

# Disclosing Cultural Contents in English Textbook Reading Passages for Junior High School

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**Abstract** - Textbooks have an important role in English language learning to provide information about the English language and interrelated cultures. This research aimed to find cultural contents which refer to cultural dimensions and cultural categories in 34 reading passages. Generating Qualitative Content Analysis, this research attempted to disclose the cultural dimensions and cultural categories embedded in the textbook reading passages. The coding system was done by means of QCMap App. With regards to cultural dimensions, this research found patterns of the occurrence of the dimension were dominated by the dimension of Practices. Then it is followed by dimension of Perspectives, dimension of Products, dimension of Persons and dimension of Communities respectively. Furthermore, this study found that the highest percentage of cultural categories is Target Culture (35%). It is followed by Universality across Culture (26%), International Culture (24%) and Intercultural Interaction (15%). However, the researcher did not find the occurrence of Source Culture in the 34 reading passages in Next Move 1 Students' Book.

**Keywords** – Culture; Textbook; Cultural Dimensions; Cultural Categories.

## 1. Background

In Indonesia, there are different kinds of English textbooks that are used in English learning: textbooks published by Indonesian publishers, and those published by foreign publishers. Mostly, schools in Indonesia use textbooks published by Indonesian publishers, especially in public schools. In other hand, there are some schools which use textbook from English spoken countries such as from United States, England, and Australia. Each textbook has their advantage and disadvantage for making students understand the material.

The English textbooks published by Indonesian publishers place a larger emphasis on Indonesian culture than other cultures. [1] found that English textbooks that are published by Ministry of Education and Culture explored more Indonesian cultures than the target culture. Through studying English using Indonesian context material, students are expected to understand English more easily by using material that they already familiar with. On the other hand, textbooks published by foreign publishers explored more target culture material. The purpose of integrating target culture components into textbooks is to help students enhance their motivation and develop their attitude toward language learning [2]. Moreover, it can enrich students' knowledge about the cultures of the target language, in this case, English.

Linguist and language teachers realize that foreign language cannot be taught without introducing the context and culture behind the language. [3] argued that culture and the term "social" are two sides of coin. In other words, teaching language cannot be left out from language context, it is also cannot be taught without understanding the language position within social life or culture. In supporting the former statement, [4] stated that language is a part of

culture, and culture is a part of language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture. Hence, in English learning, the aims are not only to make students understand the use of English, but also the culture behind the language because they are interdependent on each other.

The researcher believes that in teaching English, the use of textbook as a source of material is very important. [5] stated that textbooks are often viewed as the major sources of linguistic and cultural knowledge of the target language in EFL classrooms. It is the same with other countries in the world. In Indonesia, English textbooks play an important role in language teaching and learning since most English teachers use textbooks as the core material. From the importance of textbook in English learning, a question arises in terms of the cultural contents in English textbook. [6] argued that the sets of cultural values reflected in English textbooks are directly or indirectly carried to learners as the "hidden curriculum" when the knowledge of textbooks is transmitted to them. In other words, the textbooks carry an important role in delivering cultural value to the students in English learning.

In Samarinda, Junior High Schools use English textbooks published by both Indonesian publishers and foreign publishers. Many public Junior High Schools use English textbooks by Indonesian publishers such as Ministry of Culture and Education, Erlangga and Intan Pariwara. In other hand, there are Junior High Schools which use textbook by foreign publisher. For example, SMP Al Azhar Syifa Budi Samarinda. uses Next Move 1 Students' Book published by Pearson Education Limited for English learning. Another foreign publisher of English textbook that is used by Junior High School in Samarinda is Cambridge University Press. The researcher chose to analyze the textbook by Pearson because it accommodates the cultural content data and has a special part about Britain cultures as the representation of cultures from English-speaking country.

Nowadays, learning English as Foreign Language also includes the knowledge about conventions, customs, beliefs, and systems of meaning of another country [7]. English lesson textbooks should have a balanced presentation about cultural products and cultural perspectives [8], [9]. The foreign publisher and Indonesian publisher may have different presentations about cultural dimensions and dominant cultural categories in their textbooks; therefore, this study would investigate the presentation of cultural dimensions and cultural categories in the Next Move 1 Students' Book for 7th graders.

