



The Forms of Local Islamic Culture in the Book “Membaca Indonesia” for Beginners at TISOL UIN Surakarta

Afrizal Mufti; Andayani; Atikah Anindyarini

Master of Indonesian Language and Literature Education, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

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Abstract

Mastery of language plays a crucial role in understanding how the society communicates, and observing culture is a way of appreciating the uniqueness and differences in every environment and place. The local Islamic culture is a part of the culture that should be known by TISOL (Teaching Indonesian to Speakers of Other Languages) learners at PTKIN (Islamic Higher Education Institution). One of the approaches taken by the TISOL institution at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta (UIN Surakarta) to introduce local Islamic culture is through TISOL books that contained local Islamic cultural values. This research aims to describe the diversity of local Islamic culture in Indonesia within the TISOL book "Membaca Indonesia" for beginners (A1 and A2). The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive. The data source in this research is documents, specifically the TISOL book "Membaca Indonesia" for beginners (A1 and A2). The data collection technique used is content analysis. The data validity technique in this research uses triangulation theory. The data analysis technique used is interactive data analysis. The results of the research indicate that within the book "Membaca Indonesia" for beginners (A1 and A2), there are four forms of local Islamic culture categorized as mentifact culture, four forms of socio-cultural aspects, and two of which are categorized as local Islamic culture: pilgrimage and festive celebrations, and four forms of cultural artifacts. Studying culture is essentially exploring how cultural meanings are symbolically expressed in language as a sign system.

Keywords: *TISOL; Book; Local Islamic Culture*

1. Introduction

The international community's interest in the Indonesian language is growing. This increase is showed through the growing number of Teaching Indonesian to Speakers of Other Languages (TISOL) institutions both inside and outside the country. This development is significant considering that TISOL programs play a crucial role in the development of Indonesia as a nation (Yulianeta et al., 2022: 47). Data from the Ministry of Education and Culture shows that by the end of 2020, there were 420 TISOL teaching institutions abroad, and the Ministry had sent 793 TISOL instructors to 29 countries across various continents such as Asia, Europe, Australia, and America (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020).

The government provides services for learning Indonesian language and culture are not only for foreign speakers abroad, but also for foreign speakers residing in Indonesia. This is evident through various TISOL institutions managed by the government, private organizations, and universities. One of the TISOL institutions managed by a university is TISOL UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta or UIN Surakarta. This statement is supported by the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 49 of 2014 concerning the National Standards for Higher Education, which stated that the National Education Standards is a reference for curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation. Additionally, the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture (Permendikbud) No. 27 of 2017 and the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs (PMA) No. 38 of 2015 stated that foreign students are required to participate in TISOL training at the Islamic Higher Education Institution (PTKI) (Isnaniah et al., 2020).

TISOL learners have diverse goals in learning Indonesian language. One of their goals is they are interested to explore the cultural wealth of Indonesia and the strategic region that is perceived as a factor of economic advancement (Rachman et al., 2019). The economic factors make Indonesia an attractive country for the internationals to collaborate. Indonesia possesses abundant wealth in terms of its various regions and ethnic groups, including a variety of natural resources, customs, and traditions, which have high potential for development (Amanat, 2019: 70).

TISOL learning is not restricted in language acquisition but also a means to introduce the diversity of Indonesian cultures. Cultural insights can serve as an attraction for learners to deepen their knowledge about Indonesian culture. Therefore, it is not enough to merely teach the language. The language should also be used as a medium to enhance the presence of Indonesian culture to the internationals. As Haryati et al. (2019) explained, language and culture are inseparable entities.

The interest and enthusiasm of foreign countries in learning the Indonesian language and culture deserve appreciation and positive support, which can be manifested through maximizing the provision of adequate learning materials. One important component in supporting the effectiveness of TISOL teaching is the availability of appropriate teaching materials (Haryati et al., 2019: 2). The development of teaching materials should be based on the needs of TISOL learners, specifically tailored to their backgrounds, cultures, goals, interests, and proficiency levels in mastering the Indonesian language as a second language. Language proficiency levels are divided into three categories: basic, intermediate, and advanced (Arumdyahsari et al., 2016: 380). Based on these statements, it can be concluded that the presentation of teaching materials is adjusted according to the proficiency level of foreign learners.

