Teachers' and students' perceptions of using local content in English textbooks in an EFL context

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ABSTRACT

English textbooks that contain local content can be considered more interesting and easier for students and teachers to understand and use. Therefore, this study aims to analyze teachers' and students' perceptions of using local-content English textbooks for senior high school. This study employed mixed-method research involving 37 certified English teachers with 10 years or more of experience teaching English in senior high schools in Bengkulu and 100 students. The data collection instruments of this study were questionnaires and interview guidelines. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while the qualitative data were analyzed using three analysis stages: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. The results showed that teachers positively perceived using Bengkulu local content English textbooks. This is evident by the majority of English teachers strongly agreeing or agreeing in the questionnaire. Another result indicated that students responded positively to a local textbook covering Bengkulu culture. It can be seen that most of the students were happy to see the pictures or other things related to Bengkulu's local culture in the English textbook. In short, English textbooks with local content are essential for students and teachers because they encourage students to learn English.

Keywords: local content, English textbooks, teachers' perception, students' perception, EFL context

INTRODUCTION

English textbooks serve as crucial guidelines for teachers and students during the teaching and learning process. Phasand & Ghasemi (2018) pointed out that textbooks are a source of knowledge. They also transfer cultural information through text, pictures, video, conversation, and other means to the readers. The content of culture in the textbooks covers the things in the world in general. In Indonesia, distributed English textbooks for senior high schools include cultural content locally and internationally. However, the content of the textbooks, which is specific to Bengkulu culture, does not exist. According to Shin et al. (2011), English textbooks were dominated by American and British cultures. International culture is also important to be recognized by the students, but the local culture must be known by the students themselves.

Many studies are in relation to the local content in English textbooks from 2019 until 2022. In 2019, Monica & Vianty analyzed the local content-based instructional for reading materials. They found that the products they developed, both the test and the teaching materials, can serve as an alternative in teaching activities, such as teaching reading to students at level 3. In the same year, Prancisca & Rizqi (2019) investigated a locally-based book as a supplement to undergraduate English training. The researchers noticed that the questionnaire results assisted them in visualizing the learners' needs before designing the book. It encouraged them to determine the book's content, design, and grade level. Furthermore, the findings instructed the researchers as to which elements of the questionnaires might be enhanced and which items should be eliminated.

Furthermore, Kaltsum & Susiati (2019) analyzed local content materials in English textbooks for elementary school. They discovered that English textbooks for elementary school students in Surakarta did not adequately reflect local content. Most textbooks offer generic discourse and lack unique qualities and potential teaching areas for English. Two years later, Hasibin & Inayah (2021) and Abidasari et al. (2021) developed local content in English textbooks for elementary schools. The result showed that the development of textbooks begins with knowing the form of a map of the teacher's textbook needs based on Banyuwangi's local expertise. The book draft is included in the design stage, and the textbook outcome is in the last stage. The material, presentation, language, and visual components are used to determine the quality of textbooks. The material components receive high marks for presentation, language, and graphics.

Moreover, some studies analyzed local content in English textbooks for high schools. Handayani & Aprilliandari (2022) developed an English textbook for vocational students based on cultural elements. Based on expert assessments, teacher evaluations, and student post-test results, they determined that the product is practical. The subject expert's score was 82 %, the media experts' was 84.05 %, the instructors' assessments were 83.14 %, and the students' post-tests were 78.15 % higher than the pre-test (67.95). It is concluded that developing a culturally relevant English textbook is critical and urgent.