## 2. Cultural Dimensions

In [10] defines culture as the evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of a shared set of practices associated with a shared set of products, based upon a

shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts. [10] divided the culture into five dimensions of cultural aspects namely products, practices, perspectives, communities, persons. The dimension of products includes four aspects namely artefacts (food, document, language, money, tool), places (buildings, cities, houses), institutions (family, law, economy, religion,

They can be explicit but often implicit, outside conscious awareness. Moreover, the dimension of communities includes specific social contexts such as national culture, circumstances (e.g. religious ceremonies), and group (e.g. different social clubs) in which members carry out cultural practices. Furthermore, the person

education, politic), art forms (music, clothes, dancing painting, movie, architecture).

Practices involve acts (ritualized communicative practices), scenarios (extended communicative practice), lives (stories of the member of the future). The dimension of perspectives is about the practice of culture.

dimension refers to individual members who embody the culture and its communities in unique ways. Personal identity and life history play key roles in the development of a cultural person.

The following table 1 shows more specific about each cultural dimension and the aspects.

**Table 1:** The Construct of cultural dimensions by [13]

NO	Cultural Dimensions	Aspects
1	Products	<i>Artefacts:</i> name, food, document, language, money, tool, good/things, jewelry and hobby <i>Places:</i> buildings, cities, houses. <i>Institutions:</i> family, law, economy, religion, education, politic, occupation, media, entertainment and conventional institutions. <i>Art forms:</i> instrument, music, clothes, dancing, painting, movie, literature and architecture.
2	Practices	<i>Operation:</i> manipulation of cultural products, how to use or make the product of culture. <i>Acts:</i> ritualized communicative practices such as eating habit, table manner, behave, and celebration. <i>Scenario:</i> extended communicative practices <i>Lives:</i> stories of culture's members
3	Perspective	<i>Intellectual values:</i> though, habits, perceptions, beliefs, traditional values, etiquette, attitudes, ethnics, and ideas. <i>Behaviors:</i> non-verbal behaviors patterns, verbal behaviors patterns, other behavior patterns, means of communication, and reactions to particular situations. <i>Minor values:</i> public holiday, weather conditions, traffic rules, and travel habits. <i>Major values:</i> history, geography, and philosophy. <i>Formal values:</i> legal system, politics, and the economy.
4	Communities	<i>Specific social contexts</i> such as national culture, circumstances (e.g. religious ceremonies), and group (e.g. different social clubs, organization) in which members carry our cultural practices.
5	Persons	<i>Personal identity and life history.</i>

### 3. Cultural Categories

The [11] has classified the cultural categories into five (see appendix A for five main cultural categories). They are Source Culture (SC), Target Culture (TC), International Culture (IC), Intercultural Interaction (ICI) and Universality across Culture (UC). Firstly, Source Culture (SC) refers to the students' native culture. In other words, when Indonesian students learn English at school, the source culture is Indonesian culture, which is the culture from where the students come from. Second, Target Culture (TC) refers to where the target language is used as first language.

For example, when Indonesian students learn English at school, the target culture is American or British cultures or other countries' cultures that use English as their native language. Third, the International Culture (IC), it refers to cultures of all countries around the world except Indonesia and English-speaking countries culture. Fourth, Intercultural Interaction (ICI) refers to activity about cultural issue, such as comparing the differences or finding

the similarities between the local or source culture and the target or international culture. Last, the Universality across Culture (UC) refers to general knowledge/ content that is not specific to any particular culture or country.

### 4. Research Methodology

The research method in this study was qualitative research. The characteristics of the study are narrative description, emerging hypotheses, using triangulation and mostly using purposive sampling [12]. The steps of qualitative research include data collection and data analysis. This study investigated the quality of cultural contents in an English textbook published by a foreign publisher. Content analysis is a technique that analyzes the content of communication in an indirect way. In this study, the researcher investigated cultural dimensions and cultural categories in the English textbook titled Next Move 1 Students' Book.

The sources of data were reading passages from Next Move 1 Students' Book. The textbook was written by Carolyn Barraclough and Katherine Stannett. It was

published by Pearson Education Limited in 2013. The data in this study were words, phrases and sentences that contain cultural contents.

The textbook had some sections which can be analyzed; 9 units (page 4-108) and Culture part (page 121-126). Each unit contained reading passages that accommodate cultural content. There are 34 reading passages in the Next Move 1 Students' Book. The passages are presented in Reading

section. Some reading passages are followed by practices and questions for students.

In this research, the researcher acts as the main instrument. In addition, there were two coding guidelines in this study. The first coding guideline is for cultural dimensions by [13]. The second coding guideline is for cultural categories that were modified from [14]. The researcher used QCA Map in collecting the data.