The use of teaching materials is a fundamental part of teaching and learning process (S. K. Hasanah et al., 2018: 118). The teaching materials are crucially needed to support the abilities of foreign learners (Andayani, 2015: 1106). Cultural content in teaching materials can have a significant impact on the effectiveness of TISOL instruction. Culture can enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Through cultural exploration, learners can develop an understanding of humans as cultural beings, the relationship between language and culture, and uncertain needs of living that is inherent with the cross-cultural interactions (Alalou, 2002: 195).

The definition of culture developed by Harris (1979) is divided into three forms: (1) Mentifact culture, which refers to the complexity of ideas, norms, values, rules, and others; (2) Sociofact culture, which consists of human actions or behaviors within society; (3) Artifact culture, which is a manifestation of culture in human-made creations. Therefore, it can be interpreted from these three forms of cultural understanding that mentifact represents culture in the realm of beliefs, philosophies, religions, and myths deeply rooted in a community, sociofact represents the behaviors practiced by individuals within that cultural group, and artifact refers to objects, dances, songs, written works, and more.

Positive learning interest allows learners to also have a positive orientation towards language learning (Dehbozorgi, 2012: 42). Therefore, the interest in learning Indonesian language plays a crucial role for foreign learners. Besides that, attitude also plays a role in the language learning, whether it will become a success or a failure, including the cultural wealth that foreign learners need to acquire when learning Indonesian language (Andayani & Gilang, 2015).

TISOL learning at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta has its own uniqueness, especially in the introduction of culture. While any other TISOL institutions introduce culture generally, TISOL at the PTKI level has a curriculum that focuses on introducing local culture with an Islamic perspective. This is particularly relevant for TISOL at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, where foreign learners or students come from Thailand and the Philippines with a Muslim background. This effort is done by the TISOL institution at the PTKI level so that it aligns with the vision and mission of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in introducing Islamic culture in Indonesia (Inderasari & Oktavia, 2019: 132).

Another research related to Islamic cultural insights in TISOL learning has been previously conducted by Inderasari and Oktavia (2019). The study is related to the development of the TISOL curriculum framework, which refers to the curriculum prepared by PPSDK (Center for Indonesian Language and Culture Development for Foreign Speakers). However, there is an additional focus on Islamic cultural insights as a reflection of the TISOL institution located within an Islamic higher education institution. The integration of cultural and Islamic insights is expected to be incorporated across various levels of teaching materials, ranging from A1 to C2. The importance of cultural and Islamic insights is beneficial for learners in introducing Indonesian culture through moral, social, and spiritual values.

The similarities in the research are found in exploring the context of Islamic cultural and insights. The difference lies in the selection of objects and the specific focus of the studies. The research discussed the TISOL curriculum based on Islamic cultural studies in Islamic higher education institutions, including the curriculum model, its implementation, as well as the strengths and weaknesses in implementing the curriculum. This research examines how cultural insights based on Islamic studies are incorporated into TISOL learning materials.

The content of cultural study on teaching materials in the books for TISOL learning has also been researched by Kurniasih et al. (2021). The research examined the diverse cultures presented in the book "Sahabatku Indonesia" at the beginner level and how foreign students understand Indonesian culture through the book. In the book, cultural elements are classified into three components: mentifact, sociofact, and artifact. Afterwards, the research findings and data analysis of foreign students about Indonesian culture through the book "Sahabatku Indonesia" indicate that the understanding is categorized as good.

The research shares similarities with this study in terms of the cultural context. However, there are differences in the selection of the research object. In that study, the instructional material "Sahabatku Indonesia" was used as the research object to determine the level of understanding of foreign students regarding the culture presented in the book. On the other hand, in this research, the research object is the instructional material directly compiled by TISOL instructors at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, which is the book "Membaca Indonesia Belajar Bahasa Indonesia Melalui Kearifan Budaya". Through this book, the researcher also aims to understand how cultural insights based on Islamic values are implemented by the instructors in the material, as a characteristic of TISOL institutions at Islamic university.