Additionally, Inderawati et al. (2021), Riadini & Cahyono (2021), Husain et al. (2021), and Sapoetra (2020) also analyzed the local culture in vocational high school textbooks. They discovered that: 1) in order to support students, English must be taught through technology; (2) English is crucial for students' future careers; (3) no local culture is included in any English language Education materials; and (4) the two main goals of incorporating local Palembang culture into educational materials were to improve students' knowledge and to improve students' understanding. Mustofa & Martina (2019) found that in terms of dominance, there were differences in cultural types and dimensions. There were 38 % aesthetic sense elements, 32% pragmatic sense elements, and 26 % social sense elements in Pathway to English. The least represented sense, semantic sense, represented only 4 %. There were 50 % for target culture, 44 % for local culture, and 6 % for international culture when it came to cultural categories. Kemendikbud discovered that in Bahasa Inggris made up 44 % for aesthetic sense, 25 % for sociological sense, 22 % for aesthetic sense, and 8 % for semantic sense. The target culture has the second-highest percentage, at 41 %, after the local culture. The last is global culture, with 11 % of occurrence. Akbar (2019) & Firdianingsih (2019) conducted research at the library on the cultural content of English textbooks. He discovered that in comparison to Target Culture and International Culture, Bahasa Inggris for grade X was mostly presented through Source Culture. In contrast to Source Culture and International Culture, Bahasa Inggris for grade XI is largely presented through Target Culture. Second, in both textbooks, Pragmatic Sense was used to portray cultures more than Aesthetic Sense, Semantic Sense, and Sociological Sense.

In brief, the earlier research examined developed English textbooks for elementary, junior, and senior high schools that had local content. None of them, however, looked at how teachers and students felt about utilizing English textbooks with local content. Because perspectives can lead to judgment and appraisal of the individuals, students' and teachers' perceptions are crucial in evaluating English textbooks (Sangnok & Jaturapitakkul, 2019). Thus, if students have positive perceptions of English textbooks, they will likely have positive attitudes and motivation in learning English in the classroom. Similarly, if teachers like the textbooks, they will likely use them in teaching English in the classroom and outside the classroom. As a guideline, the following questions are addressed in this research: 1) How do teachers at senior high schools perceive the use of English textbooks containing local content? and 2) How do students at senior high schools perceive the use of English textbooks containing local content?

English teachers and students rely heavily on textbooks to aid in the teaching and learning process. Textbooks overtake all other forms of instruction (Patrick, 1988: Lockeed & Verspoor, 1990; Altbach et al., 1991). Additionally, Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture has started putting Curriculum 2013 into practice. With the help of this curriculum, children can be productive. With the help of this curriculum, children can be productive, inventive, and their

abilities, knowledge, and affective attitude are all combined. Moreover, this curriculum is also designed to build students' awareness toward their local and international culture.

In the teaching and learning of English, language and culture go hand in hand. According to Gray (2010), students are always given the opportunity to convey the cultural knowledge that is reflected in the English language. Even though the accent is close to that of native speakers in this instance, learners can still benefit from the foreign language. To reduce the challenges of adopting culture in the EFL classroom, it is worth producing and utilizing materials that incorporate culture. According to Kramsch & Hua (2016), culture functions by transforming into viewpoints on interpretation, reflection, history, and politics. Culture enables EFL teachers to determine whether students likely have varying comprehensions of the English vocabularies utilized. Because of this, English Language Teaching (ELT) lessons for the students should incorporate culturally relevant content.

Local content or cultural content in an English textbook is material that should be included because the students will learn about the culture itself. McKay (2012) stated that the cultural content was not only about culture in native English-speaking countries but also could be the local culture of Indonesia or a specific region. The materials in a textbook can be local culture, international culture, and target culture. The materials can be focused on speaking, reading, writing, and listening skills. Furthermore, English learning using local culture (source) can help students learn English because contextual learning can be based on students' needs. When learners are learning English, the local culture will affect the target language learning (Byram & Morgan, 1994). Local culture is an integral part of students' identity in language learning. For that reason, it is suggested to integrate the local culture into English textbooks to make students understand both local and international culture (McGrath, 2002).