**Table 2:** Coding Guidelines for Cultural Dimensions

Name	Definition	Anchor Examples	Coding rules
<b>B1: Language Cultural And Product</b>	'Products' are all artifacts produced or adopted by the members of the culture, including those in the environment. Products ranged from tangible objects to intangible objects.	Artifact: food, documents, language, money, tools  Place: building, cities which associate with particular cultures, houses, tourism places.  Institutions: law, family, politics, economy, religion, education, media, entertainment and conventional institutions.  Art Forms: music, dancing, painting, clothes, movies, architecture, TV program, merchandises, prints, and literary works.	ART: Artifact PLC: Place INS: Institution ARF: Art Forms
<b>B2: Language and Cultural Practices</b>	'Practice' comprises the full range of actions and interactions that members of the culture carry out, individually or with others. Practice also refers to real life activities which are inherited to a particular group of community and passed from generation to generations	Operations: manipulation of cultural products, how to use or make products of culture.  Acts: ritualized communicative practices such as eating habit, table manner, behave, and celebration.  Scenario: extended communicative practices  Lives: stories of culture's members Intellectual values: though, habits, perceptions, beliefs, traditional values, etiquette, attitudes, ethnics, and ideas	OPR: Operations ACT: Acts SCN: Scenarios LIV: Lives
<b>B3: Language and Cultural Perspectives</b>	'Perspectives' represent the perceptions, believes, values and attitudes that underline the products and that guide persons and communities in the practices of the culture. Perspectives also reflects the way a certain group of people see some aspects of life.	Behaviors: non-verbal behaviors patterns, verbal behaviors patterns, other behavior patterns, means of communication, and reactions to particular situations.  Minor values: public holiday, weather conditions, traffic rules, and travel habits.  Major values: history, geography and philosophy.  Formal values: legal system, politics, and the economy Specific social contexts such as national culture, circumstances (e.g. religious ceremonies), and group (e.g. different social clubs, organization) in which members carry out cultural practices. Examples: Sports fans, construction	INV: Intellectual value BEH: Behaviors MIV: Minor values MAV: Major value FOV: Formal value

		workers, etc.	
<b>B4: Language and Cultural Communities</b>	'Communities' include the specific social contexts, circumstances and groups through which members engage in cultural practices. It also can refer to group of people sharing values and behaviors.		NAC: National Culture CIR: Circumstances GRP: Group
<b>B5: Language and Persons</b>	'Persons' refers to the individual member who represent the particular cultures and communities in unique ways. It also can refer to people acting within a culture.	Personal identity: salary man, taxi driver, grandmother Life history: Isaac Newton, John Lennon, Barack Obama	PID: Personal identity LIH: Life history

**Table 3:** Coding Guidelines for Cultural Categories

Cultural Categories	Explanations
C1: Source Culture (SC)	It refers to Indonesian culture.
C2: Target Culture (TC)	It includes English-speaking countries. According to www.sheffield.ac.uk., majority native English-speaking countries are Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, St. Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom and United States of America.
C3: International Culture (IC)	It includes cultures of all countries in the world (European countries, countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia) except for Indonesian and English-speaking countries.
C4: Intercultural Interaction (ICI)	It includes comparison, reflection or awareness of the differences and similarities between the local or source culture and the target or international culture through activities such as case studies, problem-solving, and role play to help students develop positive attitude, knowledge, skills and awareness in intercultural communication.
C5: Universality across Culture (UC)	It includes general knowledge or content that is not specific to any particular culture or country. The content is mainly related to linguistic knowledge and practice without focusing on any particular culture

After the researcher finished coding in QCAMap, the researcher downloaded the category statistics and coded passages from QCAMap after finishing the coding process. The data was downloaded in table format and opened by using Microsoft Excel or another application which can open table format file. From the file, the researcher knew the frequencies of each cultural dimensions in reading passages in English textbook. The researcher analyzes the words that related to culture. The researcher used frequency tables, graphs, charts, and

words to display the data. After that, the researcher verified, revised and confirmed the findings of the study by using triangulation. This study used investigator triangulation and previous theories. The researcher used the concept of cultural dimensions by Moran (2001). To analyze the cultural categories, the researcher used five main categories of culture modified from Chao (2011).

### 5. Findings and Interpretation

The findings of cultural dimensions according to [17] can be seen in table 2. This table codes to include all

dimensions. B1 encodes for dimension of products. B2 encodes for dimension of practices. B3 encodes for dimension of perspectives. B4 encodes for dimension of communities. B5 encodes for dimension of persons.

