate and highlight the aspects of the target culture more frequently across these categories. Emphasizing cultural elements from various perspectives, such as history, traditions, customs, daily life, geography, and societal norms, is crucial for comprehensively understanding the target culture.

International Culture

The presentation of this cultural information became the second most presented in this EFL blended learning module. Three written texts present international cultures in almost all categories, except in the third (belief and behavior) and sixth (National history) categories. As its definition, the international culture materials present a wider variety of cultures where English is not used as L1 or L2. The written text entitled "A Trip Across Russia" can be an example. This text takes learners on a cultural journey through Russia by rail and road where Russia is one of the countries that does not use English as the L1 or L2. This text serves as an example of international culture geography and goes beyond linguistic exploration by delving into various cultural elements, particularly those related to social interaction, stereotypes, and national identity in Russia. This allows learners to gain a nuanced understanding of how people in Russia engage with one another and explores aspects of Russian national identity.

Moreover, conversation text related to introducing others shows cultural content in terms of social identity, socialization, and life cycle. The exchange of personal information during introductions reflects cultural attitudes towards individualism and group identity. Another written text also reveals social and

political institutions, which provides learners with a more understanding of the social and political dimensions that influence individuals' lives.

The study's findings indicate that all sources of cultural information are incorporated into this English module. Even though there are imbalances, all of the existing data is adequate in fulfilling the cultural requirements that should be integrated into the students' module. A sample representation of each cultural content in the EFL blended learning module is presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
SAMPLES OF EACH CULTURAL CONTENT IN THE EFL BLENDED LEARNING MODULE

Unit	Topic	Text	Section	Page	Cultural Information	
					Type	Code
1	Sunan Ampel	Sunan Ampel was among the nine Javanese revered saints Wali Songo, credited for spreading Islam in Java. The father of Sunan Ampel was Maulana Malik Ibrahim….. …... Sunan Ampel died in Demak in 1481 CE but is buried in Ampel Mosque.	Let's Learn: Reading	2	Source Culture	SC.3(1) SC.6(1) SC.8(1)
3	Jamie Cullum	In my work, I travel a lot and stay in different hotels, so my perfect weekend is at home with my family and friends. I live in a flat in northwest London next to my brother, Ben, and at weekends I like being with him and my wife, Sophie… We often go to a club on Friday nights - we all love dancing. We get up late on Saturdays, and I make breakfast, which is essential to me. Then I sit at my piano - it's in my kitchen - and I play for a couple of hours…	Let's Practice: Reading	12	Target Culture	TC.2(1) TC.5(2)
8	A Trip Across Russia	Russia is a very large country. There are eight times zones between Moscow in the west and Vladivostok in the east… You can talk to other passengers, learn some words in Russian and enjoy the views… … Go sightseeing in the big cities. In Novosibirsk-the main city in Siberia-there are museum, art galleries, theatres, and a famous opera house in the city centre…	Take Home Assignment	47	International Culture	IC.2(2) IC.7(1) IC.8(1)

Discussion

The research examined how culture is reflected in EFL blended learning module, which is utilized for teaching English as a foreign language. The findings indicate that EFL blended learning module not only reflects source cultures but also includes representations of target cultures and international cultures. Consequently, exposure to the learning module contributes to the formation of intercultural competence. This intercultural competence, developed through exposure to the learning module, serves not only to encourage identity development but also fosters an understanding of the identities of others. This can be a stabilizing element in a rapidly changing world, promoting cultural awareness and sensitivity among learners.

According to Cortazzi & Jin (1999), EFL learning materials often prioritize representing the source culture of specific countries at the national level rather than focusing on target cultures. This is in line with the findings of the current research, where the EFL blended learning module primarily reflects Indonesian culture rather than the target cultures associated with English-speaking countries. This emphasis is commonly intended to raise students' awareness of their own cultural identity. The research written by Silvia (2015) also has a slightly similar finding. Relatively, source culture is the most prominently portrayed in the two prescribed English written materials being analyzed, followed by target culture, culture-free, and international target culture materials. However, in this present study, the international culture becomes the second most frequently presented. Although international target culture has a small portion, exposure to international target culture materials is essential for students because the aim of learning English extends beyond communication with native speakers to include interactions with non-native English speakers as well (Liska Afriani et al., 2019).

