



Multicultural values in ELT textbook for Indonesian elementary schools: a critical discourse analysis

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ABSTRACT

Incorporating cultural elements into teaching is essential for Indonesian educators. However, a key issue currently observed is the lack of awareness among English teachers regarding the integration of cultural learning into English instruction. This study was to critically investigate how culture is represented and introduced in an English textbook at the elementary level. Cultural contents were analyzed throughout the 2021 revised edition of the English textbook for grade 5 of elementary school, published by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC). The textbook was selected due to its widespread use in Indonesian schools and its production by MOEC. To analyze the data, a semiotic critical discourse analysis approach was employed on the basis of Kachru's concentric circle framework. Moran's 4P framework, addressing products, practices, perspectives, and people, as well as Bennett's theory on cultural values, were also used to further investigate the cultural dimensions presented in the textbook. The findings revealed a significant dominance of source culture content, while the representation of target culture and foreign culture was minimal. Of the 27 cultural views analyzed, expanding circle cultures were most prevalent. Our findings also indicated that product culture was the most prominent cultural dimension. The findings suggested that cultural embedment in the textbook facilitates students to have a broader perspective of diverse culture. Recognizing and understanding the multicultural values and their representations allows Indonesian students to develop their intercultural competence, which not only introduces

them to diverse cultures but also strengthens their communication skills.



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INTRODUCTION

English serves as the lingua franca for the majority of speakers worldwide, with individuals from various racial, national, and cultural backgrounds using it to communicate for various purposes such as business, fashion, travel, and education (Crystal, 2003). The increasing uses of the English language have furthered economic, political, and cultural interactions among nations. For several decades, the English language has served as the dominant language of global communication. Approximately 80% of communicative events occur in the English language (Cogo, 2012; Rahim & Daghigh, 2020) across the globe, including in Asian countries such as Indonesia. Indonesia is home to a diverse range of ethnic, religious, and cultural groups. Indonesia is a country of more than 13,000 islands, 300 ethnic groupings, and 200 languages (Dalimunte, 2016; Nurcahyono, 2018). As the identity of the Indonesian nation, a plural society needs a concept of unity over diversity. The concept of multiculturalism is expected to exist.

In the context of English learning, culture can be approached from multiple perspectives; one is Kachru's (1985) classification of English into three concentric circles: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle (L2), and the Expanding Circle. Given English's role as an international language, incorporating multiculturalism into language textbooks is crucial for effective language teaching and learning as it promotes cultural awareness and global citizenship (Gray, 2002). Textbooks play a pivotal role in promoting these values and helping learners develop an understanding of diverse cultural perspectives. Students and teachers need to recognize the cultural values illustrated by the views. The appearance of the values in English textbooks is supposed to enhance teacher and student consciousness of the diverse cultural values estimated in textbooks (Widodo, 2018). Visual information is frequently overlooked or undervalued by educators and pupils. (Setyono & Widodo, 2019).

The importance of multicultural competence in the English textbook has become the focus of English language researchers around the world. One of the most widely researched is how various culture is presented in English language textbooks (e.g., Ahmed, 2011; Shin et al., 2011; Awayed-Bishara, 2015; Tajeddin & Teimournezhad, 2015; Alcoberes, 2016). Past scholars

investigated how culture was represented in ELT textbooks particularly in Asian contexts such as Iran (Baleghizadeh & Sayesteh, 2020; Morady Moghaddam & Tirnaz, 2022), Malaysia (Rahim & Daghigh, 2020), and China (Zhang et al, 2022; Xiang & Yenika-Agbaw, 2019).

In the Iranian context, Baleghizadeh, & Sayesteh (2020) examined representations of popular culture in three ESL grammar textbooks through four categories: products, practices, perspectives, and people. Their content analysis showed a cultural imbalance embedded in textbooks and dominated by cultural practices that inform daily life and prominent customs. Thus, the cultures of English-speaking countries occupy a larger space in these textbooks and, therefore, lead to less space for the targeted international cultures of textbooks. Morady Moghaddam and Tirnaz (2022) also examined two series of ELT textbooks widely used in Iran contexts. They focused on how well key ICC components, intercultural knowledge, attitude, and skills, are used. Their findings revealed that *the Top-Notch* book series adopted a broader international perspective. The books effectively used diverse cultural elements to support the development of ICC. On the other hand, the locally produced books in the Vision series lacked diversity in intercultural components. The books have limited references to target or other cultures.

In the Malaysian EFL textbook, Rahim and Daghigh (2020) measured the spectrum of culture (source, target, and other cultures). Adopting Briyam's intercultural communicative competence, they found intercultural content and a wider spectrum of cultures in local textbooks than those in the imported books. However, they suggested that replacing local textbooks with imported ones is not necessary in the interests of the Malaysian English language agenda.

In the Vietnamese context, Dinh and Sharifian (2017) analyzed cultural representations in secondary school English textbooks. Using Cultural Linguistics, they found that the textbooks depicted themes derived from the Chinese New Year (Tet) that reflected Vietnamese cultural values. Their findings suggested that the cultural elements contributed to the development of ELT materials.

Thus, local textbooks can play a strategic role in maintaining cultural relevance and supporting the development of national identity. Local textbooks can also fulfill the need to increase students' intercultural competence in the global era.