Similarly, table 3 codes cultural categories. C1 encodes Source Culture. C2 encodes Target Culture. C3 encodes International Culture. C4 encodes Intercultural Interaction. C5 encodes Universality across Culture.

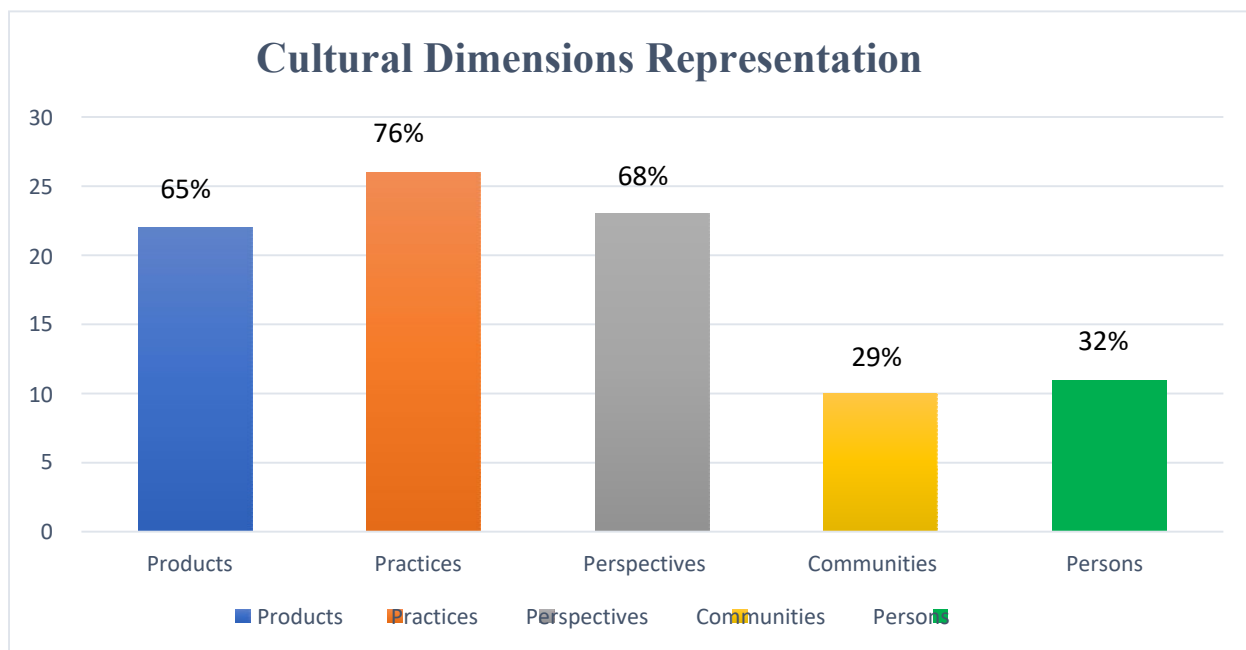
**Table 4:** Cultural Dimensions Findings

No	Title	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
1	Welcome to The Wildlife Club		✓	✓	✓	
2	Fans of the month	✓	✓	✓		✓
3	Help! Dad's got an embarrassing hobby!	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4	20 <sup>th</sup> Century Painting	✓	✓			✓
5	Cybertown. It's our town, it's your own	✓				
6	Great Parks in London	✓		✓		
7	Fazila and Skateistan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	A day with... my big family		✓	✓		✓
9	The big school quiz	✓	✓	✓		
10	How to make a Camera Obscura		✓			
11	A Day in the Life		✓	✓		
12	Unusual Pets			✓		
13	Lavindya's Best Friend		✓			
14	Guess the Job!	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15	Poems	✓				
16	Why is the sky blue?		✓			
17	Look! This is our fridge	✓	✓	✓		
18	Three Unusual	✓				
19	Louis and Chokolit	✓	✓	✓		✓
20	Flower Power	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
21	Travel bank in time!	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
22	24 hours in the life of a Roman Child	✓	✓	✓	✓	
23	Around the world in 80 days					✓
24	Azab's Journey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
25	Phiona's Journey		✓			
26	e-reading!	✓	✓	✓		
27	Technology-free week		✓	✓		
28	The Youth Mayors of England		✓	✓	✓	
29	The United Kingdom: facts and figure	✓			✓	
30	Education in the UK	✓	✓	✓		
31	British Food	✓	✓	✓		
32	London Transport	✓	✓	✓		
33	Famous British People					✓
34	British Festival and Customs	✓	✓	✓		
	Total	22	26	23	10	11

There were 34 reading passages in the Next Move 1 Students' Book published by Pearson. After the coding process using QCAMap, the researcher found that all five cultural dimensions by Moran (2001) were represented in

the 34 reading passages in the Next Move 1 Students' Book. A passage may contain one or more than one cultural dimension.