Another study that discussed cultural elements in TISOL learning is by Husna and Khaerunnisa (2022), which focused on the culture implementation in speaking skills for beginner foreign learners. Aside from that, Rahaya and Sahidillah (2022) conducted a study on the utilization of the cultural legend of *Rawa Pening* as an instructional material in TISOL. The research findings concluded that culture is

important for foreign students to know and learn as part of the TISOL learning process, as it helps their adaptation to customs and social behavior in Indonesia. Through the story of *Rawa Pening*, it is expected that foreign students will be able to understand the norms, customs, and traditions existing in the community.

According to the description, this research aims to analyze the material regarding local Islamic culture in the TISOL learning book "Membaca Indonesia" used by TISOL learners at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. The learning material under study is designed by one of the TISOL instructors at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta to fulfill the need for material that incorporates local Islamic culture. Islamic cultural studies became a distinctive feature of the instructional material design in TISOL institutions within PTKI compared to TISOL institutions in non-PTKI campuses (Salim, 2020). However, as a distinctive feature of other TISOL institutions, instructional materials based on Islamic cultural studies are still limited in availability. Limited interview data conducted by the researcher with TISOL instructors at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta indicate that dedicated instructional materials specifically focusing on local Islamic cultural content have not been developed. Therefore, up to this day, the teaching implementations are still relying on books from the Language Agency, such as "Sahabatku Indonesia," which covers general cultural content (without specifically addressing Islamic local culture). Some developments have been made in TISOL instructional materials, but there is still a lack of specific materials on local Islamic cultural content.

The selection of UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta as the research site for this study is based on three reasons. First, historically speaking, UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta is one of the PTKIN (Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions) campuses that has established a TISOL institution, which was officially established in March 2017. This achievement is remarkable for UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, particularly for the TISOL institution, which is entrusted with guiding foreign students on learning Indonesian language and introducing them to Indonesian culture.

TISOL UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta is the first institution at the PTKIN level that has been registered in the online TISOL portal of the Language Agency under the Ministry of Education and Culture. As an institution that has been registered in the Language Agency's online TISOL portal, TISOL UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta are provided an opportunity to collaborate and participate in advancing TISOL teaching, both regionally and internationally. Second, the needs of TISOL learners in mastering Indonesian language and obtaining knowledge about the culture are essential for fulfilling their social communication needs within the community and academic setting. The TISOL at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta does not only provide language learning but also introduces culture, particularly in Surakarta, and incorporates Islamic teaching. Third, the transformation at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta is expected to give an impact on TISOL and its increasing role as an institution in the field of language development.

The introduction of engaging cultural elements and providing learning resources for foreign students can be done in various ways. One of them is through the development of instructional materials that incorporate cultural content. This research focuses on analyzing TISOL instructional materials with Islamic cultural perspectives.

2. Research Methodology

This method used in this research is a qualitative study. According to Creswell (2009:173), qualitative research is a method that uses texts and images with engaging steps in analyzing data and employs various investigative strategies. The aim of qualitative research is to attain insights into the construction of reality in order to interpret it (Copley, 2019:10). The data source for this research is

documents. The documents to be reviewed are the TISOL book "Membaca Indonesia" for beginner levels, which are A1 and A2 (D. U. Hasanah, 2019). In this stage, the researcher utilizes data on the need for instructional materials in TISOL with a focus on local Islamic culture at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. This data needs to be supported by other data sources because it cannot be the sole source of information to address the problem if the research only relies on this particular data. The data obtained by the researcher is in the form of words or sentences and narratives about Islamic culture. The data collection technique used is content analysis (Sugiyono, 2019). Content analysis is a method of drawing conclusions by attempting to obtain the underlying message objectively and systematically (Weber, 1990:9). The strategy employed in this research is document analysis. The data validity technique used in this research is triangulation theory. The data analysis technique employed in this research is interactive data analysis. Interactive data analysis involves several stages: data collection, data reduction according to the research questions, organizing the reduced data into groups, and drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994:16).