As one of the most significant global languages, English is frequently used for communication on a global scale. As a result, the Indonesian government places a high priority on this language, particularly for educational purposes. The use of English has been an obvious evidence that has become a status for most Indonesian people, thus the English curriculum in Indonesia is designed as one of the most essential subjects in the curriculum of education. Because of this, Indonesian students are required to take English classes in educational institutions from junior and senior high school through the university level. From 1994 through 2012, English was added as a second academic subject (Widodo, 2016). Since English is a foreign language in Indonesia, it is crucial to encourage EFL students to develop their international and cultural communication skills. Herman (2007) also advises English teachers to encourage and train their students to be more active, participatory, and creative. It can be argued that it makes sense to include different cultural topics in the EFL curriculum.

METHOD

To accomplish the research's goals, an explanatory mixed-method design was used. Exploratory mixed-method design is a design that involves quantitative data followed by the incorporation of qualitative data to strengthen the results of the quantitative data (Creswell, 2014). The quantitative data were obtained from the questionnaire to know the students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the use of local-content senior high school English textbooks in Bengkulu, while the qualitative data was gained from interviews.

This study involved 37 certified English teachers in Bengkulu, each with a minimum of 10 years of experience, and 100 students. Researchers collected data using questionnaires and interview guidelines. There were various modifications to the questionnaire. The questionnaire's indicators were divided into sections, specifically focusing on attributes and content materials (reading, speaking, listening, and writing). The questionnaire consisted of 24 questions. There are four main attributes and twenty content materials. The perception theory was used to adapt the interview indications. This interview served as a supplement to the survey. Experts reviewed and approved the instruments.

The procedures of data collection were (1) seeking permission from the National Educational Council of Bengkulu province for senior high schools; (2) distributing the

questionnaire to the senior high school English teachers; (3) interviewing the English teachers to support the questionnaire. Both quantitative and qualitative data analyses were conducted. The quantitative data were analyzed by using percentages and simple statistical calculation. Then, the qualitative data were analyzed using the theory proposed by Miles et al. (2014) which includes data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. In the first step, the interview transcripts were coded and reduced by the researchers based on the research questions. In the second step, the data were displayed using text or excerpts from the interview that showed the answers to the research questions. In the third step, the researchers drew conclusions regarding whether the data achieved the objectives.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings
Teachers' perceptions on introducing Bengkulu local culture in English textbooks used for TEFL

For each topic on the questionnaire that garnered a response from the teachers, the mean scores, obtained through descriptive statistical analysis, were converted into a scale based on categories proposed by Joshi et al. (2015). Tables 1 and 2 present the findings of the analysis. Based on these tables, it can be concluded that the vast majority of teachers believe that it is necessary to include illustrations of the local culture of the Bengkulu people in English textbooks for students and that it is crucial to introduce culturally related vocabulary. Therefore, virtually all teachers concur that incorporating the use of local culture into the process of learning English language is crucial.

Table 1. The results of the descriptive statistic analysis

Item	N	Mean	Scale
Item 1	37	4.35	Strongly Agree
Item 2	37	4.29	Strongly Agree
Item 3	37	4.00	Agree
Item 4	37	3.37	Undecided
Item 5	37	4.13	Agree
Item 6	37	3.97	Agree
Item 7	37	3.64	Agree
Item 8	37	4.24	Strongly Agree
Item 9	37	4.21	Strongly Agree
Item 10	37	4.04	Agree
Item 11	37	4.13	Agree
Item 12	37	3.83	Agree
Item 13	37	4.16	Agree
Item 14	37	4.02	Agree
Item 15	37	4.08	Agree
Item 16	37	4.10	Agree
Item 17	37	3.86	Agree
Item 18	37	4.13	Agree
Item 19	37	4.16	Agree
Item 20	37	4.10	Agree
Item 21	37	4.18	Agree
Item 22	37	3.86	Agree
Item 23	37	4.10	Agree
Item 24	37	4.10	Agree

