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Multicultural Values in the Indonesian EFL Textbook 'English for Nusantara': A critical discourse analysis

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Abstract

This study examines how multicultural values are portrayed in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook used in Indonesian middle schools (SMP/MTS) for seventh-grade students. The research utilizes a critical discourse analysis to portray multiculturalism values, including race/ethnicity, gender, social class, and people with disabilities. The data were collected visually and textually through Language Visual Grammar Theory and Appraisal Theory respectively. The analysis shows how these four aspects of multiculturalism are woven into contemporary topics through both visual and textual representations. The findings reveal that the EFL textbook successfully incorporates all four multicultural values, yet the visual and the textual representations are imbalanced. The study concludes that EFL textbooks that present multicultural content according to these parameters serve a vital function in developing students' inclusive mindsets toward cultural differences and fostering appreciation for Indonesia's cultural diversity. The research also suggests that EFL textbooks would benefit from including more international multicultural content, as exposing students to diverse global cultures and perspectives can enhance their worldview and cross-cultural understanding.

***Keywords**: Multicultural Values, Critical Discourse Analysis, EFL Textbook, Appraisal Theory, Language Visual Grammar Theory*

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1. Introduction

In the teaching-learning practice of ELT, the role of textbooks cannot be neglected. They serve as the foundation for the courses' content, the proportion of skills taught, and the types of language practice that the students engage in. In other cases, the textbook might mostly be used to support the teacher's lessons. In addition to teacher-provided material, the textbook may be the primary source of language exposure for students (Richards, 2001). Associated with curriculum development, Opoku-Amankwa et al. (2011) state that textbooks are ideological message systems for transmitting dominant values and beliefs

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of society to shape learners' identity (Setyono & Widodo, 2019). Moreover, the ELT textbook can also be an effective medium to integrate cultural values in the educational system (Gray, 2010), and sociocultural and educational artifacts (Xiong, 2012) to promote the students' intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997; Newton, 2012).

The construction of foreign language textbooks is an important component in the national textbook construction system (Pan & Zhu 2022). Textbooks as the main learning resource play an important role in foreign language teaching (Tomlinson, 2016). Foreign language textbooks do not only provide target form and meaning as language input but also direct it culturally and ideologically and provide potential models of learning activities, contributing to language development, intercultural communication competencies, and abilities (Xiang & Yenika-Agbaw, 2019). Therefore, textbooks play an important role in the success of the social transformative agenda of language education. That is why textbooks are often said to be the most accessible language teaching artifacts and facilitate evaluation and analysis (Weninger & Kiss, 2015).

As it comes to the implementation of the latest curriculum in Indonesia, *Merdeka* Curriculum, the materials of each subject have been adapted and upgraded to fulfill the learning goal. Ministry of Education and Culture has provided the electronic textbooks, one of them is English subject from elementary to secondary levels. It becomes crucial to evaluate those textbooks in accordance with the learning goal (McGrath, 2002), of *Merdeka* curriculum, including its content and culture representation (Byram, 2021). Thus, this study examined the multiculturalism represented on one of English textbooks entitled English for Nusantara for Grade 7 of Junior High School.

In Indonesia, which is rich in culture, it is important to know multicultural values, especially among students, so that students are aware of their culture and are more responsible for maintaining it. Multiculturalism is an expression that refers to society's perspective on world diversity, as well as cultural policies that encourage acceptance of difference (Suroyo et al, 2023). Multicultural values include respect, appreciation, and tolerance (Isnaini, Setyono, & Ariyanto, 2019). Previous research shows that most of the content of textbooks is still dominated by internal cultural content, not the culture of students (e.g., Shin et al., 2011). English textbooks that incorporate cultural content can serve as vehicles for character education, delivering value both through their instructional methods and learning results (Wardani et al., 2019). Multiculturalism in Indonesia includes ethnic Chinese, but there are still challenges in integrating their culture into the country's national identity (Anggraeni, 2011). Indonesian society thrives in tolerance and unity, with *Pancasila* values and regional customs collaborating to advance unity and integrity in a multicultural and multilingual society (Suprayetno et al., 2022).