3. Results and Discussions

Indonesian culture comprises various elements, including Hindu, Islamic, and Western influences. The culture in Indonesia is considered "diverse" (Jones, 2013:99). This aligns with the perspective stating that Indonesian culture is a reflection of its Hindu/Indian origins and a part of the rhetoric of its golden era (Bogaerts, 2012:235). Forshee (2006:5) stated that Indonesian culture reflects adaptation to the lands, climates, and seas that evolves through the diversity of languages and communities across the archipelago, and by the society who got influenced from remote islands and from interactions with foreign people. According to Heider (1991:9), Indonesian culture involves social interactions that occur anywhere. In this context, Koentjaraningrat (2015) presented three forms of Indonesian culture that will be analyzed in the TISOL book "Membaca Indonesia" for beginners, which are mentifacts, sociofacts, and artifacts.

3.1 The Forms of Mentifact Culture in the TISOL book "Membaca Indonesia" for Beginners

Mentifacts refer to the complexity of ideas which are manifested in structured forms and based on a distinctive cultural system. The forms of culture reflect the complexity of ideas in a culture, and they abide in the minds of each individual as the members of that culture, which is expressed wherever they go. Associated with the complexity of ideas, these forms are often expressed and overlooked as common habits or behavioral rules. The following are the results of analysis and data explanation from the TISOL book "Membaca Indonesia" (A1 and A2).

Data (1) Cultural and Islamic Insights on Greetings

The data contains explanations regarding the greetings that are uttered when Muslims meet each other. It is common among Muslims worldwide that when they meet fellow Muslims, it is recommended to greet each other with the phrase "Assalamu'alaikum." Indirectly, greetings can be used as a conversation opening between individuals or groups. Through greetings, people are given a chance to know each other more. The book also includes material on the common way of greeting in Indonesia, which is through hand shaking. The material teaches that greeting is generally accompanied by the practice of shaking hands in Indonesian Islamic culture. Additionally, in Islamic teachings, it is encouraged to greet people either they know the people or not. In Islam, salam is not a mere greeting or exchange of words, it is believed to pray and wish good thing for both the one who initiates the greeting and the one who responds to it.

Data (2) Cultural and Islamic Insights in Religious Diversity Material

Data (2) is presented in the form of narrative texts and pictures related to the diversity of religious beliefs. Indonesia is known as a multicultural country when it comes to religious beliefs. It is evident by the existence of many religious beliefs in Indonesia. There are at least five officially recognized religions in Indonesia, which are Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. These five religions have been able to create a harmony and respect towards each other. There are various examples of harmony and tolerance among religious communities. For instance, in Solo, mosques and churches are located side by side and work together in managing worship activities collaboratively. When the mosque congregations holds religious study sessions, the church administration gladly allows the mosque attendees to use the church parking area for their vehicles, and vice versa when the church conducts chapels, the mosque parking area is open for use by the congregations. To sum up, data (2) includes in mentifact culture as it contains a particular ideology, belief, and faith embraced by the community.

Data (3) Thanksgiving (Tasyakuran)

In the book "Membaca Indonesia", there is a section on celebrating birthdays which includes a subtopic that explains how the Muslim celebrates moments of happiness, birthdays, or achievements. The traditions mentioned is a form of thanksgiving or *tasyakuran*, which is a tradition done by the people in Solo to celebrate moments of joy, and that is including birthdays. *Tasyakuran* is a form of gratitude to God for the gift of life which is done by inviting friends, relatives, and neighbors to join in the celebration. The event is also accompanied by collective prayers and the distribution of food, such as turmeric rice (*nasi kuning* or *nasi gubahan*) which is rice served with various vegetable dishes topped with flavorful and spicy coconut-based condiments. *Nasi gubahan* and *nasi kuning* are traditional Javanese dishes. Data (3) includes to mentifact culture as presented in the TISOL book "Membaca Indonesia" for beginners. Mentifact is related to the thoughts, philosophy, and cultural beliefs of the local community.

Data (4) Maintaining Etiquette in Social Media

One of the essential norms that should be applied in social interaction is politeness and courtesy. Nowadays, it is not only important to apply this in the physical world, but also in social media. This is particularly emphasized in Javanese culture, especially in Solo and its surroundings, where politeness is highly valued. For example, it is common to show respect by slightly bowing or saying phrases like "*nderek langkung Pak/Buk, Mbah*" (excuse me, Mr./Mrs./Ms.) when a younger person passes by an older person. This demonstrates a respect gesture from the younger person. Similarly, the culture of shaking hands (*salim/salaman*) between children and parents or between younger and older people is a way to show respect, politeness, and affection. However, it is important to note that such customs may not be commonly practiced in other cultures.

