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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Representation of cultural identity in Unesa BIPA students' writings about musical instruments of their country of origin: An ethnolinguistic study

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ABSTRACT
Language learning involves not only linguistic acquisition but also the expression of cultural experiences and identities. In Indonesian for Speakers of Other Languages (BIPA), however, cultural learning has often emphasized Indonesian culture, while learners' representations of their own cultural backgrounds through writing remain underexplored. Musical instruments provide a meaningful context for examining this representation because they embody cultural knowledge, social practices, and personal experiences. This study aimed to describe the linguistic and cultural elements in BIPA learners' writings about musical instruments from their countries of origin and examine how these elements represent cultural identity. Drawing on linguistic anthropology, particularly the view of language as a cultural resource embedded in social practices, this study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with an ethnolinguistic perspective. The data comprised five written assignments by BIPA learners at Universitas Negeri Surabaya and were analyzed through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings revealed five patterns of cultural identity representation: collective educational experiences, technical knowledge of musical instruments, material and social knowledge, popular culture and personal experiences, and multilingual repertoires. These patterns demonstrate that musical instruments serve as cultural artifacts through which learners express memories, social experiences, cultural knowledge, and linguistic resources. This study highlights the value of learner-produced writing as a means of exploring cultural identity in BIPA and emphasizes the need for writing activities that encourage learners to introduce and reflect on their cultural backgrounds.

Keywords: BIPA; cultural identity; ethnolinguistics; learner writing; musical instruments

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INTRODUCTION

Language serves not only as a means of conveying information but also as a resource through which people interpret social experiences, express cultural knowledge, and construct meanings about the world (Kramsch, 2014); (Bonvillain, 2019). The relationship between language and culture becomes particularly significant in second- and foreign-language learning because learners do not enter the learning process as culturally neutral individuals. They bring experiences, values, habits, and perspectives shaped by their respective sociocultural environments. Therefore, language proficiency cannot be understood solely as the mastery of linguistic structures; it also involves the ability to use language meaningfully within social and cultural contexts (Europe, 2001); (Darvin & Norton, 2018). Learners' written production can consequently provide insight into how linguistic knowledge interacts with the cultural knowledge they bring into the learning process.

This study adopts linguistic anthropology, particularly (Duranti, 2009) perspective, as its main theoretical framework. Linguistic anthropology views language as a cultural resource and language use as a cultural practice through which people interpret experiences, establish social relationships, and produce cultural meanings. From this perspective, language is not merely a reflection of an already established cultural reality; its use also participates in the construction and reproduction of social and cultural meanings. Although Duranti's discussion gives considerable attention to speaking and social interaction, the underlying view of language as a cultural resource also provides a relevant foundation for examining written production. In this study, learners' texts are understood as linguistic products through which cultural knowledge and experiences are selected, organized, and communicated. This framework supports the ethnolinguistic perspective employed in the analysis, particularly in examining the relationship between linguistic elements, cultural information, and cultural identity representation. Thus, the analysis does not treat linguistic forms as isolated structures but interprets them in relation to the cultural meanings conveyed through the learners' writings.

The relationship between language and culture is especially relevant to Indonesian for Speakers of Other Languages (BIPA). The Indonesian BIPA Graduate Competency Standards recognize listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills as essential learning outcomes while also incorporating cultural aspects into Indonesian-language instruction for foreign learners (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2017).

Cultural integration is important because learners encounter Indonesian in social environments shaped by particular values, customs, and communicative practices. Previous studies have demonstrated the contribution of cultural learning to the development of learners' language competence and intercultural understanding. (Yulianeta & Amandangi, 2021), for example, examined descriptive writing instruction based on batik culture among BIPA learners at the Indonesian Embassy in London. Their study demonstrated the use of a local cultural subject as a context for developing vocabulary and cultural understanding through writing activities. (Ahmeed & Aman, 2024), meanwhile, investigated the contribution of Indonesian-language courses to international students' cultural adaptation at Indonesian universities, highlighting the relationship between language learning and learners' adjustment to a new cultural environment. In a different context, (Prameswari & Muzaki, 2024) discussed problems encountered by BIPA learners in learning culture through elective classes, including challenges associated with learners' different cultural backgrounds and learning conditions. These studies indicate that cultural knowledge is an important component of BIPA learning, both for language development and for learners' adaptation to the sociocultural environment.