Fig. 1: Cultural Dimensions Representation



From Figure 1 as shown above, it can be concluded that all five cultural dimensions were represented in the reading passages in the Next Move 1 Students’ Book. Language and Cultural Practices (B2) was the most dominating dimension, represented in 26 reading passages. The second is Language and Cultural Perspectives (B3) which was represented in 23 reading passages. The third is Language and Cultural Products (B1) with 22 reading passages. Followed by Language and Cultural Persons (B5), represented in 11 reading passages. The least mentioned cultural dimension was Language and Cultural Communities (B4) which are represented in 10 reading passages out of 34.

It also can be concluded that most reading passages contain the dimension Practice as shown by the orange column. Then, it is followed by the gray column which represents the dimension of Perspective. After that, the

dimension Product with the blue column. Next, the green column which represent dimension of Persons. Lastly, the dimension of Communities that is represented by yellow column.

The researcher made the conclusion that all five cultural dimensions were represented in the 34 reading passages in the Next Move 1 Students’ Book. Some reading passages represented one cultural dimension only, others represented two until five cultural dimensions. The dimension of practices dominated the cultural content in this book with 76%. It is followed by dimension of perspectives 68%, dimension of products 65%, dimension of persons 32% and dimension of communities 29%.

The following table 5 shows the findings and distribution for cultural categories of 34 reading passage in the Next Move 1 Students’ Book. Each reading passage belongs to one cultural category.

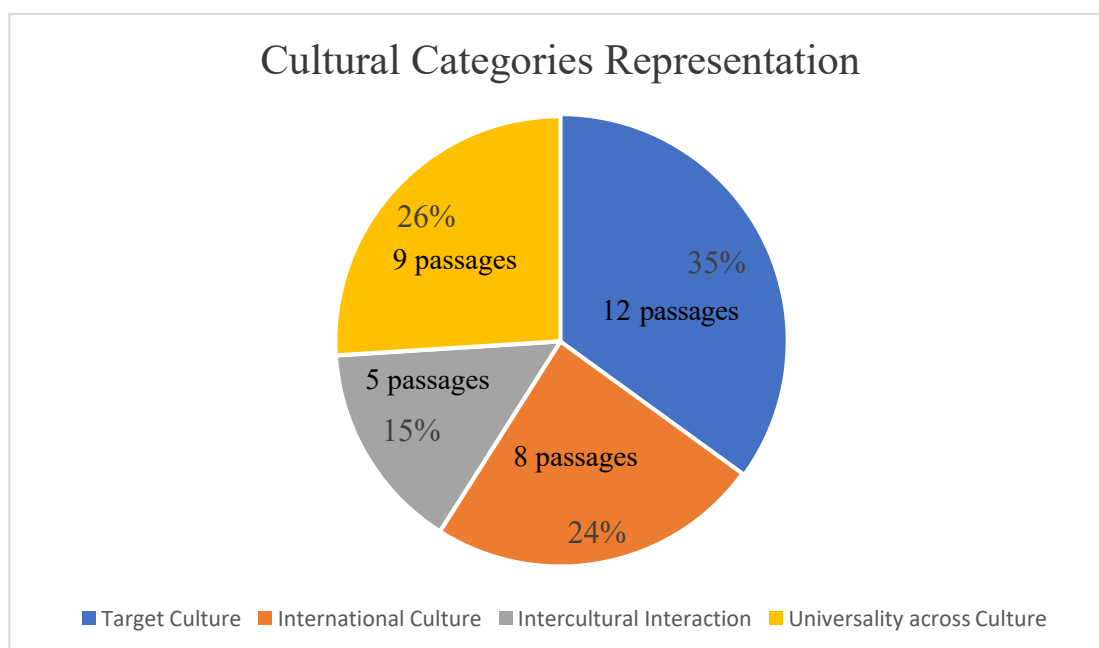
Table 5: Cultural Categories Findings

Cultural Categories	Title of Reading Passages
Source Culture (SC)	-
Target Culture (TC)	1. Great Parks in London 2. A day with ... my big family 3. Louis and Chokolit 4. Flower Power 5. Around the world in 80 days 6. The Youth Mayors of England 7. The United Kingdom: Facts and Figures 8. Education in the UK 9. British Food 10. London Transport 11. Famous British People 12. British Festival and Customs