In the Chinese context, Zhang et al. (2022) investigated cultural representations in three sets of national English textbooks used in China. Their findings show that American and British cultures dominated the cultures of the inner circle countries. International cultures are the least represented in all three textbooks. In two sets of textbooks, Chinese culture is

more represented than the cultures of the inner circle countries. The findings of the cultural categories showcased that cultural products were the most represented, while cultural perspectives and cultural communities were the least represented in all three sets of textbooks. Xiang and Yenika-Agbaw (2019) also examined the depiction of culture in two series of English textbooks in mainland China and Hong Kong. Adopting Kachru's three-circle model and Moran's 4P framework, the findings showed that both series included content on local culture as well as foreign culture. Mainland textbooks focused more on English culture in the inner circle through the cultural aspects of products and people. In contrast, Hong Kong textbooks covered a wider range of foreign cultures and presented different aspects of culture in a more balanced manner.

The results of ELT textbook research in the Asian region showcase that the Inner Circle dominates textbooks, like the culture of the United States and England. This also leads to an imbalance in the cultural representation of local and international cultures, where cultural products are often more prominent than aspects of practices, perspectives, and people. Perspective aspects are the least represented in building a holistic understanding of culture. In all the countries studied local culture is frequently used as a tool to promote national identity and local values. The given reviews also revealed that cultural representations in ELT textbooks reflect each country's educational, political, and social contexts. Local textbooks are often used to strengthen national identity through the representation of local culture, however often at the expense of international cultural diversity. In contrast, imported textbooks, although they include international culture, are often contextually irrelevant.

In Indonesian educational contexts, government-approved English textbooks are crucial in determining the content materials, themes, and topics to be taught, particularly at primary and secondary levels. Despite the growth of the research interest in EFL textbook analysis, little attention has been paid to English books published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC). Several attempts have been made to examine the cultural representations within ELT textbooks, one of which was by Yonata et al (2024). They investigated the cultural representation of cultural in international English textbooks used for Indonesian senior high school students. Grounded in a social semiotic approach, their qualitative content analysis found that the textbooks predominantly represent culture from inner-circle countries in the four cultural dimensions: perspectives, products, persons, and practices. The analysis found an imbalance in the representation of outer-circle and expanding-circle countries. The cultural imbalance limits the development of students' multicultural competence to enable them to communicate and collaborate in the global sphere.

Examining how intercultural awareness was promoted for Indonesian students through language learning tasks in one ELT book in secondary educational contexts, Mulyani et al. (2024) analyzed 15 chapters and 107 tasks. Using Kachru's framework, their findings revealed that over 50% of tasks fall outside any of Kachru's circles. They found that most tasks are at the basic level, with none reaching the advanced level, and only 14% at the top level. They suggested for more intercultural elements in the tasks to better develop students' intercultural awareness.

Sihombing and Nguyen (2022) examined the representation of various cultural types in a nationally mandated English textbook for Grade 10 Indonesian students. Their analysis revealed that the textbook predominantly featured source culture (Indonesian culture), followed by target culture (primarily from the USA and UK), international culture (e.g., India, Singapore, Argentina, and Italy), and some culture-neutral content. The interview findings indicated that teachers have different opinions on the heavy emphasis on source culture. These results offer important insights for curriculum developers, textbook authors, and educators regarding the integration of cultural content in English language instruction.

Ariawan et al (2022) analyzed two widely national textbooks at Indonesian senior high schools to systematically identify and analyze the elements of culture in the textbooks. Based on frameworks by Cortazzi and Jin (1999) and Yuen (2011), they revealed an imbalance in the portrayal of source, target, and international cultures. Their findings emphasized importance of integrating cultural elements into ELT materials to enhance learners' ICC. Lestariyani (2022) investigated cultural representation in three international English textbooks used at an intermediate level. The majority of presentation describes the culture of the inner circle. Therefore, the expanding circle shows a small representation of cultural values which is no more than 1% in each circle of the three books.

Setyono & Widodo (2019) analyzed the cultural content in EFL textbooks particularly multicultural values for Indonesian senior high school students. Their findings identified four key themes: (1) respect for different ethnic and religious cultures; (2) respect for indigenous cultures; (3) conflict avoidance and peace with life and nature; and (4) appreciation of creative cultural products. They suggested that multicultural materials from outer and developing countries need to be added to ELT.

Widodo (2019) also identified multicultural content in English textbooks using critical discourse analysis and SFL. His findings revealed four types of multicultural values in textbooks, namely, honor the culture of different ethnic and religious groups, respect for the culture of indigenous peoples, conflict, avoidance, and peace with all forms of life and nature, and

appreciation of creative cultural products. However, an imbalance in cultural values is depicted in textbooks. Regardless of many multicultural topics in textbooks, cultural material from certain parts of the world, such as Asian and African countries, are underrepresented.

Parlindungan (2018) examined using a semiotic approach with drawing visual grammar theory to analyze cultural representation, diversity, and multicultural perspectives in both textual and non-textual English textbooks for grades seven and eight. They found unbalanced and equal depictions of Indonesia's cultural diversity with the local culture in a more silent manner, especially minority groups.

