

THE REPRESENTATION OF MULTICULTURAL VALUES IN EFL TEXTBOOK

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Abstract: To recover the educational system in Indonesia during the pandemic crisis, The Minister of Education changed the curriculum and the least one is independent curriculum. To support this new curriculum, the lesson material especially the textbook also followed this system. Based on this situation, this research tried to describe representation of multicultural values found in EFL textbooks entitled “Merdeka English” by Airlangga Publisher. This research used qualitative method since it used document analysis. This research would try to analyze some criteria to be examined including multicultural in English Textbooks in Indonesia. The findings indicating that not all the aspects of multicultural values are included in this EFL textbooks. Appreciating Other People's Perspectives is mostly covered in this textbook published by in Airlangga publisher. Airlangga publisher revealed women equal rights. Therefore, this study suggest that as English textbooks should have an equal portion for multicultural aspects because of its importance role as a global lingua franca as well as to make it more interesting.

Keywords: EFL textbook in language learning, multicultural values in textbook.

Introduction

The national motto of Indonesia, "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika," which translates to "Unity in Diversity," aims to unify all elements of Indonesian society, promoting a collective vision and mission of fostering a family-like environment where individuals care for and value each other (Nurhayati et al., 2021). Despite the existence of differences, such as multiculturalism, the primary objective of tolerance in Indonesia is to maintain unity. Just as Indonesia's geography showcases the nation's cultural variety, it is also marked by considerable diversity. This reflects that Indonesian society experiences instability due to a lack of awareness about other cultures. One effective approach to achieving peace is through the implementation of multicultural education (Derico et al., 2019). The initiative for individuals from various backgrounds to gain a better understanding of each other will have profound impacts on upcoming generations (Pratama et al., 2021). It is vital to prioritize strategies for multicultural education in addressing cultural diversity challenges. The crucial role of education in promoting multicultural curricula has also been recognized globally (Derico et al., 2019).

A diverse community where biases and stereotypes are widespread and unavoidable, education emerges as one of the most powerful tools to shape the next generation's mindset towards peace and unity. As stated by Dejene (2017), it is essential to incorporate multicultural education within textbooks if schools aim to fulfill their role in developing citizens equipped with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to thrive in a multicultural democratic society. In agreement with Arslan (2013), it is vital for students to study other cultures to gain a comprehensive understanding of their own; therefore, principles of interculturalism should be woven into educational frameworks. A practical method for introducing cultural distinctions is through the educational materials used in classrooms.

A textbook serves as one of the essential materials for learning in the classroom. It includes valuable text and images that reflect multicultural values. Recent studies on integrating multicultural values into English language teaching (ELT) textbooks have indicated areas for improvement concerning students' cultural awareness and social abilities. Setyono and Widodo (2019) affirmed that multicultural values can be represented in a textbook while still respecting the rich cultural diversity of Indonesia. As stated by Utomo in Harahap (2022), various elements such as culture, language, race, religion, and ethnicity contribute to the Indonesian national identity. Setyono and Widodo (2019) further confirm that the interpretation of multicultural values aims to foster a sense of national identity.

Previous research indicates that Indonesian English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks can more effectively represent Indonesian culture by integrating multicultural values. Given the significant role that these values play in language education, it is imperative to examine their representation in English textbooks. However, the aforementioned studies primarily focus on the presentation of multicultural themes in English textbooks aligned with the 2013 Curriculum. Consequently, it is pertinent to investigate the Curriculum Merdeka textbook. Furthermore, the promotion of multiculturalism should be a continuous effort. Therefore, the latest research on the integration of multicultural values in the ELT textbook "When English Rings a Bell" is vital for educational institutions.