Nevertheless, cultural learning in BIPA should not be limited to introducing Indonesian culture as knowledge that learners are expected to acquire. A more dialogic perspective also recognizes learners as individuals who possess cultural knowledge and experiences that can contribute to classroom interaction and learning. (Asteria et al., 2026) examined cultural transfer in pluricultural BIPA learning and showed that such transfer involves cultural products, values, and behaviors, while differences in learners' cultural backgrounds may present challenges in the learning process. (Batitusta et al., 2025) similarly emphasized the importance of connecting BIPA learning with local communicative culture and learners' sociocultural realities to support pluricultural competence. (Hardika & Andriyanto, 2025) explored Indonesian arts and local wisdom as resources for introducing Indonesian culture in BIPA programs. Their study demonstrates how cultural materials can provide a meaningful connection between language learning and cultural understanding. (Roekhan et al., 2024), in turn, examined discursive practices in BIPA textbooks and showed how learning materials can convey social and cultural values, particularly values related to peace. Taken together, these studies establish the importance of cultural integration in BIPA. They also suggest that cultural learning can be approached through various resources, including local arts, communicative practices, cultural products, and instructional texts.

The relationship between language and culture is also inseparable from identity (Kim, 2003); (Alshehri, 2023). In second-language learning, identity is understood as dynamic and connected to social positioning, personal experiences, and language practices rather than as a fixed characteristic detached from the learning process (Darvin & Norton, 2018); (Robinson, 2013). From an ethnolinguistic perspective, language use can provide evidence of how individuals express cultural affiliations, interpret their social environments, and communicate knowledge associated with particular communities. (Birke, 2021), for instance, examined ethnolinguistic perception and identity in the Gurage context, illustrating the relevance of language perception and use to sociocultural identity. Accordingly, BIPA learners' language production is worth examining not only in terms of linguistic accuracy but also in terms of how they use Indonesian to communicate cultural knowledge and experiences. Their writing can reveal which aspects of their cultural backgrounds they choose to present and how they make those aspects meaningful through the language they are learning.

One cultural element that offers a meaningful context for examining this relationship is the musical instrument. Musical instruments are not merely objects used to produce sound; they are also associated with cultural knowledge, social practices, production processes, and forms of cultural heritage. (Howard, 2022) explains that musical instruments can be understood as tangible cultural heritage while also contributing to intangible cultural heritage through the practices of making, using, and performing music. Their cultural significance therefore extends beyond their physical characteristics to include the social activities and meanings associated with them. When BIPA learners write about musical instruments known or popular in their countries of origin, their texts may contain more than descriptions of an instrument's appearance or technical features. They may also communicate knowledge about how the instrument is produced, who plays it, where it is used, and how it is connected to collective or personal experiences. Musical instruments consequently provide a concrete cultural subject through which learners can introduce aspects of their cultural backgrounds in Indonesian.

Previous research has approached the relationship between language, culture, and BIPA learning from several perspectives. (Romadhon et al., 2026), for example, examined cross-cultural BIPA learning through an ethnolinguistic perspective, emphasizing the relationship between linguistic and cultural dimensions in the learning process. This study is relevant because it demonstrates the applicability of ethnolinguistic inquiry to BIPA

contexts. However, its focus on cross-cultural learning differs from the present study, which examines learners' own written representations of cultural knowledge associated with musical instruments from their countries of origin. (Pramesty et al., 2025) investigated BIPA learners' small-talk practices in intercultural communication with Indonesian native speakers. Their findings highlighted how learners' utterances reflected pragmatic awareness and politeness in communication. Although this research also treated learners' language production as a source for understanding the relationship between language and culture, it focused on spoken interaction, particularly the forms and functions of small talk in intercultural encounters. The present study, by contrast, examines written texts and the cultural meanings conveyed through learners' descriptions of musical instruments.

Other studies have also contributed to understanding cultural identity and language production in BIPA. (Asteria et al., 2026) explored cultural transfer through cultural products, values, and behaviors in pluricultural learning, while (Yulianeta & Amandangi, 2021) focused on the use of batik culture as a basis for descriptive writing instruction. These studies provide important insights into the integration of cultural materials and the role of learners' cultural backgrounds in language learning. However, they do not specifically investigate how learners represent their own cultural identities through written descriptions of cultural artifacts originating from their countries of origin. The distinction is important: cultural content can be introduced as instructional material, but learners' own texts can also be examined as linguistic products that reveal how they select and communicate cultural knowledge. The latter perspective places learners not merely as recipients of cultural information but as active participants who bring their existing cultural resources into the use of the target language.

