

## CULTURAL DIVERSITY ANALYSIS OF VISUAL CONTENT IN THE INDONESIAN TEXTBOOK: MY NEXT WORDS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GRADE 1

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### Abstract:

The aim of this research is to analyze visual content that elevates Indonesian culture from the book "My Next Words For Elementary School Grade 1" published by Lala Intan Gemala et al. from the Ministry of Education and Culture. This research is using descriptive qualitative method and Roland Barthes' semiotic theory: The science of interpreting a signal, where language is also a structure of signals with a particular message from society. According to this study, the visual content of the book contains several categories of cultural diversity values. In the first image, the girl is portrayed as emphasizing the importance of helping parents, which is categorized as "Respecting Other People's Traditions" (ROPT). In the second image, two female students are depicted wearing different-shaped uniforms, demonstrating "Appreciating Women's Equal Rights" (AWER). In "Appreciating Other People's Cultural Products" (AOPCP), this is demonstrated in one of the traditional Indonesian costumes that the teacher was wearing, depicted in the third image. The result proved that the three photos do not reflect Indonesia's entire cultural prosperity.

### Keywords:

Culture Analysis;  
Visual Content  
Analysis; Textbook  
Analysis; "My Next  
Words for Elementary  
School"



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## INTRODUCTION

Currently, English is extensively utilized as a global language. The objective of learning English transfers from communicating easily with native speakers within the country to conversing with English speakers from abroad. EFL students have opportunities to comprehend and embrace cultures from various nations, both internal and external, due to English's status as a global language. Therefore, an EFL textbook should include materials that illustrate multicultural ideals for EFL students in the classroom.

A language textbook is an indispensable tool for the study and instruction of English in the classroom. In the Republic of Indonesia, there are two distinct varieties of English textbooks. The first textbook is one that the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia has mandated, while the second textbook is one that other publishers have made optional.

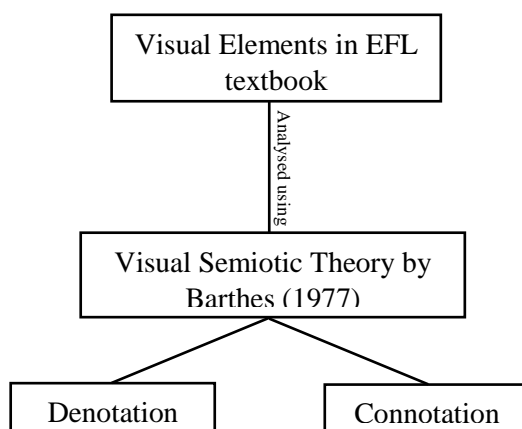
As a multicultural country, Indonesia's English textbook must reflect its culture. Cultural portrayal might take the form of a visual element or words. The goal of visual features in textbooks, as one of the main sources of learning, is to excite and raise students' awareness and attention. Picture and illustration resources are popular and widely used in the teaching of English as a foreign language.

Previous research on the content analysis of EFL textbooks in Indonesia has used various approaches, frameworks, and subjects. Ena (2013) conducted research that employed the paradigm given by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) to examine cultural representation in EFL textbooks for Senior High School (grades X, XI, and XII). As a result, the portrayal is unbalanced and erroneous. The Melanesian ethnic group is underrepresented, none of Indonesia's recognised faiths are represented, and women are disproportionately represented in terms of numbers and functions.

Setyono and Widodo (2019) conducted research on multicultural ideals portrayed in Indonesian English textbooks. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was used to investigate cultural diversity ideals in an EFL textbook for Indonesian senior high school learners. This investigation uncovered numerous photographs depicting the external qualities of educators and learners. The learners and educators exemplify intercultural values such as religious and cultural identity tolerance.