The representation of source culture content in locally written learning materials is often seen as a strength due to its practicality and familiarity for learners (Dat, 2008). Consequently, the learning module investigated in this research can be viewed as supporting this strength by incorporating numerous representations of the source culture. However, this finding was not the case in Faris's research on the cultural content analysis of English learning materials for senior high school grade three in Cianjur, Indonesia where the target culture was heavily portrayed in comparison to source and international cultures (Faris, 2014). However, in the present study, the analysis indicates that the exposure to the target culture is at the lowest percentage. Despite its lower representation, the importance of target culture cannot be overlooked. Many teachers believe it is crucial to introduce target culture elements, such as comparisons between Western and Indonesian lifestyles, habits, customs, etiquette, and body gestures (Liska Afriani et al., 2019). Those things are essential for fostering students' intercultural communicative competence.

The present study reveals a vivid imbalance in the exposure of source, target, and international cultures. An ideal condition for English learning materials is a balanced representation of source and international target cultures (Alshenqeeti, 2020; McKay, 2012). However, with the extremely low exposure to international culture and target cultures in the EFL blended learning module, it can be inferred that the module does not provide sufficient cultural exposure to develop students' intercultural understanding. Developing intercultural understanding involves students comprehending their own culture and others and comparing, interpreting, and synthesizing cultural differences to achieve better cultural understanding and communicative goals.

The learning module, designed as a manifestation of implementing EFL blended learning, is a crucial component for online and offline learning. Despite its blended nature, the learning module needs to include cultural content materials. Cultural integration within the learning materials can significantly enhance students' comprehension of multicultural contexts (Hu & Zuo, 2023). As emphasized by Setyono & Widodo (2019) in their research on multicultural values, graduates are expected to emerge as global citizens who demonstrate respect for religious, social, and cultural values, exhibit a strong work ethic, and engage in creative thinking to contribute effectively at both national and international levels. Consequently, the analyzed EFL blended learning module includes content related to target cultures and international cultures, reflecting a commitment to preparing students for a globalized world with diverse cultural interactions.

Incorporating diverse cultural contents drives the importance of multicultural education for students due to the use of English as international communication. Multicultural education not only holds the

potential to enhance students' engagement by providing content that relates to their experiences, but also to foster deeper engagement through enhanced comprehension, positive peer relationships, and an increased sense of connection (Abacioglu et al., 2023). Multicultural education plays an enormous role in cultivating competent and dignified generations, reflecting cultural values, shaping national character, contributing to the development of national identity, and preserving cultural heritage (Oktavianti et al., 2017). Embracing multicultural diversity also encompasses a variety of cultural expressions, both domestic and foreign. Alptekin (2002) recommends that cultural materials included in EFL learning materials should encompass local, global, and foreign contexts that are familiar and meaningful to the lives of language students. Following the present research findings, the EFL blended learning module supports multicultural education by incorporating materials containing information on source cultures, target cultures, and international cultures.

CONCLUSION

The "English Language for Indonesian Module" analysis reveals that all sources of cultural information, including source culture, target culture, and international culture, are represented through written texts. This module's primary goal is to enhance students' cultural awareness, encompassing not only cultures from other countries but also emphasizing the importance of Indonesian cultures. Cultural information was frequently presented in the English learning module materials in reading and practice sections. However, a notable imbalance is observed in the representation of cultural content among the three sources. Source culture is the most frequently presented, with 67%. International culture follows at 24%. In contrast, the cultural contents related to the target culture are performed under-represented, only 9%. This finding highlights a significant imbalance in the cultural presentation within the English learning module.

To conclude, the cultural materials integrated into the "English Language for Indonesian Module" are well-represented, making them suitable for incorporation into the English language teaching and learning process. The analysis suggests that this module, designed for EFL students at a higher university level, aligns with Cortazzi & Jin's source of cultural information. Consequently, it is highly recommended for use by English teachers. Additionally, the study's findings provide valuable insights for future researchers interested in EFL blended learning modules or module reviews. It is suggested that they explore other elements and identify potential gaps in the field. Conducting similar analyses on different English learning modules would help to ensure whether the materials contain cultural content based on alternative indicators. This approach can contribute to a deeper understanding of authors' strategies for incorporating cultural content into EFL learning module.

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