Despite the growing attention to cultural integration and pluricultural learning in BIPA, the representation of learners' cultural identities through Indonesian-language writing about cultural artifacts from their countries of origin remains insufficiently explored in the studies discussed above. In particular, there is a need to examine how linguistic choices in learner-produced texts are connected to cultural information and how these connections reflect learners' cultural experiences and affiliations. This issue is important because writing activities in BIPA can provide opportunities not only for practicing Indonesian but also for expressing and introducing learners' cultural backgrounds. Without attention to this dimension, cultural learning may remain predominantly oriented toward the culture being taught, while the cultural knowledge that

learners already possess receives less attention as a resource for language learning. Examining learners' writing can therefore contribute to a more reciprocal understanding of cultural interaction in BIPA classrooms.

The present study addresses this gap by examining five written assignments produced by BIPA learners at Universitas Negeri Surabaya (Unesa) about musical instruments known or popular in their countries of origin. Its novelty lies in positioning learner-produced writing about musical instruments as an ethnolinguistic data source for identifying the relationship between linguistic elements, cultural information, and cultural identity representation. Rather than providing an encyclopedic description of musical instruments, this study investigates how learners select, organize, and communicate knowledge about these cultural artifacts through Indonesian. It also considers how the content and linguistic choices in their texts reflect educational experiences, technical and material knowledge, social practices, popular culture, personal experiences, and multilingual resources. By applying (Duranti, 2009) linguistic anthropology as its main theoretical framework, the study interprets these written productions as cultural resources through which learners communicate meanings associated with their sociocultural experiences.

Accordingly, this study aims to (1) describe the linguistic and cultural elements used by BIPA learners at Unesa in their writings about musical instruments from their countries of origin and (2) describe the representations of cultural identity reflected through those linguistic and cultural elements. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of ethnolinguistic studies in BIPA and provide a better understanding of learner-produced writing as a space for representing and introducing cultural identities in Indonesian-language learning.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with an ethnolinguistic perspective to examine the relationship between linguistic elements, cultural information, and cultural identity representation in BIPA learners' writings. The analysis was guided by (Duranti, 2009) linguistic anthropology, which views language as a cultural resource embedded in social practices. This perspective enabled the researchers to interpret learners' written expressions not merely as linguistic forms but also as resources for communicating cultural knowledge and experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

The data sources consisted of five written assignments produced by BIPA learners at Universitas Negeri Surabaya (Unesa), coded PB1–PB5 to protect their identities. These five texts constituted the entire dataset and discussed musical instruments known or popular in the learners' countries of origin. The data comprised words, phrases, clauses, and sentences containing information about musical instruments and their cultural contexts, including cultural knowledge, social practices, personal experiences, and cultural affiliations.

Data were collected through documentation by repeatedly reading the five assignments, identifying relevant linguistic expressions, and organizing them in an analytical matrix. The matrix was used to classify linguistic elements, identify the cultural information conveyed, and interpret cultural identity representations. The researcher served as the primary research instrument, responsible for selecting, coding, categorizing, interpreting, and verifying the data, while the analytical matrix functioned as a supporting instrument (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Data analysis adapted the interactive model of (Miles et al., 2014), comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Relevant data were selected and coded, organized in the analytical matrix to identify patterns, and interpreted in relation to the research objectives. Conclusions were subsequently verified by rereading the original texts. Data trustworthiness was maintained through persistent observation and repeated examination of interpretations against the source data to ensure that each category and interpretation had a clear textual basis.