Over more than a decade, there has been an increasing concern that EFL researchers examine the cultural content represented in the textbook (Awayed-Bishara 2015; Dinh and Sharifian 2017; Lestariyana and Nurkamto 2022; McConachy 2018; Su 2016; Weninger and Kiss 2013). Furthermore, cross-cultural content analysis in local and international textbooks has also received attention (Abdul Rahim & Jalalian Daghigh, 2020; Hosseinzadeh et al., 2022; Moghaddam & Tirnaz, 2023; Su, 2016). Summarized from the systematic literature review study by Mahbub et al. (2024), the previous studies

concerning the analysis of cultural representation in ELT textbooks were dominantly conducted in content analysis design, followed in descending order by critical discourse analysis, semiotic approach, and particular theories or frameworks such as the cultural linguistic approach, thematic analysis, Kachru's (1985) circle model, Moran's (2011) 4P framework, Yuen's (2011) 4P model, and Krippendorff's methods (2013) for analyzing verbal/visual text.

Regarding the insufficient numbers of discourse analysis designs and particular frameworks applied in the research on cultural representation in ELT textbooks, therefore, this present study analyzes the cultural representation in the current ELT textbook in the Merdeka Curriculum using discourse analysis integrated with Xiang & Yenika-Agbaw's (2019) framework, which also includes the subcategories of Kachru and Nelson's (1996) three circles model of English, including race/ethnicity, gender, social class, and people with disabilities to give broader insight to the research area about cultural representation in ELT textbooks. The formulated question of this study was "What multicultural values are contained in the English for Nusantara textbook for Grade VII published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia?"

2. Literature review

2.1 Multicultural Education in Indonesia

Multicultural education can be said to be an educational means to provide equality for all students. Specifically, multicultural education is "an approach to school [education] reforms designed to achieve educational equality for students of various races, ethnicities, cultures, social classes, and language groups" (Banks, 2009, p. 13). Indonesia is rich in social and cultural elements, such as ethnicity, religion, and language, making it more complex to implement effective multicultural education (Zamroni et al., 2021). Therefore, multicultural education is very important in efforts to ensure equality in education, especially in societies with diverse cultures such as Indonesia. According to Raihani's (2018), the focus in multicultural education is developing an understanding of cultural diversity; for example, every student, regardless of their race, culture, religion, gender, and class, is given the same opportunity to develop their potential. In this case, multicultural education attempts at various aspects of the school to transform the school into a multicultural area for all students. Hence, through multicultural education, we can reduce the potential for conflict between students and can establish harmonious and peaceful relationships (Zamroni, 2011). Several studies on multicultural education in Indonesia include Wihardit (2010), who puts forward multicultural education as an approach, concept, and solution.

According to Parekh (2006), the most important strategy for multicultural education is to develop a curriculum that teaches cultural diversity and understanding to students. Multicultural education can involve equal educational opportunities for minority students in white middle-class majority schools or bilingual, bicultural schools but must include provisions for minority peoples to operate in the majority world (Pearson, 1977). Schools in Indonesia must promote a pluralistic and multicultural environment to foster peace and unity among diverse communities (Suparno, 2017).

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2.2 Multicultural values in EFL textbooks

Song (2013) notes that textbooks reflect both curriculum requirements and establish idealized standards for English speakers and learners. Studies of EFL textbooks in various countries have revealed concerning patterns: an overemphasis on English-speaking countries' cultures, minimal representation of learners' native cultures, and insufficient acknowledgment of global diversity (Lee 2005; Ookawa 2015; Rodríguez 2015; Shin, Eslami, and Chen 2011; Yamada 2010).

In the EFL context, textbooks are the main source in the teaching and learning process, so researchers need to explore cultural content to study how cultural aspects are taught (Xiang & Yenika-Agbaw, 2019). Weninger & Kiss (2015) language and culture cannot be separated even though they have different opinions about how to determine what culture needs to be studied or whether culture can be owned by certain groups. Multicultural values are defined as values that acknowledge culture of people from different sociocultural and geographical backgrounds (Setyono & Widodo, 2019).