Literature Review

Textbook in Language Learning

Textbooks play a crucial role in educational curricula, as they guide both teaching practices and student learning (Widodo, 2014). They are collections of various texts that have been purposefully chosen to meet the aims and objectives of the Curriculum, along with the desires and goals of policymakers and authors (Setyono & Widodo, 2019). They further observed that the ideology of the curriculum significantly impacts the choices made by textbook authors regarding book selection and assignment formulation. As a result, textbooks connect the ideologies embedded within curricula (Dijk, 2001), convey ideas and values that shape student identities (Bishara, 2015), and provide students with both universal and local significance (Gebregeorgis, 2017). Additionally, when teaching foreign languages in Indonesia, the process of integrating new textbooks into the current curriculum is consistently a key consideration. Using textbooks as a guide, teachers can create and implement lessons and activities both inside and outside of the classroom. According to Widodo (2014), teachers are not obligated to adopt the textbooks' recommended teaching strategies and instructional materials without taking into account the social and cultural environment in which English is spoken or taught. According to Tomlinson (2013), in order to attain the best possible fit between the material, approach, students, targets, target language, and the teacher's personality and teaching style, educators must modify textbooks to fit their unique institutional context. The goal is to increase the efficiency of instruction. Occasionally, the textbook might help teachers with less experience because it offers a few different challenges. Moreover, textbooks are utilized as language learning tools because they include a range of writings that As a result, textbooks are initially thought of as educational resources that contain ideological agents (Dijk, 2001). Second, the classroom is the primary means of disseminating the ideas and beliefs that shape students' identities (Widodo, 2018). The media should teach students both global and local values (Gebregeorgis, 2017). Stated differently, textbooks both explicitly and implicitly support different cultural goals while teaching language. Textbooks vary in the quantity and kind of cultural allusions they contain. According to Samsudin et al. (2021), other resources are designed to present content that is congruent with cultural representations from cultural sources,

targets, and elements from other cultures. Source culture, target culture, and foreign culture are the three categories into which Cortazzi and Jin (1999) divided textbook cultural variables.

Multicultural Values in Textbook

One way to encourage the growth of intercultural values in society is through education. In the multiethnic nation of Indonesia, character education has placed a high priority on recognizing and embracing cultural variety. Widodo and Setyono (2019). Textbooks and other resources that promote intercultural education must thus be available to educators and learners. As tangible tools that support educators and learners, textbooks are essential to the teaching and learning of foreign languages (Pratama et al., 2021). Textbooks are collections of different materials created to meet the needs of writers, policymakers, other programs, and the curriculum. The authors of the textbook choose which readings and activities to include based on theoretical frameworks derived from the curriculum. One of the objectives of the textbook is to convey the principles of the official Curriculum (Dijk, 2001). Additionally, the Indonesian educational system's textbooks discuss a number of national problems. The expressions of social issues associated with diversity, according to Purba et al. (2019), continuously convey the understanding to sustain national cultural identity. Their study focused on how language education textbooks portray social phenomena gaps in a multicultural way, allowing students to grow up feeling patriotic. Students' academic proficiency is also impacted by how English textbooks are presented. Students can learn more from the textbook, including cultural values. According to Sulistyono et al. (2020), language textbooks provide both the content (skill) and moral values. It suggests that the textbook emphasized that moral value is provided and that the desired skill is connected to. According to Li et al.'s (2019) research, using English language textbooks is essential for acquiring the cultural diversity of English as well as for affecting linguistic knowledge. To put it briefly, linguistic principles and several latent cultural agendas are usually included in the content taught in ELT textbooks. In order to examine the visual elements of the textbook that incorporate multicultural values, this study used Barthes' (1977) dimension of intercultural values. AWER stands for Women's Equal Rights; ROPT stands for Respecting Others' Traditions; AOPCP stands for Appreciating Others' Cultural Products; and AOPP stands for Appreciating Others' Perspectives.