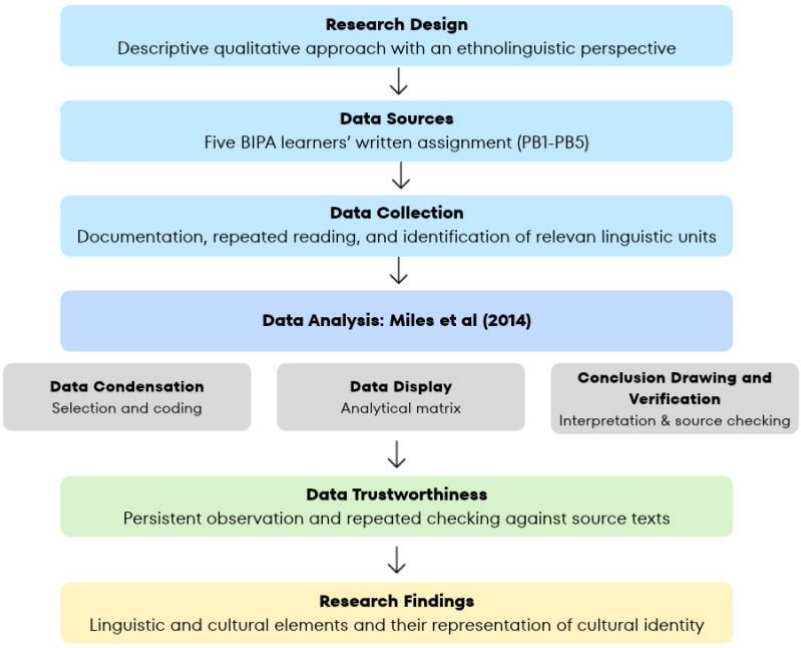


Figure 1. Research method flowchart

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of five BIPA learners' writings at Universitas Negeri Surabaya (Unesa) revealed that musical instruments were represented not merely as material objects but also as entry points for expressing cultural knowledge, social experiences, personal memories, and intercultural relationships. Although all learners were assigned the same topic, each text emphasized different aspects of cultural identity. Five patterns emerged: (1) collective educational experiences, (2) technical knowledge of musical instruments, (3) material and social knowledge, (4) popular culture, personal experiences, and intercultural relationships, and (5) multilingual repertoires. These patterns are summarized in Table 1.

Data	Prominent Linguistic Elements	Cultural Information Represented	Identity Representation
PB1	"murid-murid" (students), "bersama-sama di sekolah dasar" (together in elementary school), "sekolah menengah pertama" (junior high school), "hampir semua orang Korea" (almost all Koreans)	Recorder learning in Korean schools	Identity through collective educational experiences
PB2	"kepala, leher, dan tubuh" (head, neck, and body), "alat musik dipetik" (a plucked instrument), "memetik senarnya" (plucking its strings), "pick gitar" (guitar pick)	Knowledge of guitar structure and playing techniques	Identity through technical knowledge of musical instruments
PB3	"70% gitar di dunia" (70% of the world's guitars), production locations, "Kama, Enya, Trumon," "sebagian besar pemain gitar adalah mahasiswa" (most guitar players are university students)	Guitar manufacturing and guitar-playing communities in China	Identity through material and social knowledge
PB4	"terutama anak muda" (particularly young people), "T-Pop," "series," "Jeff Satur," "Bright Vachirawit," "belajar gitar secara otodidak" (self-taught guitar learning), "tinggal dekat Malaysia" (living near Malaysia)	Guitar popularity, popular culture, music learning, and regional relationships	Identity through popular culture, personal experiences, and intercultural relationships
PB5	English terms: "Strumming," "Plucking," "Out of tune"; Korean terms: "헤드," "너트," "프렛," "넥," "바디," "사운드 홀," "스트링," "브리지"	Technical and terminological knowledge of the guitar	Identity through multilingual repertoires

Table 1. Linguistic Elements, Cultural Information, and Cultural Identity Representations in BIPA Learners' Writings

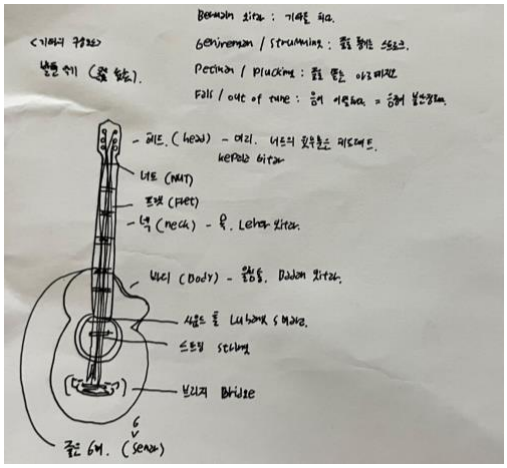


Figure 2. The use of multiple languages to explain guitar terminology by PB5

The findings indicate that cultural identity in BIPA learners' writing is expressed through different combinations of knowledge, experience, and linguistic resources. This supports the view that linguistic choices in writing can function as means of self-representation (Ivanič & Camps, 2001). From the perspective of linguistic anthropology, language is not merely a communication system but also a cultural resource embedded in social practices (Duranti, 2009). Accordingly, the learners' descriptions can be understood as ways of bringing their cultural experiences and social knowledge into Indonesian-language texts.