Data (4) contains material that highlights the importance of maintaining politeness and courtesy both in physical interactions and social media. It also includes a reminder to be cautious when receiving news and information that is unclear to avoid misinformation or hoaxes as it also said in the Quran, specifically Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 6:

“O believers, if an evildoer brings you any news, verify it so you do not harm people unknowingly, becoming regretful for what you have done.”

The verse reminds people to be careful and verify the accuracy of information before accepting and spreading it to prevent harm caused by ignorance and potential regretful actions. This includes in the mentifact culture as it has been a habit for the community.

3.2 The Forms of Sociofact Culture in the TISOL book “Membaca Indonesia” for Beginners

Sociofact is one of the cultural forms that involves the complexity of activities. These activities are perceived as a social system because they involve complex patterns of human behavior. The complexity scopes various forms of human behavior, such as dancing, speaking, working, and so on. Sociofact culture is concrete and can be recorded in photos or films. Each movement performed from time to time and from day to day represents a pattern of behavior that occurs based on existing systems. There are explanations and analysis regarding sociofact data in the TISOL book "Membaca Indonesia" at the beginner level (TISOL1).

Data (5) Communal Work

One unique habit that can be found among Indonesians is communal work or *kerja bakti*. Communal work is a collective work carried out by many people without asking for payment or wages. Typically, this activity is conducted once a month or according to the agreement of the village residents. The tasks involved in the communal work can range from cleaning up trash, repairing village infrastructure, or even more challenging tasks such as building roads, guard posts, community centers, drainage systems, and more. Communal work is also regularly and simultaneously conducted in August as a commemoration of the Independence Day of Indonesia. During this time, the communal work done varied from painting the streets with white paint, hoisting flags, building gates, decorating the streets, and so on. Almost everyone in the community participates in the communal work altogether in a spirit of cooperation. After the work is completed, the community usually gathers to eat together. Data (5) communal work includes sociofact culture, which is a form of culture that is applied to the life of society as a social system that involves the behavioral pattern of humans.

Data (6) Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage is an important tradition that is still practiced in some areas of Solo especially during the month of Ramadan. In Javanese tradition, this is known as *nyekar*, which means visiting the graves of relatives. Another term used is *nyadran*, which refers to a collective expression of gratitude by visiting the graves of ancestors in a village or community. One area that still regularly celebrates *Sadranan* is Cepogo village in Boyolali. This tradition is usually conducted in the month of *Sya'ban* (in the Hijri calendar) or *Ruwah* (in the Javanese calendar). In the book, the topic of pilgrimage is included as a part of Islamic culture awareness. It serves as a means of education and a reminder of death. Pilgrimage is considered a sociofact culture as it involves social and physical aspects of human interaction within a cultural context.

Data (7) Celebration of Islamic Holidays

Data 7 materials are presented through texts and images about the culture of celebrating Islamic holidays, which are Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. As a country with the largest Muslim population in the world, there are various cultures, traditions, and ways in which Indonesian Muslims celebrate these holidays. One interesting tradition is of visiting or *silaturahmi* after the Eid prayer. There is a distinct atmosphere of the visitation when it is done during the holiday. Usually, after completing the Eid prayer, people will visit their neighbors' houses to seek forgiveness, socialize, and enjoy meals together. Additionally, some may distribute cash or *fitrah* to children who come to their homes. These cultural practices are excellent in strengthening community bonds and fostering unity.

Data (8) Cultural Procession of Solo

Data 8 presents material in the form of images and narration related to the Cultural Procession or *Kirab Budaya*. This celebration is one of the eagerly anticipated cultural activities by people in Solo. The Cultural Procession is usually carried out as a parade along Slamet Riyadi Street. During the procession,

various forms of culture are performed, including dances, costumes, attractions, traditional music, and more. The Cultural Procession also serves as a celebration of religious ceremonies, such as the Grebeg Sudiro Cultural Procession, the Procession of the New Year's Eve celebration (the first Suro), the Selokerti Cultural Procession, and others. The Cultural Procession is an eagerly awaited event attended by an enthusiastic Solo community.