According to Harris K (1996) Effective strategies for representing multicultural values include using effective interpersonal and communication strategies, understanding one's perspective, and promoting appropriate assessment and instructional strategies. Therefore, foreign language learners must be aware of the culture of the target language with the aim of achieving efficient cultural communication (Liu, 2017).

The cultural content in EFL textbooks has been the subject of several studies. Setyono and Widodo (2019) analyzed Indonesian high school EFL textbooks, assessing how multicultural values influence students' intercultural competence. Although EFL textbooks contain many multicultural topics, they seem to underrepresent cultural content from certain regions, such as Asia and Africa. In China, Xiang & Yenika-Agbaw (2019) examined the cultural content in EFL textbooks among ethnic Chinese Mongol junior high school students, to understand the representation of multiculturalism and the power relations that underlie it. The results of the findings prove that critical multiculturalism not only helps but also urges students and educators to recognize international and internal diversity that the importance of cultural knowledge in EFL textbooks. Moreover, in Korea, Song (2013) explores culture in four Korean EFL textbooks. Song found unequal cultural representation in textbooks and culture that showed male and white dominance.

Another relevant study is by Weninger and Kiss (2013). They analyzed EFL textbooks, images, texts and assignments, written by and for Hungarians, and study the culture of meaning created there. Their findings show that two textbooks, "Blogger and Steps", depict sections on famous people from different countries, festivals around the world, and in Blogger, world characters and voices. Although overt or factual cultural lessons are real cultural lessons, this is not enough, especially because this is rarely linked to homework that encourages them to reflect on cultural values. In addition, Lestariyana and Nurkamto (2022) analyzed the multicultural nature of International Textbooks used for EFL Students, the results of their study revealed that multicultural content appears in international textbooks used for global consumption in all countries including abroad language learners, especially Indonesian students.

Thus, to expand further research, this study was conducted to critically examine multicultural dimensions in EFL textbooks by using multimodal analysis including Visual Grammar (Kress and Van Leeuwen's, 2021) to analyze visual with images and then conveying meaning based on their composition and arrangement, and Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2005) to examine verbal in the analysis of linguistic sources. The EFL textbook in this study applies the newest curriculum and has just been approved by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. This research focuses on the contents of EFL textbooks which contain cultural elements that can provide students with an understanding of cultural differences.

3. Method

This research employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze how multiculturalism values: race/ethnicity, gender, social class, and people with disabilities (Xiang & Yenika-Agbaw's, 2019) are represented in the English for Nusantara textbooks for Grade VII published by the Ministry Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an analytical approach used to interpret language, ideology, and power (Fairclough, 2013; Wodak and Meyer, 2001), both textually and visually. Furthermore, CDA is used to investigate linguistic structures and reveal hidden meanings in order to determine how text and images contribute to social representations.

To collect the data, two methods of analysis were conducted systematically. The first was visual analysis by examining every picture depicted in the textbook. This stage was done by applying Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2021) Visual Grammar Theory, which examined how the textbook's visual elements reflect the cultural values it conveys. The second was verbal analysis by examining every text or discourse written in the textbook. This analysis used Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2005) which investigated how attitudes and emotions are encoded in texts. The data collected, then, were analyzed qualitatively to expound the multicultural contents referring to provided parameters (race/ethnicity, gender/sexuality, social class, and people with disabilities).

This study employed peer debriefing techniques to enhance the trustworthiness of the data being presented (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Different experts perform a thorough assessment by closely examining the analysis's findings. Analytical ability in a variety of domains is improved by pointing out and criticizing subpar analytical outputs. The researchers then respond to and enhance the expert comments and criticisms about the analysis's findings in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook. Furthermore, to enhance credibility that ensures that interpretations are accurate and well-supported by data, this study used multiple data sources (visual and text) and the integration of different analytical methods by combining Critical Discourse Analysis with Visual Grammar Theory and Appraisal Theory.

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4. Findings and discussion

This research examines multicultural values embedded within English textbooks designed for seventh-grade students in both regular and Islamic junior high schools. The textbooks convey multicultural values through a combination of visual and verbal elements. The visual components include illustrations, photographs, and other graphic elements that represent multicultural values that teachers and students should recognize and understand.