Collective Educational Experiences as a Representation of Cultural Identity

The first pattern appears in PB1, which describes the recorder through school-based musical experiences. The learner writes, "Di KR, murid-murid belajar rekorder bersama-sama di sekolah dasar dan sekolah menengah pertama" ("In Korea, students learn the recorder together in elementary and junior high school"). The expressions "murid-murid" (students), "bersama-sama" (together), and the references to school levels position the recorder within a collective educational experience rather than merely describing its physical characteristics. This representation is reinforced by the statement, "hampir semua orang Korea pasti pernah belajar memainkan rekorder setidaknya satu kali dalam hidup mereka" ("almost all Koreans must have learned to play the recorder at least once in their lives").

The expression "almost all Koreans" is significant because it shows how the learner uses language to construct an image of a shared cultural experience. This statement is interpreted as the learner's representation of what is perceived to be a common

experience, not as statistical evidence that most Koreans have learned to play the recorder. The relationship between the instrument, educational institutions, and collective experience illustrates how a material object acquires meaning through social practices. This interpretation is consistent with (Howard, 2022) view that musical instruments are tangible cultural heritage whose significance is also connected to intangible practices, skills, and social uses.

The finding also demonstrates how learners' linguistic choices convey self-representation. (Ivanič & Camps, 2001) explain that writers construct representations of themselves through the linguistic resources they select. In this study, PB1 brings a perceived collective experience into an Indonesian-language text through vocabulary and the organization of information. While (Yulianeta & Amandangi, 2021) demonstrate the use of cultural content to support BIPA writing and vocabulary development, the present finding highlights another possibility: learners' writing can also provide access to the cultural knowledge they bring into the classroom, rather than focusing exclusively on the culture introduced by teachers.

From the perspective of (Duranti, 2009) linguistic anthropology, PB1 illustrates how language functions as a cultural resource for expressing shared social experiences. The learner's references to students, school levels, and collective learning practices do more than describe the recorder; they connect the instrument to an educational environment in which cultural knowledge is acquired and shared. Thus, the linguistic expressions in PB1 reveal how an ordinary musical instrument becomes meaningful through the social practices surrounding it. Cultural identity is consequently represented through the learner's language-based account of an experience perceived as collective within Korean society.

Technical Knowledge of Musical Instruments as a Representation of Identity

The second pattern is found in PB2, which emphasizes the structure and playing techniques of the guitar. The learner writes, "Alat musik ini punya kepala, leher, dan tubuh" ("This musical instrument has a head, neck, and body"), followed by "Gitar adalah alat musik dipetik yang menghasilkan suara dengan cara memetik senarnya menggunakan tangan atau pick gitar" ("The guitar is a plucked instrument that produces sound by plucking its strings with the hand or a guitar pick").

The vocabulary “kepala” (head), “leher” (neck), “tubuh” (body), “dipetik” (plucked), “senar” (strings), and “pick gitar” (guitar pick) forms a semantic field related to the instrument’s structure and use. These expressions indicate that cultural identity is not necessarily represented through traditions or collective social practices. It can also emerge through an individual’s technical and practical knowledge of a cultural object. Unlike PB1, which emphasizes collective experience, PB2 foregrounds the learner’s knowledge of how the instrument is constructed and played.

This difference illustrates the varied ways learners represent identity through writing. (Yang & Peng, 2021) describe L2 writer identity as complex and dynamic, shaped by individual experiences and the process of using a second language. In the BIPA context, PB2 demonstrates how learners can use Indonesian to communicate knowledge of objects they are already familiar with. This finding also complements (Yulianeta & Amandangi, 2021) discussion of culture-based writing activities, which can support vocabulary development and cultural understanding.

In line with (Duranti, 2009) perspective, the technical vocabulary used in PB2 demonstrates that language is a resource through which culturally situated knowledge is organized and communicated. Terms referring to the guitar’s parts and playing techniques reflect the learner’s familiarity with the instrument and provide a linguistic means of presenting that knowledge to Indonesian-speaking readers. The cultural meaning of the guitar therefore emerges not only from its association with a particular country or tradition but also from the practical knowledge through which the learner understands and explains it. This finding shows that technical descriptions can also become a form of cultural representation.