Method

The study adopted a qualitative methodology to gather detailed insights into multicultural principles and the content of English textbooks. A critical discourse analysis was employed to address the research questions. This method was chosen as it was considered the most suitable, offering an effective analytical framework for assessing how texts can represent and shape social realities through both verbal and nonverbal components (Widodo, 2018). Furthermore, it serves as a comprehensive approach to discourse analysis, viewing language use as a social practice imbued with specific values and interpretations (Fairclough, 2001). In this context, textbooks encompass numerous verbal and nonverbal elements that illustrate particular cultural values, thereby encouraging students to develop a heightened sense of multicultural awareness within English Language Teaching (ELT) environments. The researcher served as the appropriate instrument for this study. As a result, the primary instrument utilized in this investigation is a human subject (Ary et al., 2010), given that the researchers were actively involved in all facets of the research process, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Zahra & Arianti, 2022). The researchers applied a variation of Barthes' visual semiotics to explore the intercultural values reflected in the visual elements of a textbook. These characteristics allow the investigator to assess the multicultural significance of the textbook. It is essential to integrate these elements into both visual and non-visual artifacts. According to

Barthes (1977), visual semiotics comprises two phases of meaning. The first phase, denotation, refers to the individuals or objects represented in the images, while the second phase, connotation, reveals the underlying meanings. The representations and interpretations of the individuals or objects illustrated in the textbook.

Result and Discussion

In this research, examinations of the multicultural values depicted in photographs were conducted utilizing Barthes's visual semiotic theory (1977). This research identified twenty artifacts in Merdeka English textbook written by Dr. Nurzaida published in 2023 that illustrate multicultural principles. The textbook "Merdeka English" has 5 chapters, and 156 pages. Almost every chapter contains a visual representation of multicultural values. Four artifacts representing each category of intercultural values were investigated as follow :

1. Respecting Other People's Traditions

The artefact for "Respecting other people's traditions (ROPT)" can be found on pages 137 and 85 140 Chapter V: My School. The custom depicts how people spend their time preserving their traditions like traditional dance and festival for Indonesian people especially in August.

2. Appreciating Other People's Cultural Products

The artefact for "Appreciating Other People's Cultural Products (AOPCP)" can be found on page 53,58,66,70,75 of Chapter II: Good Food Good Life. The illustration in chapter II depicts Cultural Product in form of traditional food from Indonesia and western country, such as bakpia Jogja, pempek Palembang, Balinese milk pie, cendol and Gimmari Korean Food . It means that young and old generations continue to maintain and still like traditional food made in their own country as a national product.

3. Appreciating Other People's Perspective

The artefact for "Appreciating Other People's Perspective" can be found on pages 24,32,34 in chapter I : Hi, How are you? On page 46,73 in chapter 2 : Good Food, Good Life ; on page 94 in chapter III : Things at Home ; on page 107,113,119,120 in chapter IV : My Class Starts ; and on page 132,133 in chapter V: My School . The illustration in the chapter 1 shows describing people's personality and hobby; in chapter II shows family members ;in chapter III shows household cores; in chapter 4 shows schedules, study habits and online class and chapter V shows extracurricular activities .

4. Appreciating Women's Equal Rights

The artefact for " Appreciating Women's Equal Rights" can be found on pages 129 chapter V: My School. The illustration in the section shows two girls dressed in different styles in hijab and not.

Provided the preceding explanation, it can be concluded that all elements of multicultural values are included in this textbook. Appreciating Other People's Perspective is mainly found in Merdeka English textbooks. They can be found in five different chapters. They are in chapter I, chapter II, Chapter III, chapter IV, and chapter V. Moreover, this EFL textbook needs to reflect Indonesia's cultural diversity appropriately. Topics such as "Respecting Other People's Traditions" and "Appreciating Other People's Cultural Products" are essential in Indonesia, but they are not adequately covered.

Conclusion

The findings were derived from images that illustrated the practical application of multicultural values. This indicates that the government-sanctioned textbook in a country where English is regarded as a foreign language incorporates certain multicultural principles aimed at fostering students' appreciation for diverse cultures. By employing Barthes' four dimensions of

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