Results from previous textbook studies in Indonesian educational contexts emphasize the importance of balanced cultural representation in ELT textbooks to support students' intercultural communication competencies. Imbalances in the representation of source, target, and international cultures can hinder students' understanding and appreciation of global cultural diversity. Previous findings also emphasize the need to increase the inclusion of local and international cultures from the outer and expanding circles to create more equitable, relevant, and multicultural learning materials. Any increased cultural inclusion can be achieved by integrating visual elements, intercultural tasks, and broader multicultural themes to address existing imbalances.

The empirical review of previous studies shows that the content of multicultural materials in English textbooks is more often presented in an unbalanced manner where one particular circle is more dominant, such as the inner circle or expanding circle. Several studies have reported problems with the lack of cultural integrity in the ELT textbooks in expanding circle countries. Based on the review, the methodologies gap indicates that most studies adopted Kachrus' circle framework (1985) combined with Moran's 4P (2001). Few studies on Indonesian ELT books adopted a variety of CDA approaches. Therefore, the current study used Fairclough's CDA by combining Kachrus' circle, Moran's 4P theory (2001), and Kress & van Leeuwens' Visual Grammar (2006) simultaneously since their combination provides a systematic and comprehensive way to understand and analyze how meaning was built upon and conveyed through pictures.

The gap also shows that studies of cultural representation in ELT textbooks for the elementary level and published by the Ministry of Education and Culture are relatively limited. Most studies were conducted on ELT books for secondary schools in the context of international and private schools where private and international publishers published the books. Efforts to study in depth the cultural values represented in elementary school textbooks are valuable, considering that elementary school is the earliest level of education where ethics and morals are the main focus of education. ELT textbooks serve

a critical role as the key source of teaching and learning the English language. A vast body of research has shown the uncontested role of textbooks at the school level. In the Indonesian educational context, since 1994, the English language has functioned as an optional subject. English subject at the elementary school level, although not mandatory, is indeed a critical subject. English plays an important role in early preparing students to face global challenges, introduce multicultural values, and develop 21st-century skills. This has been realized by MoEC, which will oblige the English language at elementary schools starting from the 2027/2028 academic year. By introducing English at an early age, primarily through textbooks as widely accessible sources, students are prepared to be competent and inclusive individuals who are ready to interact in a diverse global world. Thus, responding to the gap, the present study attempted to expand previous studies by focusing on ELT textbooks dedicated to elementary school students and published by MOEC.

To respond to the key objective, several research questions were formulated.

1. What multicultural values are represented in the Indonesian EFL Textbook for Grade 5 elementary Schools, published by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC)?
2. What cultural circles are represented in the Indonesian EFL Textbook for elementary schools published by MOEC?
3. What multicultural dimensions are represented in the Indonesian EFL Textbook?
4. How are the multicultural values represented in the Indonesian EFL Textbook?

METHOD

Research Design

The present study used critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine multicultural values depicted in ELT textbooks in the Indonesian educational context for three major reasons. First, CDA views language as a social practice involving contexts (Wodak, 2001). Therefore, CDA enabled us to analyze how the English language in the school book reflects societal and cultural values. Second, CDA was considered a suitable approach to allow us to deeply understand how language choices might reveal particular ideologies and intentions. Such an approach was necessary for exploring the representation of multicultural values in educational texts. Third, the social semiotic perspective within CDA can help us to disclose how cultural contents in ELT textbooks are presented. Since the contents consist of both textual and visual elements to engage learners, CDA can serve as a valuable tool for understanding how cultural meanings are conveyed in multimodal materials.

Data source

To investigate the cultural values embedded in school books, a textbook for Indonesian elementary schools was selected. It was entitled *My Next Words* used for Grade V elementary school, and published in 2021 by the MOEC (Ministry of Educational and Culture). The school book was selected as the data source due to several reasons. First, the textbook was easily accessible and downloaded from the ministry website. Second, the book is widely used in elementary schools and serves as one of the key teaching and learning resources within the national curriculum. Third, the book is considered to have rich verbal and visual contents which are assumed to contain cultural values from Indonesia as a multicultural country as well as from other countries.

Analysis frameworks

To address the research question regarding cultural circles represented in the Indonesian EFL Textbook for Grade Five of elementary schools and published by MOEC, Kachru's (1985) three-circle model was adopted in the present study.

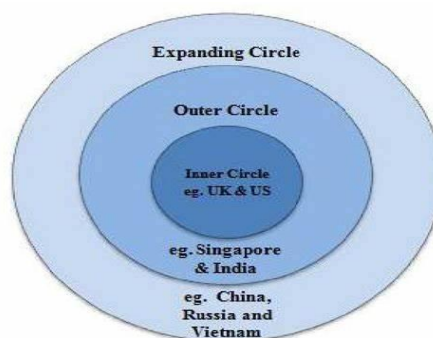


Figure 1. Kachru's Model of English Spread (1985)

Kachru's theory proposed a concentric circle model to divide the area of English usage into three concentric circles (Kachru, 1985a): inner, outer, and expanding circles. The Inner Circle (L1) depicts countries where English is spoken as a first language (e.g., USA, UK, England, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand). The Outer Circle (L2) depicts Anglophonic post-colonial contexts in Africa and Asia (e.g. Malaysia, Nigeria, Zambia in Africa, India, and Singapore in Asia). The Expanding Circle (Foreign Language) refers to countries that do not have a special administrative status for the use of English but are recognized as a lingua franca and widely studied as a foreign language (EFL). (e.g. Japan, Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia). The model represents the types of spread English is used across cultures and languages, and which English is spoken in nearly every country on the planet, as well as in seventy-five territories (Crystal, 2003).