Material and Social Knowledge in Cultural Representation

The third pattern appears in PB3, which connects the guitar with manufacturing, geographical locations, brands, and social groups. The learner writes, “Tiongkok memproduksi sekitar 70% gitar di dunia dengan lokasi produksi utama di Hui Zhou (惠州), Gui Yang (贵阳东), Dong An (东安东)” (“China produces approximately 70% of the world’s guitars, with major production locations in Hui Zhou, Gui Yang, and Dong An”). The learner also mentions the brands “Kama, Enya, Trumon” and states, “Di Tiongkok, sebagian besar pemain gitar adalah mahasiswa” (“In China, most guitar players are university students”).

These statements reveal three dimensions of cultural knowledge: material production, represented through manufacturing locations; product identity, represented through brand names; and social life, represented through the group of guitar players. The guitar is therefore positioned within networks of production, economy, geographical space, and social activity. The statement about university students is interpreted as the learner's representation of a social group, not as a statistically verified generalization. The information selected by the learner indicates which aspects of the social and cultural environment are considered relevant when introducing their country to Indonesian-speaking readers.

This finding illustrates that identity can be communicated not only through explicit statements about oneself but also through the selection of information used to describe one's social environment. (Schneider, 2022) argues that writing strategies can function as acts of identity. From this perspective, PB3's emphasis on manufacturing locations, brands, and university students can be understood as a way of presenting cultural knowledge considered meaningful by the learner. In line with (Duranti, 2009) perspective, these linguistic choices connect language with the material and social practices through which cultural meanings are produced.

Viewed through (Duranti, 2009) linguistic anthropology, PB3 demonstrates the connection between language and the material and social dimensions of cultural life. The learner's references to production locations, guitar brands, and groups of players show how linguistic choices bring together knowledge of economic activities, geographical spaces, and social communities. These details position the guitar within a broader network of cultural practices rather than treating it as an isolated object. Accordingly, the learner's cultural identity is represented through the selection and communication of knowledge about the material environment and social relationships associated with the instrument.

Popular Culture, Personal Experiences, and Intercultural Relationships

The fourth pattern is particularly evident in PB4, whose writing combines popular culture, personal experiences, and cross-border relationships. The learner begins by stating, "Di Thailan Gitar sangat popular. Banyak orang suka bermain gitar terutama anak muda" ("In Thailand, the guitar is very popular. Many people, especially young people, enjoy playing it"). The learner then connects Thai popular culture with Indonesia through

the statements, “Musik Thailand juga mulai dikenal di Indonesia seperti T-Pop, series” (“Thai music is also becoming known in Indonesia, such as T-Pop and series”) and “Penyanyi yang terkenal di Indonesia seperti Jeff Satur dan Bright Vachirawit” (“Singers who are popular in Indonesia include Jeff Satur and Bright Vachirawit”).

References to T-Pop, series, and popular figures show that the learner represents Thai culture as something that circulates beyond national boundaries and is also encountered in Indonesia. Cultural identity is therefore expressed not only through local traditions but also through popular cultural products and their reception in another country. The personal dimension becomes more apparent in the statements, “Di Thailand, orang biasanya belajar gitar secara otodidak” (“In Thailand, people usually learn guitar by themselves”) and “Saya kenal wali band karena saya tinggal dekat Malaysia” (“I know Wali Band because I live near Malaysia”). The first-person pronoun “saya” (I) shifts the text from a general description to an account of personal experience and geographical connections.

These findings are consistent with (Litten, 2022) view that L2 writing provides a space for identity construction and the expression of personal experiences. (Yang & Peng, 2021) likewise emphasize the role of individual experiences in shaping L2 writer identity. PB4 also illustrates (Robinson, 2013) argument that identity is not fixed or singular but is shaped through learners’ relationships with different social worlds. While PB1 foregrounds collective experience, PB4 connects cultural identity with personal experiences and transnational cultural encounters.

The connection between Thai popular culture and Indonesia also highlights the relevance of plurilingual and pluricultural perspectives in language learning. (Europe, 2001) describes plurilingual competence as a dynamic and interconnected repertoire, while pluricultural competence involves engaging with and relating different cultural perspectives. PB4 brings the learner’s cultural background into contact with the cultural environment in which Indonesian is being learned. This finding is also related to (Pramesty et al., 2025), who identify pluricultural representations in BIPA learners’ small-talk practices. Whereas that study examines spoken intercultural communication, the present study demonstrates how cultural identity can be represented through writing about cultural artifacts.

(Duranti, 2009) perspective helps explain how PB4 uses language to connect cultural meanings with personal experiences and social relationships across national

boundaries. References to Thai popular culture, its reception in Indonesia, and the learner's own experiences demonstrate that cultural identity is articulated through interactions between individual life and wider social contexts. The learner's language does not present Thai culture as a fixed or isolated entity; instead, it represents culture as something encountered, shared, and interpreted through cross-cultural connections. PB4 therefore illustrates how language serves as a cultural resource for expressing identity within overlapping personal, social, and intercultural experiences.