3.3 The Forms of Artifact Culture in the TISOL book "Membaca Indonesia" for Beginners

Artifact culture is defined as a cultural element that is associated with human-made objects or commonly referred to as physical culture that can be seen and photographed. These artifacts reflect the values, beliefs, practices, and cultural identity of a particular group. Cultural artifacts can be in the form of statues, weapons, musical instruments, textiles, jewelry, buildings, paintings, and many more. Cultural artifacts serve as concrete manifestations of human ideology, traditions, and creativity. They provide insights into the way of life, artistic expression, value systems, and technological developments within a culture. Artifacts can also serve as a means to convey stories, history, and knowledge about a particular group of people. The following material from the textbook "Membaca Indonesia" is relevant to the concept of cultural artifacts.

Data (9) HIK Stall (Special Village Dishes)

Data 9 presents material about a unique dining place or local cuisine in Solo called "HIK" (*Hidangan Istimewa Kampung*), which translates to Special Village Dishes. This simple concept stall offers a variety of affordable village food and beverages. Customers are free to choose from a selection of dishes such as *nasi kucing* (small portion of rice), fried rice, stir-fried rice, and various side dishes. Additionally, customers can order various drinks or *wedang*. HIK stalls normally open from 5 PM until late at night, although some may also open during the day. HIK is a suitable choice for those seeking affordable and delicious meals and drinks.

This material is important for TISOL learners to obtain insights into the local culinary specialties of the area they are in, such as in Solo. With the material of HIK stall, it undoubtedly sparks the interest and curiosity of foreign learners to explore the culinary delights of Solo.

Data (10) A Signature Dish of Solo: Selat Solo

Data 10 is presented in the form of pictures and narratives about the signature dish of Solo. One of Solo's popular culinary delights is *Selat Solo*. *Selat Solo* is a traditional dish from the Surakarta Palace. The word "Selat" is derived from the Dutch word "slachtje", which means butchered small pieces of meat. However, the pronunciation of "slachtje" was difficult for the native people, so they often pronounced it as "selat" (Mellyani & Kusumaningrum, 2020). The material mentions several famous places known for serving *Selat Solo*, such as Selat Viens Banjarsari, Selat Mbak Lies Tipes, or Selat Tenda Biru in Mangkuyudan. Data 10 in TISOL materials regarding Selat Solo includes in the artifact culture in the form of tangible objects that can be photographed, videographed, or documented in other ways.

Data (11) Batik of Solo

Data 11 presents an image and a narrative about "Batik of Solo" as one of the cultural artifacts in the field of textiles. *Batik* is very special and carries deep philosophical meanings. There are various patterns and motifs of batik of Solo, such as *parang*, *sidomukti*, *truntum*, *sawat*, and others. On October 2, 2009, *batik* was declared by UNESCO as a world heritage (Fauzi, 2022). There are several cities famous for batik, such as Yogyakarta and Pekalongan. In Solo, batik productions can be found in various areas, and one of the most well-known is Kampung Batik Laweyan located in the Laweyan sub district of

Surakarta. The village is a center for batik production, which attracts many visitors and tourists who come to witness the batik production process. Besides that, visitors can also purchase clothes or fabrics produced by Kampung Batik Laweyan as souvenirs.

Data (12) Panjat Pinang and 17th of August Competitions

Data 12 is presented in the form of combination of images and narratives related to *Panjat Pinang* competition and various competitions held during the celebration of the 17th of August. These competitions are held to commemorate Indonesia's Independence Day, which is on August 17. In August, Indonesians celebrate it by organizing various competitions. One of the most phenomenal competitions is *Panjat Pinang*, which serves as the highlight of the 17th of August celebration. *Panjat Pinang* is a competition where participants attempt to climb a *pinang* tree or a bamboo pole that is greased with oils and has various attractive prizes hung at the top. The competition involves groups of 5-8 people working together to climb the *pinang* tree or bamboo pole and aim for the prizes at the top. This competition tests teamwork, cooperation, physical strength, and endurance of the participants. It also teaches the spirit of sacrifice and perseverance in pursuit of victory.