To address the research question regarding the multicultural dimension in the EFL textbook depicted in the Indonesian EFL Textbook, Moran's 4P categories were adopted. Moran (2001) conceptualized that in textbooks, culture can be expressed in four dimensions: products, practices, perspectives, and persons. These parameters are important for identifying cultural values, both visual and textual. For example, a man with fair skin and blonde hair in a shirt who works at a tourism resort is an 'inner circle and 'person' because the man represents a Latin American country where English is studied as a target language (inner circles) as well as represent the identity and ethnicity of the country (person). If one item is identified repeatedly in the same unit of analysis, it is counted only once to avoid any double counting.

Table 1. Analysis Frameworks Adopted from Moran's 4P (2001)

Cultural categories	Definition	Example
Product	artifacts created or adopted by culture (e.g., plants, animals, clothing, buildings, music, economy, and religion).	Music, movie, food, clothes, etc.
Person	the individual members who make up the culture and include well-known figures	Ki Hajar dewantara, Ibu Kartini, Leonardo Davinci, etc.
Practice	actions and interactions of a culture's people. Communication and product use are examples of these practices	A conversation between (Edo) a male white skin (from a tourist resort) and Slamet grown skin (Jepara).
Perspective	beliefs, values, and behaviors that underpin a culture's practices and products	Americans think that pupils who have pets in the house is standard sensitivity to living things

To illustrate how multicultural values are represented in the ELT textbook, researchers adopted Bennett's dimension of multicultural values (2011). Bennett's (2011) multiculturalism theory centered on how people react to cultural differences, assesses intercultural awareness and aids in the development of intercultural sensitivity, as well as the ability to accept and adapt to new and diverse cultures. He classified cultural values into four categories: 1) acceptance and appreciation of cultural wealth, 2) Human dignity and universal human rights are respected, 3) accountability to the global community, and 4) regard for the environment. Table 2 provides the descriptions of the values.

Table 2. Analysis Framework Adopted from Bennett's Dimension of Multicultural Values (2011)

No	Multicultural Values	Theme
1	Acceptance and appreciation of the cultural diversity	Culture, Traditional Clothes, Traditional house, Wedding Ceremony, Religion
2	Respect for Human dignity and universal human rights	Welfare, Social life, Human's rights
3	Responsibility to the world community	Peace and war, Economic crisis
4	Respect for the earth	Pollution-Nature, Conservation, Protect Environment

FINDINGS

Overall Multicultural Categories and Values Represented in EFL Textbook




Within the English textbook investigated, multicultural knowledge and sensitivity were often presented in a series of graphic portrayals. We counted the portrayals as views. The views are to illustrate any multicultural ideals throughout the textbook. The results showed that multicultural circles are represented in the English textbook for elementary school.



Table 3. Percentage of Multicultural Categories in EFL Textbook

Circle of Culture	Total	Cultural Dimension	F	(%)
Inner Circle	6	Product	3	50%
		Practice	3	50%
		Perspective	0	0
		Person	0	0
Outer Circle	2	Product	1	50%
		Practice	1	50%
		Perspective	0	0
		Person	0	0
Expanding Circle	19	Product	7	37%
		Practice	9	47%
		Perspective	3	16%
		Person	0	0

Table 3 shows the distributions of multicultural values in the fifth-grade EFL textbook, categorized by Kachru's circles of culture. In the Inner Circle, both Product and Practice dimensions are equally represented with no representation of Perspective or Person. The Outer Circle also emphasized Product and Practice while Perspective and Person are absent. In the Expanding Circle, Practice is the most represented yet with no occurrences of the Person dimension. Overall, the textbook focused heavily on practices and products, with limited presentation of perspectives and no representation of individuals.

Table 4. Samples of Representation of the Multicultural Values and Categories in the EFL Textbook

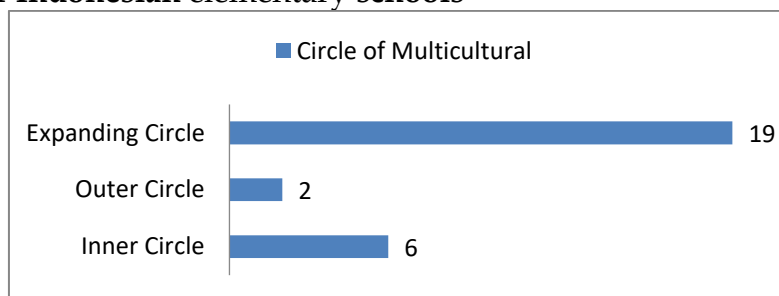
Themes	Sample of Picture	Unit & Page	Cultural Dimension	Description
Cover Opening		1	Product	This picture describes the characters that usually appear in the textbook which introduces the cultural diversity. This shows an <u>expanding circle</u> from different race, ethnic and religion. Their look can be seen from their difference name, skin tone and traditional culture of how to dress (<i>hijab as the identity of religion</i>) which shows <i>beliefs</i> . It implies to <i>acceptance and appreciation of the cultural diversity</i> .
What a delicious Bakso!		1 (1)	Product	The picture describes a student who buys food in school canteen. This picture shows an expanding circle from their look, their dress (scout uniform and scout hat). Then the food shows the value of <i>openness</i> in culinary. It implies value of <i>acceptance and appreciation of the cultural diversity</i> . In addition, their interaction reflects value of <i>friendly and polite attitude</i> . It implies <i>respect each other</i> .
I want an ice cream cone		2 (3)	Practice	The picture describes of the four children buy ice cream. This picture shows social life an <u>expanding circle</u> to promote the queuing culture reflecting values of discipline, ethic, honest, <i>tolerance, moral and respect</i> . It implies <i>respect to human dignity and universal human right</i> .