Multilingual Repertoires as a Representation of Cultural Identity

The fifth pattern, particularly prominent in PB5, concerns the use of multiple languages to explain guitar-related knowledge. The learner uses English terms such as "Strumming," "Plucking," and "Out of tune," accompanied by Indonesian explanations, including "menyapu atau menggenjreng senar" (strumming the strings), "memetik senar satu per satu" (plucking the strings one by one), and "suara sumbang, terdengar tidak selaras" (an out-of-tune or discordant sound).

The multilingual repertoire is further demonstrated through Korean terminology: "헤드 (Head)," "너트 (Nut)," "프렛 (Fret)," "넥 (Neck)," "바디 (Body)," "사운드 홀 (Sound hole)," "스트링 (String)," and "브리지 (Bridge)." The learner provides Indonesian explanations for these terms, such as "넥 (Neck): Leher gitar" (guitar neck), "바디 (Body): Badan atau ruang gema gitar" (guitar body or resonating chamber), and "스트링 (String): Senar gitar" (guitar strings).

These choices show that the learner draws on previously acquired linguistic knowledge while writing in Indonesian. Korean terms reflect connections with a particular linguistic environment, English terms provide musical terminology, and Indonesian serves as the main language for explaining the concepts to readers. Thus, cultural identity in PB5 is not represented through a single language but through the interaction of several linguistic resources. From an ethnolinguistic perspective, these terms are more than technical vocabulary; they also provide traces of the linguistic experiences brought into the Indonesian-language text.

This finding is consistent with research that views multilingual identity as shaped by linguistic experiences and social relationships. (Forbes & Morea, 2023) discuss how

multilingual identities relate to learners' experiences and evaluations of languages and language learning. (Weiss et al., 2025) similarly demonstrate how multilingual identities can develop through the sharing of language experiences and engagement across linguistic and cultural contexts. The present finding adds that such identities can also be examined through learners' lexical choices in writing.

The use of multiple languages in PB5 also reflects the CEFR Companion Volume's view of plurilingual competence as a dynamic and interconnected repertoire rather than a collection of entirely separate languages (Europe, 2001). This is compatible with the concept of translanguaging, which emphasizes how multilingual learners draw on their linguistic and semiotic resources to construct meaning (Lasagabaster & Garcia, 2014). In PB5, the use of Korean and English terminology does not replace Indonesian; instead, these resources work together to explain the learner's knowledge of the guitar. Cultural identity is consequently expressed implicitly through linguistic choices rather than through an explicit declaration of national or ethnic identity. This supports (Al Hakim, 2021) argument concerning the close relationship between language, culture, and identity.

From (Duranti, 2009) perspective, the multilingual expressions in PB5 demonstrate that language is inseparable from the cultural experiences and social contexts in which linguistic resources are acquired and used. The combination of Korean, English, and Indonesian terminology reflects how the learner draws on different linguistic resources to organize and communicate knowledge about the guitar. These choices are not merely technical alternatives for naming parts of an instrument; they also provide traces of the learner's linguistic experiences and cultural affiliations. Thus, PB5 shows that cultural identity can be articulated through the interaction of multiple languages, making the learner's multilingual repertoire an important resource for constructing meaning in Indonesian-language writing.

Patterns of Cultural Identity Representation

Taken together, the five patterns demonstrate that cultural identity in BIPA learners' writing is multidimensional and not always expressed explicitly. PB1 represents identity through collective educational experiences; PB2 through technical knowledge; PB3 through material and social knowledge; PB4 through popular culture, personal experiences, and intercultural relationships; and PB5 through multilingual repertoires. Musical instruments

thus function as cultural artifacts through which learners connect Indonesian with their existing knowledge, social experiences, and linguistic resources. This interpretation is consistent with (Robinson, 2013) view that identity in language learning should be understood through learners' relationships with the social world rather than as a fixed category.