For foreign learners, the celebration of the 17th of August and its competitions are new experiences that they may have never seen before. This material provides perspectives for the learners to understand the various types of competitions and how Indonesians celebrate their independence day. Therefore, these traditions can be categorized as cultural artifacts.

TISOL books play a significant role in advancing the learning process. As Muliastuti (2017) explains, TISOL teaching is inseparable from the books that meet the BNSP (National Education Standards Agency) standards. In addition, the books can also serve as a means of learning languages and cultures for TISOL learners. Aligned with this study, cultural elements need to be introduced to TISOL learners, while language plays a role in supporting the achievement of conveying cultural materials. Therefore, language and culture are interconnected in the TISOL learning process.

The books play an important role as an object to be studied. Sun & Kwon (2019: 5) stated in their research that analyzing books allows us to unpack the discourse within them, including cultural representations. This is relevant to the purpose of this study, as culture is an integral component from language learning. The books contain various cultural aspects as a learning medium that provides understanding of culture to foreign learners. Meanwhile, in language learning, culture serves as a medium of diplomacy and a strategic resource that influences the background and motivation of individuals (Brauchler, 2015: 38).

Lukas (2017: 218) in his research stated that books are one of the main components in the formation and transmission of knowledge, presenting components that provoke researchers to unpack the underlying ideology by analyzing their production conditions, textual representations of culture and language, and linguistic and social practices as knowledge (Lukas, 2017: 218). This research is part of the textual representation of culture and language, presenting the cultural diversity of Indonesia in learning books as a diplomacy form and strategic resource in attracting the interest of foreign people to learn and understand the Indonesian language and culture. This aligns with the findings of a study (Andayani & Gilang, 2020: 4114) that understanding the cultural heritage of Indonesia is essential for socializing in Indonesia because cultural understanding is an integral part of language learning.

Teaching Indonesian language is inseparable from introducing various cultural heritages (Nurlina, Andayani, Winarni, & Slamet, 2020: 453). Culture is the main requirement for planning specific actions to enhance students' learning success (Joseph, Ramaswamy, & Wang, 2018). In the learning process, foreign learners can explore language factually and are supported by an understanding of local cultural heritage (Andayani & Gilang, 2015: 199).

Culture is a crucial part of language teaching because language and culture are closely related (LASA, Andayani, & Anindarini, 2019: 304). Learning the same culture involves exploring cultural meanings that are symbolically expressed in language as a sign system. Indonesian language serves as a medium for cultural development, knowledge, and technology, including culture related to the language substance. The TISOL program functions as a means to inform foreign learners about Indonesian culture, as it utilizes the Indonesian language to express the cultural values of Indonesians (Haryati, Andayani, & Anindarini, 2019: 1979).

The findings of this research is a depiction of the importance and contribution of Islamic cultural and insight materials in the TISOL book "Membaca Indonesia" at the TISOL Institution of UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, as an institution in Islamic university environment. Introducing culture becomes a competence that needs to be attained by learners in order to adapt to a diverse society. The choice to focus on beginner levels or TISOL A1 and A2 is because learners at these levels may still have limited understanding of the local culture. Therefore, introducing the culture is necessarily done from the beginning of the learning journey.

Conclusion

As a component of the learning process, the learning book plays a significant role in promoting cultural awareness. One way to introduce culture is through the learning books. The TISOL institution at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta has made efforts to introduce various cultures through instructional books, and one of the books used for language and culture learning is "Membaca Indonesia." In the TISOL book "Membaca Indonesia" for beginner levels (A1 and A2), there are four forms of local Islamic culture categorized as mentifact culture, four forms of socio-cultural aspects, and two of which are categorized as local Islamic culture: pilgrimage and festive celebrations, and four forms of cultural artifacts. However, the analysis also indicates that there is still a room to explore more materials on local culture with an Islamic perspective by teachers as the learning materials and used by learners as a means to learn and appreciate cultural diversity. This becomes a challenge and limitation in providing learning books, as they need to embrace not only cultural content but also language instruction. Therefore, the researcher suggests that this research can be followed up as a preliminary exploration to provide insights for conducting more comprehensive research on the development of learning materials based on local Islamic culture.

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