Table 2. The result of the frequency of the scale for each item

Item	Frequency (percentage)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	37.8%	59.5%	2.7%	0%	0%
2	37.8%	54.1%	8.1%	0%	0%
3	21.6%	59.5%	16.2%	2.7%	0%
4	13.5%	35.1%	27%	24.3%	0%
5	24.3%	64.9%	10.8%	0%	0%
6	18.9%	64.9%	13.5%	0%	2.7%
7	10.8%	51.4%	29.7%	0%	0%
8	29.7%	64.9%	5.4%	0%	0%
9	27%	67.6%	5.4%	0%	0%
10	18.9%	70.3%	10.8%	0%	0%
11	21.6%	70.3%	8.1%	0%	0%
12	16.2%	54.1%	27%	2.7%	0%
13	32.4%	51.4%	16.2%	0%	0%
14	18.9%	67.6%	10.8%	2.7%	0%
15	18.9%	70.3%	10.8%	0%	0%
16	18.9%	73%	8.1%	0%	0%
17	13.5%	75.7%	5.4%	0%	0%
18	18.9%	75.7%	5.4%	0%	0%
19	24.3%	67.6%	8.1%	0%	0%
20	24.3%	64.9%	8.1%	2.7%	0%
21	21.6%	75.7%	2.7%	0%	0%
22	13.5%	59.5%	27%	0%	0%
23	24.3%	64.9%	8.1%	2.7%	0%
24	27%	67.6%	2.7%	2.7%	0%

The teachers gave information regarding the significance of incorporating cultural components into the textbooks. They asserted that culture is an intrinsic component of language since language is essentially a cultural product. What must be emphasized, however, is that when learning English, it is preferable not only to emphasize the introduction of the culture of native English speakers but also to introduce the local cultural aspects of the students who are learning English so that students do not feel as though they have lost their cultural identity and local culture is preserved. Finally, a teacher showed that integrating English textbooks with teaching materials based on Bengkulu's local culture helped students' comprehension and retention of the content. This was because they had a prior understanding of Bengkulu's local culture, making it simpler for them to acquire language skills, particularly reading abilities.

Despite the agreement on the importance of incorporating local culture, most teachers stressed the need for a balanced ratio between information on the local culture of Bengkulu and British culture. Some teachers argued that all materials used to teach English must be influenced by regional culture. The teachers' agreement that the target language must be studied alongside its native speakers' cultures was also made clear in the interview. Culture and language are inextricably linked. However, the teacher agreed that during the target language learning process, students should be exposed to both their own culture and the culture of the target language's native speaker. The delivery of cultural material in a balanced manner causes no cultural shock among language learners.

Moreover, most teachers believed that the topics of speaking, listening, reading, and writing might be either features of the everyday habits of the Bengkulu locals or their local history. Teachers believed that all areas of culture, especially parts of daily life, might be the key cultural issues that should be the focus of learning for each language skill–reading, listening, speaking, and writing. This was validated through interviews. Furthermore, it is likely that other cultural components, such as Bengkulu's local history and architecture, should also be included as part of the English learning process.

In addition, most teachers believed that the local culture of Bengkulu should not be included in reading, listening, speaking, or writing materials in English textbooks. Moreover, this belief is corroborated by the instructors during the interview process, where they presented a variety of criteria for selecting culturally relevant content for textbooks, that is, the material should be age-appropriate for the students, and covered cultural components should avoid potential disagreements among the students.

Furthermore, most teachers believed that local cultural issues could boost students' interest in writing, speaking, listening, or reading, according to the survey results. Most teachers also believed that introducing local culture in reading texts is essential for enhancing students' cultural understanding and discussing Bengkulu local culture in speaking and writing may enhance students' critical thinking abilities.