Table 1. The description of visual and verbal representations of Multicultural values in ELT Textbooks using Xiang & Yenika-Agbaw's (2019) framework as the subcategories of Kachru and Nelson's (1996) three circles model of English

Unit/Page	Theme	Description	Multicultural Values
1/27	About me	Three students greeting their teacher	**Race/ethnicity** Visually shows the difference in skin color between teachers and students
1/43	About Me	Gathering of physical characters	**Race/ethnicity** Visually, this shows the differences in physical characteristics that exist in Indonesia **People with disabilities** One of the students uses a prosthetic leg
1/45	About me	Basketball player in a wheelchair	**People with disabilities** Verbally and visually depicts a basketball player, even though he is special, he can still work
2/64	Culinary and me	A family praying before a meal	**Race/Ethnicity** This visually shows the characteristics of a religion in terms of praying **People with disabilities** One of the daughters sits in a wheelchair
2/71	About me	Two students talking about favorite food	**Race/ethnicity** Visually shows the difference in skin color between two students
3/120&133	Home sweet home	Both men and women are allowed to clean	**Gender** The verbal and visual texts teach that cleaning is an obligation of every individual, not only for women

3/103	Home sweet home	Appearance of a traditional house and its contents	**Social class** The image shows the social differences that can be seen from traditional houses
3/106	Home sweet home	Galang's friend's admiration for his house	**Social class** The text shows the difference in social class between Galang and his friend
3/112	Home sweet home	Minimalist modern house	**Social class** Visually, the picture shows the condition of the house, which is more modern and contemporary, this shows that there are social class differences that occur in Indonesia
4/5 166/219	My school activities	Various traditional clothes in Indonesia	**Race/ethnicity** Visually, the image shows the cultural diversity that can be seen from the traditional clothing in each region,

4.1. Race/ ethnicity

According to Lestariyana and Nurkamto (2022), race and ethnicity-related cultural values play a crucial role in Indonesian society.



Figure. 1. Three students greeting their teacher



Figure. 2. A family praying before a meal

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a. Visual

Starting from Figure 1 in Chapter 1, there are images of students and teachers; there are male and female students with straight hair and fair skin. The illustration depicts diversity through contrasting physical characteristics: male students with straight hair and light complexions alongside a male teacher with curly hair and darker skin. From a social semiotic perspective, as noted by Setyono & Widodo (2019), this illustration reflects the authentic c demographic composition of Indonesian school communities, which are characterized by the nation's inherent population diversity.

Further analysis of figure 2 visually shows that the family prays before eating. According to Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006), the way illustrations are composed plays a vital role in communicating messages about kindness and moral values. This is demonstrated in the image through its specific arrangement, which shows a father figure guiding others in prayer, depicted through the positioning of the characters and the gesture of clasped hands in prayer. The discourse shows that the family adheres to Christianity by showing the characteristic of clenched hands when praying.



Figure. 3. Gathering of physical characters

Furthermore, in Figure 3 as well as in Figure 1, the visual elements show that there are many differences in physical characteristics, including straight to curly hair, dark skin and white skin, and woman with glasses who wear hijab. As noted by Setyono & Widodo (2019), the hijab in Indonesia serves as both a dress code and a symbol of Islamic modest dress, commonly worn by Muslim women and girls. This aspect of clothing choice represents one of the many ways in which Indonesia's social and cultural diversity is expressed and acknowledged in everyday life.



Figure. 4. Various traditional clothes in Indonesia

In Figure 4, the visual elements show the traditional clothes of a region, starting from the left part with traditional clothes from Aceh (Ulee Balang), followed by traditional clothes from Betawi Jakarta (Kebaya Encim), traditional clothes from Central Java

(Beskap), traditional clothes from Bali (Payas Agung), then traditional clothes from Papua (Koteka), and finally the traditional clothes of the Dayak tribe from East Kalimantan (Sapai Sapaq). The depiction of these traditional clothes is very important to show to teenagers, so that they always recognize and understand that we live in a country that is rich in culture.