These five patterns can be further understood through (Duranti, 2009) linguistic anthropology, particularly the view of language as a cultural resource embedded in social practices. The findings demonstrate that learners use language not simply to describe musical instruments but to select, organize, and communicate cultural knowledge shaped by their social environments and personal experiences. Whether expressed through collective educational memories, technical knowledge, material and social contexts, popular culture, or multilingual resources, linguistic choices provide access to the ways learners understand and represent their cultural worlds. From this perspective, cultural identity is not merely conveyed through explicit statements of national or cultural belonging but is also constructed through everyday linguistic practices that connect individuals with their social and cultural experiences. Thus, the five patterns collectively affirm the relevance of linguistic anthropology in understanding BIPA learners' writing as a space where language, culture, and identity intersect.

The findings also extend previous research on cultural learning in BIPA. (Yulianeta & Amandangi, 2021) use batik culture as a basis for BIPA writing activities, while (Hardika & Andriyanto, 2025) highlight the role of Indonesian arts and local culture in helping learners understand Indonesian language and culture. (Romadhon et al., 2026) further demonstrate the relevance of an ethnolinguistic perspective in examining language and culture in cross-cultural BIPA learning. In contrast, the present study focuses on how learners introduce their own cultural backgrounds through Indonesian. Learners are therefore positioned not merely as recipients of Indonesian cultural knowledge but also as cultural subjects who possess knowledge and can communicate it through the target language. This position is consistent with the understanding of language learning as a social practice in which learners negotiate identity across cultural contexts (Darvin & Norton, 2018); (Robinson, 2013).

The findings also offer a complementary perspective to (Asteria et al., 2026), who discuss cultural transfer in BIPA learning through cultural products, values, and behaviors.

While their study emphasizes the transfer of culture within pluricultural learning, the present study highlights how learners' existing cultural knowledge enters their Indonesian-language production. Learners' writing can therefore be understood as a space where the target language meets the cultural knowledge they bring from their countries of origin.

These findings have implications for BIPA instruction. Writing activities should provide opportunities for learners to introduce and reflect on their own cultural backgrounds through topics such as musical instruments, food, traditional games, clothing, and other cultural artifacts. Such activities can develop writing skills while encouraging learners to compare cultural experiences, communicate existing knowledge in Indonesian, and engage with different cultural perspectives. This approach is in line with the plurilingual and pluricultural orientation promoted by the (Europe, 2001), which recognizes learners' linguistic and cultural repertoires as valuable learning resources.

Overall, the five texts show that writing about musical instruments involves more than describing physical objects. Musical instruments serve as cultural artifacts that evoke memories, social experiences, material knowledge, cultural practices, and multilingual resources. Cultural identity may be expressed directly through references to a country or community, or implicitly through lexical choices, technical terminology, cultural references, personal experiences, and the use of multiple languages. These findings reinforce the value of BIPA learners' writing as an ethnolinguistic data source and as a space for articulating cultural identity.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the linguistic and cultural elements in BIPA learners' writings about musical instruments from their countries of origin and explored how these elements represented cultural identity. The findings identified five patterns of representation: collective educational experiences, technical knowledge of musical instruments, material and social knowledge, popular culture and personal experiences, and multilingual repertoires. These patterns demonstrate that learners' cultural identities are expressed not only through explicit references to national cultures but also through linguistic choices, practical knowledge, social experiences, personal connections, and the use of multiple languages. Viewed through (Duranti, 2009) linguistic anthropology, these findings reinforce the understanding of language as a cultural resource through which individuals

communicate and construct meanings about their social worlds. The originality of this study lies in its focus on learners as cultural knowledge holders who bring their own cultural backgrounds into Indonesian-language writing, rather than positioning them solely as recipients of Indonesian cultural knowledge. Thus, the study contributes to ethnolinguistic research and BIPA pedagogy by demonstrating the potential of learner-produced texts as a means of examining cultural identity.

This study is limited to five written assignments from BIPA learners at Universitas Negeri Surabaya; therefore, its findings should be understood within the scope of the available texts and not generalized to all BIPA learners. Future research could involve a wider range of learners, cultural backgrounds, and written genres, complemented by interviews or other forms of interaction to explore the experiences and intentions underlying learners' linguistic choices. In practice, BIPA writing activities should provide opportunities for learners to introduce and reflect on cultural artifacts and experiences from their countries of origin. Such activities can support writing development while recognizing learners' cultural and linguistic repertoires as valuable resources in pluricultural language learning.

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Ethical Considerations

Not applicable.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

The generative artificial intelligence (AI) tool [ChatGPT] was used exclusively for language editing and/or grammatical improvement. The use of AI did not influence the scientific content, study design, data analysis, data interpretation, results, or conclusions of the manuscript. Full responsibility for the content remains with the authors.

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