In the interview, the teachers stated that they believed it was essential to incorporate local culture into the learning process since doing so encouraged students to study English textbooks. By reading English textbooks that also contain information about local culture, their interest in the Bengkulu culture in which they reside grows. Moreover, according to the teachers, presenting culture-based topics initiates discussions. For instance, while learning to speak and argue, or when learning to write, students compare the local culture of the Bengkulu people with that of native English speakers. By attempting to compare local cultural elements to those of English native speakers, it is possible to indirectly encourage students to think critically when conducting comparative analyses. As a result, students will become accustomed to thinking critically, and it is hoped that their critical thinking skills will improve.

Students' perceptions of knowing Bengkulu local culture in English textbook used for TEFL

For each item on the student response questionnaire, the mean scores obtained from descriptive statistical analysis were transformed into a scale based on the categories suggested by Joshi et al. (2015). The analytical findings are shown in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3. The result of descriptive statistics analysis

Item	N	Mean	Scale
Item 1	100	4.25	Strongly Agree
Item 2	100	4.25	Strongly Agree
Item 3	100	4.25	Strongly Agree
Item 4	100	3.4	Undecided
Item 5	100	3.75	Agree
Item 6	100	3.75	Agree
Item 7	100	4.50	Strongly Agree
Item 8	100	3.75	Agree
Item 9	100	4.50	Strongly Agree
Item 10	100	4.00	Agree
Item 11	100	4.00	Agree
Item 12	100	4.25	Strongly Agree
Item 13	100	4.75	Strongly Agree
Item 14	100	4.00	Agree
Item 15	100	4.00	Agree
Item 16	100	3.50	Agree
Item 17	100	4.25	Strongly Agree
Item 18	100	4.00	Agree
Item 19	100	4.50	Strongly Agree
Item 20	100	4.25	Agree
Item 21	100	3.50	Agree
Item 22	100	4.50	Strongly Agree
Item 23	100	4.25	Strongly Agree
Item 24	100	4.50	Strongly Agree

Table 4. The result of the frequency of the scale for each item

Item	Frequency (percentage)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%
2	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%
3	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%
4	0%	40%	60%	0%	0%
5	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%
6	25%	25%	50%	0%	0%
7	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
8	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%
9	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%
10	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%
11	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%
12	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%
13	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
14	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%
15	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%
16	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%
17	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%
18	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%
19	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
20	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%
21	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%
22	75%	0%	25%	0%	0%
23	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%
24	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%

Considering the statistical analysis of the information in Tables 3 and 4, it can be concluded that practically all students firmly agreed that it is important to incorporate local culture into the English textbook. In the English textbook, it is interesting to see images of the local culture of the Bengkulu people, and it is essential to know some vocabulary relating to that culture.

In addition, the interview revealed that students thought that the incorporation of local Bengkulu culture made them prouder of their identity as Bengkulu people. Moreover, the students thought that the terminology associated with the cultural realm of the Bengkulu people was expanding. In addition, the students believed that the cultural materials of the Bengkulu people included in the English textbook facilitated the rapid dissemination of cultural knowledge because everyone could read the book, thus indirectly preserving the Bengkulu culture. However, most students agreed that the amount of information on the local culture of the Bengkulu people and British culture must be balanced. Some students questioned whether the local culture had to be reflected in all the content used to teach English.

According to the information obtained from the interviews, the students were essentially in agreement that continuing to acquire knowledge about the culture of native English speakers is crucial for effective communication, particularly among native English speakers. Moreover, most students believed that the topic of speaking, listening, reading, and writing may be either features of the everyday habits of the Bengkulu locals or their local history. According to the findings of student interviews, it was also discovered that students thought it would be advantageous if instruction in both local Bengkulu culture and the culture of native English speakers were included in the learning of all language skills, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Additionally, most students concurred that content related to Bengkulu local culture in reading, listening, speaking, or writing material in the English textbook should avoid sparking debates. This was also confirmed by the students during the interview session; the content of the textbook must be appropriate for adolescents. Therefore, conflict-generating issues should not be very complex and contentious.