A critical discourse analysis reveals that equal rights and opportunities are extended to all Indonesian citizens. This equality is reflected in both public and private educational institutions, where teachers and students represent various ethnic backgrounds - a reality that is accurately portrayed through the diverse characters featured in the textbook.

b. Verbal

In Figure 1, the greeting "Good morning, Pak Edo. How are you today?" demonstrates [affective] language, reflecting Indonesian cultural norms where warm, friendly greetings are customarily exchanged during social encounters. The next analysis in Figure 2, the language analysis of this 'let's say grace' conversation shows a [judgment], the discourse shows that the father's actions reflect positive behavior, namely leading to pray before eating.

The textbook promotes diversity through both its visual elements and written content, featuring characters with names representing Indonesia's various ethnic backgrounds. These include Andre Tanudjaja (Chinese), Monita Turangan (Manado), Pipit Safitri (Sundanese), Leni Lestari (Minang), Made Wirawan and Ida Ayu Komang (Balinese), and Edo Salosa (Papuan). The characters and content showcase real-world social and cultural aspects of Indonesian society. Through this representation, the textbook cultivates appreciation for cultural diversity and promotes racial and religious tolerance among its readers. These values are essential for maintaining Indonesia's identity and unity as a nation comprising multiple ethnicities and cultures.

Besides, the textbook introduces the global diversity as the additional information for students in the reading section by showing some cultures from other countries. In page 82, it explains how some countries have different tea cultures, especially in Great Britain and Turkey. In page 125, it mentions the cultures how to use shoes in other countries, such as in most in Asian countries, Britain, United States, and Mexico. Additionally, in page 216, it shows the architecture of the oldest school in the world that located in China.

4.2. Gender



Figure. 5. Both men and women are allowed to clean



Figure. 6. Father and son conversation to invite cleaning

The topic of gender and sexuality continues to be a significant focus in educational discourse, particularly regarding instructional materials. Studies by Lestariyana and Nurkamto (2022) have highlighted persistent concerns about gender-related issues in textbooks, including how different genders are portrayed, stereotypical representations, and the continuing underrepresentation of women. This area of study has garnered substantial attention in global academic literature, with numerous scholars examining the intersection of gender with education and language in educational resources, particularly textbooks, as demonstrated by various researchers (Atchison, 2017; Lee, 2019; Namatende-Sakwa, 2019; Sarvarzade & Wotipka, 2017).

a. Visual

The image depicts five people engaged in cleaning activities. The focal point is the collaborative interaction between male and female participants, which makes a statement about gender equality. By showing men participating in housekeeping tasks traditionally associated with women, the visual challenges gender roles and promotes the idea that domestic work should not be limited by gender.

Through this visual (see Figure 5), the authors of the book present a new ideology according to which men can shoulder household responsibilities together. Men's actions show readers that sharing the burden of unpaid household labor is a good thing, as cleaning is a shared activity that is not gendered. The visual representation demonstrates how domestic responsibilities can be shared by men, challenging traditional gender roles (Singleton & Maher, 2004). The imagery depicting men and women collaborating on household tasks promotes the concept of partnership and equality between genders.

b. Verbal

The text applies Martin and White's (2005) language appraisal framework. The father's use of "let's clean up our yard" demonstrates emotional engagement rather than authority, as he chooses to invite collaborative action instead of giving a direct command. When the boy responds with "let's do it," it reveals his positive response to the suggestion, showing good judgment through his willingness to participate. This linguistic exchange, viewed through discourse analysis, emphasizes how the text portrays father and son coming together in a shared household task. The boy's smiling expression further reinforces his willing participation in the yard work, as he follows his father's example in taking care of household responsibilities. Furthermore, verbally, the textbook introduces how to address for both older man and woman with *Pak* and *Ibu* respectively. These addressees are coming from the Javanese culture of Indonesia.

4.3. Social Class

Social class is very important in the content of the textbook to introduce students to the position of social classes that exist in Indonesia.



Figure. 7. Galang's friend's admiration for his house



Figure. 8. Appearance of a traditional house and its contents

a. Visual

The analysis in Figure 7, the kindness is evident from the pleasant look on the guest's face and the kindness of the homeowner. The discourse shows that there are social class differences in the conversation, seen from the guest who is amazed at the wooden house, this shows that the guest has a house that is not the same or already lives in a modern house and can be said to have a higher social class than the owner of the house.