A unit of account concept		15	Perspective	<p>The picture describes a woman serving food and a glass of water. The picture shows an <i>Expanding circle</i> in terms of gender inequality. The visual and verbal element shows the perspective of the culture pathriarcy reflecting value of <i>inequality</i>. This portrait does not imply theory of Bennett (2011) of <i>respect to human dignity and universal human right</i>.</p>
How Much is it		(3) 22	Product	<p>The picture of visual-verbal element from two characters talking about <i>Nasi Uduk</i>. The cultural product originates from the outer circle. Based on the dialogue, <i>Nasi Uduk</i> reflects the value of <i>openness</i> to foreign culture and is combined with Indonesian products to become a special food for one of Indonesian tribe (betawi). It implies <i>acceptance and appreciation of the cultural diversity</i>.</p>

Multicultural circle representations in the English Textbook for grade 5 of Indonesian elementary schools

Figure 2 reported our analysis result of the multicultural circle distributions in the English textbook used at Indonesian elementary schools, based on Kachru's model. The Expanding Circle, representing countries where English is a foreign language, dominates with 19 instances (68%), while the Inner Circle, where English is the native language, has six instances (25%), and the Outer Circle, where English functions as a second language, has only two instances (7%). The findings suggest that the textbook places a strong emphasis on non-native English-speaking countries, reflecting Indonesian status as an Expanding Circle country.

Figure 2. Distributions of the cultural circle in the English Textbook for Grade 5 of Indonesian elementary schools



Distributions of multicultural dimensions representations in ELT schoolbook

To examine the dimension of multicultural represented in each visual element displayed in the school book, Moran's taxonomy of cultural dimensions (2001) was adopted. The representation of cultural dimensions in the textbook is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 3. Distributions of Multicultural Dimensions

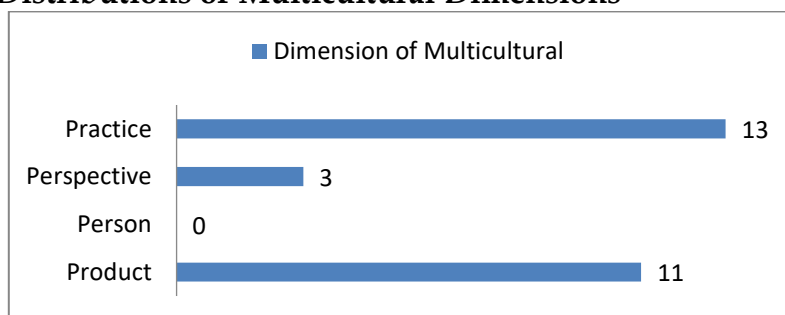


Figure 3 shows the overall findings of multicultural dimensions represented in the ELT textbook for Grade V of Indonesian elementary schools. Overall, 27 views were found in the textbook representing the multicultural dimension. Practice was represented most (48%), followed by Product (40%). Perspective was the least represented (12%), while the Person dimension had no representation. The result indicated that the textbook has great emphasis on cultural practices and products yet with little emphasis on perspectives and a complete lack of representation of cultural persons from different cultures.

Figure 4. Distributions of Multicultural Values in the EFL Textbook

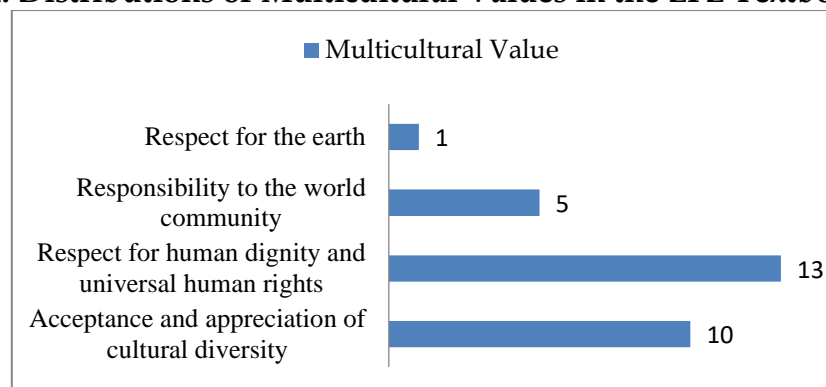


Figure 4 shows the distributions of multicultural values represented in the ELT textbook for Grade V of Indonesian elementary schools. Value of *Respect for human dignity and universal human rights* is the most represented one accounting for 41% of the total values. The second dominant value is *Acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity* at 31% of the total. Meanwhile, *Responsibility to the world community* made up 16%. On the other hand, *Respect for the earth* is the least represented one at 3%. Thus, our findings indicated that school book has a strong emphasis on promoting values related to human dignity and universal human rights as well as cultural diversity yet minimal focus on environmental issues.