Isnaini et al. (2019) investigated cultural diversity values in EFL textbooks. Utilizing Barthes' (1977) visual semiotic theory, the present research analyzed the K–13 EFL textbook (Grade 10) curriculum. This study examines how cultural diversity principles (tradition, perspective, cultural product, and equal rights for women) are portrayed in an EFL textbook (tenth grade) for Indonesian senior high school students.

The present research is based on a similar theoretical foundation as Isnaini et al.'s (2019) study, namely Barthes' (1977) visual semiotic theory. The present research investigates the cultural representation of visual elements in an EFL textbook for My Next Words for Elementary School Grade 1 that provides guidance for respecting other people's traditions, perspectives, cultural products, and women's equal rights. The purpose of this research is to address the following research question: "What cultural diversity values are reflected in "My Next Words for Elementary School Grade 1?"



**Figure 1.** Visual Semiotics Theory by Barthes (1977)

## **METHOD**

In this research, the researcher used the descriptive qualitative method. Kumar (2018, p. 334) stated that descriptive qualitative research is "...a study which focus on description, rather than examining relationships or associations. This study attempts systematically to describe a situation, problem, phenomenon, service or program, or provides information about, say the living conditions of a community, or describes attitudes towards an issue."

Moreover, Creswell (2018, p. 41) stated that qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. This research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes. In this research method, the researcher makes interpretations of the meaning of the data.

The researcher analyzed the dialogue scripts in interrogative sentences in the form of word and sentences and the result of the data in the subtitling strategy were a form of description. The researcher used descriptive qualitative method in this research because the data are words, phrases, and sentences. By using this method, the researcher expected to be able to find out, identify, and explain the data of this research.

For this research, the researcher uses the documentation method as the method to collect the data. The techniques are: 1. Watching the movie the researcher watched the Movie Series of Animal Kingdom season 6 episodes 12 and 13 in Netflix. 2. Reading the subtitle the researcher read both English and Indonesian subtitle Animal Kingdom season 6 episodes 12 and 13. 3. Taking note, the researcher took notes of types of subtitling strategy based on the English and Indonesian subtitle that contains subtitling strategies as the data. 4. Rewriting the data found in the table the researcher rewrote the English subtitle, Indonesian subtitle, and the type of subtitling strategy used in the table.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Results***

This study aims to examine how Indonesian local cultures are portrayed in English education materials for Elementary School. In this research, we looked at who is represented and how they are represented in these textbooks from a semiotic perspective. The analyses' variables included visual content that reflected local Indonesian cultures. According to Sahril (2014), those characters are meant to symbolize the diversity of Indonesian society, including its cultural, geographical, religious, and gender differences. We would like to describe findings organised under four major topics in this section. There are three cultural diversity value classifications that were recently assigned to these three images. Respecting Other People's Tradition (ROPT), Appreciating Women's Equal Rights (AWER), and Appreciating Other People's Cultural Products (AOPCP) But there does not exist an image that corresponds to the qualifications for Appreciating Other People's Perspective (AOPP).

A Visual Analysis of Cultural Diversity Values in an Elementary School English Textbook. The textbook has 144 pages and 13 units. Three of the thirteen units in the textbook that incorporate visual elements do not adequately represent Indonesia's cultural

prosperity. These graphic components can be found in:(a) unit 1: *How are you?*, p. 2, p. 3, p. 6, p. 9, p. 16, p. 17, *Look and tick*: No. 1 p. 19, and *Write and say*: No. 4 p. 20; (b) unit 6: *My Garden is Colorful*, p. 54, and p. 59.