Furthermore, in Figure 8, the visual elements show a house and its contents, a house made of wood and in the house contains simple furniture, there are animals and there is also a motorcycle. At the beginning of the book, the profession of the owner of this house is introduced as a farmer and tailor. The discourse shows that the person who owns the house has a middle social class. Because in Indonesia, it is a depiction of a simple life.



Figure. 9. Minimalist modern house

The next analysis is in figure 9, this visual element shows the difference with figure 8, in figure 9 shows a modern minimalist house, and there are modern furniture including a 2-door refrigerator, a modern cooking place and a car. The discourse shows the difference in social class in the two images, showing that Figure 9 has a higher social class than Figure 8.

b. Verbal

Figure 7 shows a conversation between three people. Linguistically, 'you have a nice house' shows [positive evaluation] because it shows an admiration for something, and 'you take us on house tour' indicates a request. Seen as more powerful, the homeowner uses the lexicon 'Sure'. This is where there is [judgment], by performing the action of showing something with others.

The materials in the textbook contain the middle social class and upper social class, shown living in the countryside and having a wooden house and pets, as well as showing a modern house with a garage containing cars and modern equipment.

4.4. People With Disabilities

Presenting people with disabilities is important in the content of the textbook. Based on this textbook material, students really appreciate other people around them, especially people with disabilities.


Picture 1.4 Made

Made the Basketball Player

Made is Galang's friend. He is 14 years old. He is very friendly. He has a lot of friends. Made has short, black hair. He always wears a cap wherever he goes.

Made is special. He uses a crutch and sometimes uses a wheelchair. He likes playing basketball. He plays for a basketball team called Kalimantan Wheelchair Basketball. He practices basketball once a week on Saturday. His teammates are proud of him. Together, they make a very good basketball team.

Figure. 10. Basketball player in a wheelchair

a. Visual

In figure 2, 3 and 10 showing a person with a disability, both figure 2 and 10 visual elements show a person in a wheelchair, and figure 3 shows a student uses a prosthetic leg. This shows a good example, because it can teach teenagers to respect and not

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differentiate between fellow humans. Figure 2 shows the harmony of a family by not distinguishing a special child by inviting them to eat together at one table. Figure 3 depicts how friendship works without distinguishing physical condition. Moreover, figure 10 provides a positive example by showing that even though they are special, they can still work according to their wishes.

b. Verbal

Figure 10 shows the value of kindness by exemplifying that physical deficiency is not an obstacle for someone to do their favorite activities. The language used in the text reflects a positive judgment, such as 'He is very friendly', 'His teammates are proud of him,' and 'They make a very good basketball team.' The discourse shows such language underlines a sense of emphasizing the value of collaboration and unity in overcoming challenges.

4.5. Discussion

As mentioned above, this Indonesian ELT textbook was analyzed both visually and verbally. Based on the findings, the four points of multiculturalism dimensions—race/ethnicity, gender, social class, and people with disabilities—are all represented. Although there are more multicultural topics in textbooks, the content containing verbal elements is less represented than the visual ones. The first parameter is race/ethnicity, which is most visually represented from the local wisdom of Indonesia. The character illustrations are illustrated by teachers and students, family members, and friends with different skin colors, hair shapes, traditional clothes, a traditional house, a traditional sport, and characteristics of a person's name from a particular area in Indonesia. These diversities are contextually in reference to the heterogeneous real-life condition of Indonesia. Thus, this finding supports the results of the previous study by Setyono and Widodo (2019) that the textbook characters convey the message to the students about accepting and embracing the ethnic and cultural diversity in Indonesia.

Among the four dimensions of multiculturalism, gender is the most equal parameter in both visual and verbal representations. Most character illustrations in pictures and texts portray men, women, and also boys and girls. Moreover, the activities represented in both visual and text show the balanced power relation between male and female characters. Although it does not truly reflect real-world gender roles in Indonesia, if not all, this finding introduces that legally, all Indonesian citizens have equal rights and opportunities. Likewise, people with disabilities were mostly represented through visuals. According to the content of this textbook, the students are highly appreciating other people around them, particularly people with disabilities, and the students can build friendships with them. Also, people with disabilities can have the same profession as others. By embracing people with disabilities in the textbook, it would encourage students to respect them and help students with disabilities feel they possess agency. Fostering a more multicultural environment, this intentionally multicultural education may lessen prejudice and discrimination against young people (Xiang & Yenika-Agbaw's, 2019). Contrastively, only a few social class diversities are depicted in the textbook. It shows the upper, middle, and lower classes through the wealthiness of certain types of professions, whereas social

class representation in education significantly influences how students perceive themselves and society.