The survey data suggested that most students felt that local cultural issues could pique their interest in writing, speaking, listening, or reading. In addition, most students believed that

introducing local culture in reading texts is essential for enhancing their cultural understanding and that discussing Bengkulu local culture in speaking and writing about Bengkulu local culture may enhance their critical thinking abilities.

The information gleaned from the interview corroborated the results of the questionnaire. During the interview, the students explained that the presence of a reading text including cultural knowledge, particularly the local culture of the Bengkulu people, might encourage them to read with more enthusiasm. Reading about the local customs of the Bengkulu people helps individuals deepen their understanding and appreciation for the culture of their birthplace, Bengkulu. Moreover, according to the students, cultural matters could be the focus of debate. For instance, when students are forced to discuss examples involving the differences between cultural features and are needed to think critically by evaluating the case and making solutions based on the case.

Discussion

Numerous scholars have stated that language and culture are intertwined. According to Howatt & Widdowson (2004) and Kramsch (2013), language and culture have a bidirectional link, and language is viewed as an important and central part of any civilization. Undoubtedly, language is a crucial component of ESL and EFL instruction and learning, having long been a subject of heated discussion in language classrooms. It is therefore more crucial to use the target language's culture as a teaching backdrop while teaching English. As suggested by Couper & Watkins (2016), Lindahl & Watkins (2015), Wardhaugh & Fuller (2015), Yang & Li (2019), English teachers should teach their students about culture to remove language barriers and help their students adapt their language production to the culture. Given the relationship between language and culture, teachers should probably foster an atmosphere where the target culture is deeply ingrained (Couper & Watkins, 2016; Lindahl & Watkins, 2015; Michaleva & Regnier, 2014; Tajeddin, 2012).

Most teachers and students in this survey felt that cultural materials should be incorporated either through speaking or reading, as determined by the study's findings. Teachers and students concurred that cultural knowledge should be incorporated into English textbooks. This aligns with Ndura's (2004) assertion that the information provided in instructional materials has a significant impact on how pupils view themselves, society, and other people. To help students understand different cultural values and beliefs, English language instruction textbooks must incorporate a variety of cultural opinions and voices (Shin et al., 2011).

The question of which culture should be incorporated into the English-learning process has arisen considering the importance of culture learning in the process. Along this vein, English learners continue to struggle with the mastering of fundamental language structures. They may or may not be successful in their language output. Errors reveal both a lack of awareness of the target culture and a lack of proficiency in the target language (L2). Such errors may manifest in both verbal communication and written expression, stemming from the transfer of language and culture from the learners' native language (L1) to the target language (L2). Additionally, Benahnia (2012) claims that source language culture gives beginning EFL learners confidence; however, as they move on to subsequent language learning processes, the learners should be exposed to the target language culture, allowing them to experience a wider range of cultural elements in the target language, as Brown (2001) claimed that learning English as the target language involves more than just syntactical, phonological, and morphological knowledge.

Furthermore, target language (English) learners should be able to produce language with both linguistic and cultural competency. Inadequate knowledge of these two can result in so-called pragmatic errors (Zhu, 2012). Similarly, Mahmud (2019) showed that pragmatic errors can occur because of poor usage of any language form or misreading of what is meant by what is spoken in context. As a result, target language speakers' culture is extremely important in learning their language. Brown (2001) demonstrated that learning a language efficiently results in learning something about the speakers of that language.

Both teachers and students also agreed that the quantity of knowledge about the local culture of the Bengkulu people and British culture must be balanced. Students stated that the inclusion of local Bengkulu culture made them prouder of their identity as Bengkulu people. The

students were largely in agreement that they should continue acquiring knowledge about the culture of native English speakers because they felt that learning it is vital for efficient communication, particularly among native English speakers. In alignment with the students, the teachers agreed that the culture of the target language's native speakers must be studied in conjunction with the target language itself. Language and culture cannot be separated. However, in the target language learning process, the teachers concur that not only the culture of native speakers of the target language but also the culture of the students themselves should be conveyed to the students. The distribution of cultural content in a balanced manner generates no cultural shock among language learners.