Reliability of the findings

To establish the level of reliability of the findings, it is highly important to ensure that our analysis is consistent when compared to the result of another coder. Therefore, inter-coding reliability was carried out by inviting one scholar to serve as a second coder. She was selected due to her past experience of conducting analysis on similar research areas of CDA and cultural values on ELT books. Therefore, the selected coder was considered to have substantial knowledge of related concepts and theories and particularly familiarity with the analysis frameworks used.

To indicate the results, we used the percentage agreement. Percentage Agreement is the most straightforward inter-coder agreement metric. It is calculated by dividing the number of times a set of ratings is identical by the total number of observation units that are rated and multiplying the result by 100. To determine the percentage agreement result of the multicultural circle, the number of agreements (24) was divided by the total number of instances analyzed (29), resulting in an 82% agreement. Similarly, to calculate the percentage agreement for the multicultural dimension, the number of agreements (23) was divided by the total number of instances (27), yielding an 85% agreement. Based on Kappa (McHugh, 2012), the achieved reliability

of both the multicultural circle and the multicultural dimension findings is regarded as highly reliable.

Multicultural Values Represented in the EFL Textbook for Grade 5 of Elementary Schools

To answer how culture is depicted in *My Next Word* school book, we present images below depicting culture in three concentric circles. The distribution of cultural values in this textbook demonstrates six concentric circle cultural themes in the Inner circle, two themes in the Outer circle, and nineteen in the Expanding circle. Thus, six verbal-visual pictures have been chosen to showcase the critical analysis conducted in the present study.

Expanding Circle

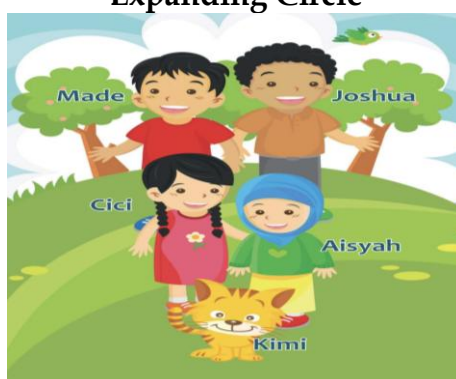


Figure 5. Characters in EFL Textbook for Grade V

Compositionally, Figure 5 depicts the visual elements of two male and two female characters. Their names are Made, Joshua, Cici, and Edo. However, the character of the cat is not included in the analysis. Looking deeply at the visual differences among them, Made has brown skin, straight hair, and wears a red shirt. Joshua has dark skin, curly hair, gray pants, and a brown shirt. Cici is depicted with fair skin, long hair tied in braids, and wearing a red short-sleeved dress with a flower in the middle. Lastly, Aisyah has white skin with a different appearance from Cici. Aisyah wears a green bracketed shirt and a yellow long skirt. Made, Joshua, and Cici have black hair. Meanwhile, Aisyah wears a blue hijab to cover her hair. Their body gestures are facing the book reader with cheerful smiles and open arms. Representationally, based on the cultural product, the image depicts differences in ethnicity, race, nation, style, and religion and acts of love for fellow creatures in Indonesia as the expanding circle. Ideationally, readers are expected to identify the background and lifestyle of the people in the multicultural country. One culture that has good value in people's style by wearing the "*hijab*" reflects the value of religion and identity. Furthermore, the visual hijab on this character showcases spiritual values that reflect polite

and closed attitudes. Thus, it implies the multicultural value of *respect for human dignity* following Bennett's theory (2011) because covering genitalia is part of caring for the dignity of a woman. When looking at their different skin color tones, Made has brown skin, Joshua has dark skin, Cici has fair skin, and Asiyah has white skin. All of them are in one frame with the cheerful expression reflecting value of *acceptance*. From the picture, it is sufficiently clear how they express things clearly and accept differences. Referring to the theory of multicultural values (Bennett, 2011). It implies *acceptance and appreciation for cultural diversity*. Moreover, it also can be noticed through the various colors of their clothes, such as Made wearing a red blouse, Joshua wearing a brown, Cici wearing a pink blouse and Aisyah wearing a green blouse with a blue veil.

Inner Circle

The inner circle in terms of cultural diversity is depicted in Figure 6, which appears in the visual-verbal elements of the interaction between Joshua and Alfonso.

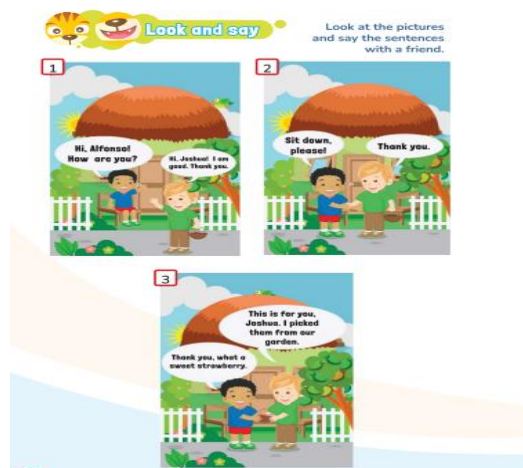


Figure 6. The photograph of Joshuan and Alfonsho

Compositionally, Figure 6 depicts a series of visual-verbal elements resulting from the interaction of two participants (two males); Joshua and Alfonso. These two individuals are depicted with distinct visual characteristics. Joshua's complexion is dark brown, and his hair is short and curly. In contrast, Alfonso has a bright white complexion and brown hair. In the first image, Joshua sits and extends his hand in greeting Alfonso. Alfonso likewise responded to the salutation by extending Joshua's hand. As seen in the photograph, they hold hands with each other. And in the third photograph, Alfonso gives Joshua a strawberry-filled basket. Representationally, Figure 6 indicates the cultural product of the harmony friendship from different backgrounds (from the *inner circle and expanding circle*). It is evident from two different types of skin tones with the natural