Related to the implementation of *Merdeka* Curriculum, these findings also support the character building on student profile of *Pancasila.* The multiculturalism in the textbook can build students' awareness on diverse ethnicity, power relation on gender and social class, also respect and embrace people with disabilities based on real-life context in Indonesia. In addition, regarding the methodology of differentiated learning, both visual and textual representations of these multiculturalism values may accommodate students' varied learning styles. For students who have a learning style that is easier to learn through text, this will affect students' sensitivity to multicultural values. Accordingly, both verbal and visual texts help readers understand concepts better, especially for complex topics. These efforts can ensure that students gain a deeper understanding of values. This is different from the results of previous research by Xiang & Yenika-Agbaw (2019) which revealed that multicultural values in the form of race/ethnicity, gender/sexuality, social class, and people with disabilities were not evenly represented in EFL textbooks for the Mongol ethnic group in China.

The findings of this study indicate that combining cultural content with language instruction is particularly effective for developing multicultural awareness in adolescent students. Analysis of Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook through critical discourse methods has revealed how authors strategically integrate multicultural values through both texts and visuals. These textbooks serve as valuable platforms for initiating discussions about multiculturalism. The approach recognizes that language education should extend beyond merely teaching linguistic skills - it should also empower students and the broader population to acquire and expand their cultural understanding.

Overall, this study helps to evaluate how multicultural values are reflected in government-published ELT textbooks in countries where English is a foreign language. The analyzed textbooks articulate multicultural ideology by appreciating and respecting different ethnic traditions in Indonesia. Therefore, the implications of ELT textbooks that present multicultural content based on the parameters studied regarding race/ethnicity, gender, social class, and people with disabilities play an important role in shaping an inclusive attitude towards cultural differences and encouraging students to appreciate the cultural diversity that exists in Indonesia. Multi-cultural materials from outside countries need to be added to English language teaching (ELT) textbooks. Because from a global perspective, introducing students to cultures and views from different countries will broaden their horizons.

5. Conclusion

This critical discourse study has examined the multicultural values depicted through EFL textbooks for junior high school/middle school grade VII in Indonesia. Based on the findings, four points of multiculturalism dimensions; race/ethnicity, gender, social class, and people with disabilities are all represented, even though the dimensions were unequally represented in both visual and verbal representation. There are still some points that still need to be included. For example, in the first parameter, traditional clothing is still underrepresented because it does not cover all traditional clothing in Indonesia. As

for the various kinds of traditional houses, because seeing from the many traditional houses in Indonesia, only wooden houses are represented.

Ethnic diversity should be emphasized in teaching and learning activities. Whereas, if these materials are presented in all textbooks, it will help students to achieve easy cultural access. Therefore, this study also aims to understand how English teachers use cultural references in textbooks and integrate them in their teaching practices. Overall, this critical discourse analysis has revealed how multicultural content appears in EFL textbooks produced under the latest curriculum in Indonesia, which has significance for future EFL research and teaching. The fact that most of the EFL textbook content is dominated by the Indonesian state and little representation from abroad or global diversity especially in the context of race/ethnicity, gender/sexuality, social class, and people with disabilities.

This study has some limitations as the analytical framework was limited to the four of multiculturalism variables which also the subcategories of Kachru and Nelson's three circles model of English. Thus, it may not fully capture the broader multiculturalism values and the effect of the cultural representations on learners. Therefore, next future researchers on critical textbook studies may use the same or other approaches to CDA (e.g. multimodality, critical morality) integrated with other multiculturalism frameworks (e.g. critical multiculturalism) and extend to the other dimensions such as moral, religious, or gender-related values. Likewise, it is worth studying further about how these multiculturalism values integrated in the teaching learning activities to give more practical contributions to ELT.

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