The challenge of harmonizing the local culture of students with the culture of the target language is highlighted. Guilherme (2000) and O'Dowd (2003) noted that effective intercultural communication occurs when language learners can engage effectively with individuals of diverse cultures in a new language. Speakers must be aware of their own and other cultures as well as possessing the essential language and pragmatic abilities to traverse another culture. In addition, Hermawan & Noerkhasanah (2012), Alptekin (2002), and Meihami & Khanlarsah (2015) all affirmed that target cultures should not dominate the cultural materials in EFL textbooks and that local culture representations are essential.

In addition, most teachers and students in this study agreed that learning about the local culture makes them proud of their own culture. By reading a text on the local customs of the Bengkulu people, students can gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for the culture of their birthplace, Bengkulu. According to Gray (2010), EFL textbooks are cultural artifacts. Consequently, incorporating source culture content in ELT textbooks helps students, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, gain confidence in their own culture. Also, according to the teachers, the incorporation of local culture into the classroom is advantageous for English language proficiency and learner engagement but does not tend to spark conflict. Notably, incorporating local culture in English Language Teaching is viewed as a means of boosting students' English language proficiency and fostering positive behavior. The more the teaching-learning process relies on locally authentic resources, the higher its potential value. Employing the local context not only aids students in understanding what to say but also subconsciously strengthens their moral character. The role of local culture in language acquisition and character development is natural and contextual. Mediyawati et al. (2019) proved that language acquisition can be aided by providing learning materials based on ethnic and real-life characters. Cultural synthesis, or the alignment of two cultural components, allows students to feel proud of their own country's cultural values while appreciating those of other countries.

Moreover, the teachers agreed that occasionally assigning group discussions, where students are required to investigate issues involving cultural differences between the target language culture and the local culture, can be beneficial. In such discussions, students can speak in English to evaluate the case and consider potential solutions. This practice might stimulate the students' critical thinking. Students are compelled to engage, negotiate, and build their identities as they learn about local culture through EFL in the classroom. Learning the target language guarantees the students acquire fundamental EFL abilities as well as the ability to communicate their knowledge of local culture and become aware of a foreign culture (Prastiwi, 2013). To enable language learners to use English to describe their own culture to others, local educators or teachers are encouraged to choose linguistic material, cultural content, teaching style, and pedagogy that are appropriate for the local context (McKay, 2003).

Finally, most teachers and students agreed that the cultural components that should be incorporated into the curriculum are connected to everyday life activities and historical themes. In fact, according to Ayu et al. (2017), the current '2013 Curriculum' used in Indonesia's education system emphasizes that textbook materials should be interactively designed based on the students' contextual information. This includes considerations of their geographic location, the food they consume, the places they live, work, play, and worship, as well as their traditions and ethical values.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that firstly, most of the teachers and students have a positive perception regarding the value of local culture but nevertheless pay attention to the balance between the cultural information of the target language and the local culture. Furthermore, practically all teachers and students think that cultural issues included in English textbooks should be related to the everyday habits and history of the Bengkulu local people, without tending to generate conflict. Additionally, most teachers and students argue that incorporating cultural material in studying English may boost students' engagement and increase students' insight into cultural knowledge. Finally, most teachers and students thought that actively addressing the distinctions between their local culture content and the target language culture content, in this case English, may increase students' critical thinking skills.

However, it is important to note a limitation in this research, which stems from a shortage of survey samples. Thus, in future studies, expanding the geographical region and increasing the number of survey respondents could address this limitation. The results of this study may be utilized by researchers as a reference for conducting needs analyses on the significance of local cultural material in English learning and as a foundation for further research on the development of local culture-based English textbooks. Another important follow-up of this study is to survey which local contents (e.g., cultures, places, objects, people) should be included in an English textbook for senior high schools.

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