scenery around the house (composed of mango trees, traditional houses, grass, flowers, house fences, and the sky). Figure 6 also showcases the action of the interaction process. Joshua has slightly darker skin, while Alfonso has white skin. This is emphasized by their hair. Joshua has black hair, and Alfonso has brown hair. Their different physical characteristics reflect the value of cultural diversity in Indonesia, which can also be noticed from their various color composition.

Then these two boys are shown as the main actors through their dialogue and body language (starting from greetings, facing each other and staring; Joshua sees Alfonso and vice versa). Verbally, Joshua invites Alfonso to sit by using the word please, which demonstrates a cordial and courteous attitude and reflects the value of humility. As dialog continues, "Here are strawberries. I gathered from the garden for you", Joshua. Alfonso gave Joshua fruits as a gift, and Joshua thanked him and exclaimed, "What a sweet strawberry"! to continue the interaction between them. Further, the beauty of Joshua's environmental house and the dialog in Figure 6 show the *nature and environmental care*. It implies *respect to the earth*. Ideationally, readers are asked to identify them in conversation. This reflects the value of harmony. Thus, it can be classified as a visual-verbal element. This element invites the reader to observe their identity and then their relationship (the way they interact), where they are represented horizontally as strangers.

Outer Circle



Figure 7. An interaction between a boy and girl about *Nasi uduk*

Compositionally, Figure 7 depicts two visual-verbal elements of boys and girls. Judging from the dialogue, they discussed the price of a portion of nasi uduk in Jakarta. From the dialog, "How much is a plate of nasi uduk in Jakarta?" and answered by "it is thirty thousand rupiahs" emphasize the price of *nasi uduk*. Meanwhile, visually the body gesture of the girl smiling broadly by opening both hands shows her curiosity. Then, the boy's visual gesture sits on a chair while pointing with his index finger to tell the price of *nasi uduk* as if

indicating a pleasant interaction between them. In addition, visually, girls are wearing yellow clothes with red shoes, while boys are wearing blue clothes and green shoes and sitting on purple chairs. Representationally, this picture depicts two children (boy and girl) having a dialogue about inner and expanding cultural products (marriage of two cultures). The picture also teaches cultural values. The traditional value of mixing culinary delights from Sumatra and neighbouring Malaysia. *Nasi uduk* is nasi lemak, which is a culinary modification of the basic ingredients of white rice, which is popular among Indonesian people. *Nasi Uduk* is a food made from white rice – boiled half, half-cooked, and then steamed – using coconut milk from grated coconut and flavoured with various kinds of spices such as cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and lemongrass leaves. As a result, the spices taste savorier and more fragrant.

Nasi uduk, a kind of nasi lemak of typical Malay food, is also commonly found in Malaysia, where it is considered one of its national dishes (Wikipedia, 2022). In Indonesia, particularly Riau and North Sumatra, the dish is used as a blend of two cultures into *nasi uduk* brought by the Malay tribe who emigrated to Batavia (Betawi) and spread throughout Indonesia. The existence of this uduk rice comes from Tanah Melayu, where the Malay community is in the western part of Indonesia (Sumatra) and the neighbouring country of Malaysia. Judging from the dialogue in Figure 7, the female character asks, "How much is a plate of nasi uduk in Jakarta"? This dialogue informs that nasi uduk is also popular in Jakarta even though nasi uduk comes from a mixture of Malay and Indonesian soil. Thus, the dialogue showcases openness to other people's cultures, which implies multicultural values of *the acceptance and appreciation of the cultural diversity* (Bennett, 2011). It is the openness that enable this culinary process to land as far as Sunda Kelapa to West Java.

DISCUSSION

The results of the present study show that the circle that represents the most is the expanding circle, with the most prominent cultural dimensions being product and practice. Overall findings showed an imbalance in the representation of cultural origin in the textbook. The present findings are also supported by past studies which indicated that the source culture (expanding circle) was more represented in locally produced ELT books (see Ariawan et al 2022; Sihombing & Nguyen, 2022), Rahim & Daghigh (2020, Gheisari & Akbari (2022; Morady Moghaddam & Tirnaz, 2022). This is possible because this textbook was published by MoEC and authored by domestic authors who are Indonesian nationals.

On the other hand, our critical analysis also showed that the inner and outer cultures are underrepresented. The unbalanced cultural representations displayed in the textbook greatly influence the learning process. It is

important to represent culture in a balanced way in the Indonesian EFL textbook.

The findings can be different when school books are authored by foreign writers or used in international education contexts. Such was found by past critical analysts, one of whom was Puspita (2022), examining international textbooks used at international schools in Indonesia. She discovered that the culture of the inner circle is more prominent. Similar to Alsaawi (2021), who found that international textbook studies focused more on Western culture than local culture.