International Culture (IC)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 20<sup>th</sup> Century Painting</li> <li>2. Fazila and Skateistan</li> <li>3. A day in the life....</li> <li>4. Lavindya's Best Friend</li> <li>5. Guess the Job!</li> <li>6. 24 hours in the life of a Roman Child</li> <li>7. Azab's Journey</li> <li>8. Phiona's Journey</li> </ol>
Intercultural Interaction (ICI)	Interaction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Big School Quiz</li> <li>2. Unusual Pets</li> <li>3. Look! This is our fridge</li> <li>4. Three unusual</li> <li>5. Travel back in time!</li> </ol>
Universality across Culture (UC)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Wildlife Club</li> <li>2. Fans of the Month</li> <li>3. Help! Dad's got an embarrassing hobby!</li> <li>4. Cybertown</li> <li>5. How to make a Camera Obscura</li> <li>6. Poems</li> <li>7. Why is the sky blue?</li> <li>8. e-reading!</li> <li>9. technology-free week</li> </ol>

From the table above, we can see that there are four cultural categories that are presented in the 34-reading passages. They were Target Culture (TC), International Culture (IC), Intercultural Interaction (ICI), and

Universality across Culture (UC). Nevertheless, the source culture was not presented in the reading passages. It means there is no Indonesian culture presented in the 34 reading passages in the textbook.



**Fig. 2:** Cultural Categories Representation

From Figure 2 as shown above, it can be concluded that four cultural categories were represented in the reading passages in the Next Move 1 Students' Book. Target Culture (TC) was the most dominating category. There are 12 reading passages (35%) which presented the target culture. The second is Universality across Culture (UC) which represented in 9 reading passages (26%). The third is International Culture (IC) with 8 reading passages (24%). Followed by Intercultural Interaction (ICI) that represented

in 5 reading passages (15%). Nonetheless, there are no reading passages which present the Source Culture or Indonesian Culture.

## 6. Discussion

The most prominent cultural dimension represented in the reading passages is Dimension of Practice. The least prominent cultural dimension represented in the reading passages is Dimension of Communities. It can be assumed

from the findings that because this book is used worldwide, this book was written to accommodate cultures from different countries. It also can be assumed that the authors and the publisher of the Next Move 1 Students' Book wanted to make students understand the cultures from different countries, therefore they presented the practices of culture from different countries around the world more than other cultural dimensions. It also aims to help students to understand the concept and practices of cultures. The representations of five different cultural dimensions and cultures from different countries in the textbook could build better understanding about various cultural knowledge which will help students understand English better. In this case, this Next Move 1 Students' Book gave good experiences for the students through perspectives of dimensions to promote respect, tolerance, accepting the diversity and other characters.

The most frequently occurring cultural category in 34 reading passages in Next Move 1 Students' Book is Target Culture. The TC is presented in 12 reading passages. They present culture from English-speaking countries such as British cultures and American Culture. The author aims to make students learn English more easily by giving example of Culture from English-speaking countries. The findings show that authors do not give complete presentation of cultural categories. There is no Source Culture represented in the 34 reading passages in English Textbook. The researcher assumed that the writers did not write about Indonesian Culture because the textbook is used widely around the world. The writers want the students learn English through presenting many reading passages about English-speaking countries (TC) so that students will have more conception about culture from countries which use English.

## 7. Conclusions

From this study, we know that all five cultural dimensions by [19] are represented in the 34 reading passages in the Next Move 1 Students' Book for Junior High School. The most represented cultural dimension is Language and Cultural Practices. It is followed by Language and Cultural Perspectives, Language and Cultural Products, Language and Cultural Persons. Then the least is Language and Cultural Communities.

In terms of cultural categories, this study finds that Target Culture becomes the most frequently occurrence category in the Next Move 1 Students' Book under investigation. It is followed by Universality across Culture, International Culture and Intercultural Interaction. There is no Source Culture in the textbook. The texts that are categorized into Target Culture mostly present British Culture such as British Festival and customs, Famous British People, British Foods, Transportations in London and Education in the UK.

Referring to the results of the research, it can be concluded that the Next Move 1 Students' Book facilitates the cultural contents for students who learn English by having reading passages that contain cultural dimensions and cultural categories.

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