This shows that ELT textbooks published by the government contain more source culture than target culture, while textbooks from abroad contain international culture content. Exposure to authentic cultural contexts is critical to developing intercultural competence. Without diverse cultural references, students lose the opportunity to engage in real-world cultural situations. This potentially limits their ability to develop the skills, attitudes, and knowledge necessary for effective intercultural communication, negatively impacting their readiness to interact in a global or multicultural environment.

Our finding is consistent with Handoyo (2019), who examined multicultural values represented in high school textbooks by MOEC. In his research, he found that cultural values are more dominant in Indonesia, such as respect for different groups, ethnicities, or religions, politeness, and caring for other people.

Cultural value discourses cannot be separated from the sociocultural contexts in which they are anchored (Puspitasari, 2021). The discourses of values cannot be divorced from the sociocultural context in which such values are embedded. In the setting of Indonesian elementary school, students are constantly engaged with instructional materials. Cultural diversity refers to the variety of ethnic groups on Earth, including those in Indonesia. In the meantime, the cultural diversity of the Indonesian nation derives from numerous regional cultures that continue to evolve. In addition, the development of information has facilitated the spread of Indonesian culture throughout the globe. Some foreigners are also drawn to Indonesia's diverse cultural landscape. Cultural diversity in Indonesia can be framed within the framework of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. The English textbook examined many visual images of the cultural values in Indonesia as an expanding circle. The book's cover (Made, Joshua, Cici and Aisyah) represented an example of a visual artefact of textbook characters portraying two females and two males with different physical characteristics and a cat. It looks like the characters in the textbook come from different cultural backgrounds. In semiotics, visual

data represents the *acceptance and esteem for cultural diversity* (for example, from appearance and what is being discussed).

Furthermore, the value of *respect to the human dignity and universal human right* is also identified in the school book. We identified the value based on the gesture of an adult woman serving food with both hands and a smile. Her smile expresses her desire to build strong relationships with customers. It looks as though they have a comfortable connection, and the conversation also glorifies the buyer. The gesture of a boy who welcomes food with his right hand is as if he really respects the adult woman. It implies multicultural value, which is *respect for human dignity and universal human rights*. Meanwhile, the given critical analysis also shows the value of revitalisation seen by how family members, comprised of a mother, a father, and a son, go to the zoo. The image depicts the diverse cultural practices of the family's excursion to the zoo. The appearance of the zoo with various kinds of animals and plants seems to revive traditional cultural practices that are almost extinct. This reflects revitalization and unity with nature. By appreciating and caring for nature, the value of caring for nature can be determined from multiple perspectives. It implies *multicultural respect for the environment* (Bennett, 2011). It can be identified through animals in the picture, including *zebras, deer, elephants, etc, which* are placed in a conservation organization, namely as a site engaged in flora and fauna conservation, as shown in the book. This illustrates that as living things, we do not live alone; plants and animals are also part of life and natural sustainability

The represented cultural values need to be instilled in the nation's next generation to shape students' characters and improve their interculturality. Not only local culture but also international culture needs to be added to EFL textbooks.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study critically examined cultural values representation in an English textbook for Grade 5 of Indonesian elementary schools entitled *My Next Words* published by the Ministry of Education and Culture. We used Kachru's circle model to determine cultural origin and Moran's theory to identify categories of cultural dimensions. The results showed that several categories of cultural values were represented in the textbook. We found that the category of cultural origins most emerged from the Expanding circle (67%), Inner Circle (26%), and the outer circle (7%). The results also showed that the most prominent cultural dimension categories are product (48%), practice (38%), and perspective (14%). Thus, there is an imbalance in the representation of cultural origin in this textbook, where the most dominant culture comes from the book authors' culture as Indonesian citizens. The findings also show that cultural values represented in the textbook are *acceptance and appreciation of*

cultural diversity (42%), respect to human dignity and universal human rights (35%), responsibility to world community (17%) and respect to the Earth (5%). This implies that Indonesian culture is a social culture attached to the three cultural values. Thus, it is expected that the children can be more familiar with local and foreign cultures so that their knowledge, attitudes, and actions can change for the better.

Our findings offer important insights for EFL teachers in Indonesia to consider cultural analysis before and during teaching. Teachers can be well-informed to address dialect differences and promote tolerance in order for students to feel more confident in speaking English. Furthermore, our findings also support the use of critical social semiotics to develop critical thinking in both teachers and students to be globally competent. We also encouraged the integration of media and technology in the classroom to further explore global cultural values. The inclusion of visuals without text can serve as a tool for cultural discussions. Students are to be facilitated to express their opinions and reduce future discrimination by introducing them to diverse cultures at an early age. Such a condition is essential to develop intercultural competence by understanding diverse cultural values. Having cultural awareness can improve students' communication skills and promote their appreciation of local and international cultures. The present study highlights that cultural content in English textbooks, especially those from the Expanding Circle, is more dominant. We suggest that the government strive to create more culturally balanced EFL textbooks to enhance students' cultural understanding. The current study recognizes that focusing on a single ELT textbook cannot capture broader trends in multicultural representation across different publishers or educational contexts. Therefore, future studies are expected to expand their sample size to produce broader findings. In addition, future research needs to critically examine textbooks for ideological, socio-political, and historical values across publishers and also explore how EFL teachers implement cultural references in teaching. Comparative studies of international textbook development are also recommended.

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