**Table 1.** Visual Data Representating Cultural Diversity Values in EFL Textbook

Unit	Theme	Description	Location	Cultural Diversity Values
Unit 1	How Are You?	Two female students are exercising in different-shaped outfits.	Page 2	AWER ( <i>Appreciating Women's Equal Rights</i> )
Unit 1	How Are You?	Two female students in differently shaped uniforms are leaving for school.	Page 3	AWER ( <i>Appreciating Women's Equal Rights</i> )
Unit 1	How Are You?	Two female students with different-shaped uniforms greet in front of the school gate.	Page 6	AWER ( <i>Appreciating Women's Equal Rights</i> )
Unit 1	How Are You?	Two male students greet the teacher in traditional Indonesian costumes.	Page 9	AOPCP ( <i>Appreciating Other People's Cultural Products</i> )
Unit 1	How Are You?	The female students greet the teacher in traditional Indonesian clothes.	Page 16	AOPCP ( <i>Appreciating Other People's Cultural Products</i> )
Unit 1	How Are You?	Aisyah said goodbye to his father and went to school.	Page 17	ROPT ( <i>Respecting Other People's Traditions</i> )
Unit 1	How Are You?	Mother bidding her child good night.	Number 4, Page 19	ROPT ( <i>Respecting Other People's Traditions</i> )
Unit 1	How Are You?	The student hand-kissed the teacher.	Number 1, Page 20	ROPT ( <i>Respecting Other People's Traditions</i> )
Unit 6	My Garden Is Colorful	A child who assists his mother in taking care of their garden.	Page 54	ROPT ( <i>Respecting Other People's Traditions</i> )
Unit 6	My Garden Is Colorful	A student with Muslim outfits.	Page 59	AOPCP ( <i>Appreciating Other People's Cultural Products</i> )

**Discussion**

**Respecting Other People's Tradition (ROPT)**

Respecting Other People's Traditions (ROPT) was represented by one image that was discovered in the present study. These images can be located in Unit 6: *My Garden is Colorful*, p. 54.



**Figure 1.** A child who assists his mother in taking care of their garden.

Figure 1 illustrates the value of the denotation through the image of a girl called Aisyah, who is shown carrying a water hose while her mother plants flowers in the background. As considered from the perspective of the connotative meaning, it could indicate that in Indonesian culture, children are taught to assist their parents from an early age. According to findings published in 2009 by Klein, Graesch, and Izquierdo, children's engagement in home duties revealed "More about parental judgment than about the nature and quality of children's participation in household chores" (p. 100). Due to the fact that the characters are representative of Indonesian culture, the cultural material of this work has been designated as be source culture (SC). Because of this image, it is anticipated that teachers will be able to emphasize the significance of assisting parents, a subject that their parents have always taught them, in order for them to be able to generate high-quality human resources.

### **Appreciating Women's Equal Rights (AWER)**

This study utilizes a reference of visual image that qualifies for the category of Appreciating Women's Equal Rights (AWER). This visual image is contained in Unit 1: P. 6: How are you?



*Figure 2.* Two female students with different-shaped uniforms greet in front of the school gate.

Figure 2 shows a visual representation of two elementary school students in front of the school gate. However, they have different looks a girl dresses in a headscarf to signify her Muslim identification, while the other does not add any additional apparel to her attire. Denotatively, these two characters represent how students dress for school. In a connotative sense, the illustration depicts a phenomenon of social and cultural significance in an Indonesian school environment where wearing hijab is a school duty (particularly in public and Islamic schools) and multi-religious principles are valued. In addition, it indicates that male and female students have equal access to education. The cultural material in this artwork is classified as source culture (SC) because the characters are representative of Indonesian culture. Teachers can utilize the image to guide students in observing socio-cultural phenomena in the Indonesian educational system that are connected to respecting women's equal rights. This depiction of a female student in a hijab takes into consideration Islamic values, which perform a significant role as the values that are most prevalently portrayed in Indonesian students' social backgrounds and

are predominately related to multireligious values that acknowledge the equal opportunity for females and males to obtain education and employment (Ariyanto, 2018).

### **Appreciating Other People's Cultural Products (AOPCP)**

This study selected one visual image classified as Appreciating Other People's Cultural Products (AOPCP). These visuals are positioned in Unit 1: How are you?, p. 9.



*Figure 3.* The teacher wears traditional Indonesian costumes.

Figure 3 illustrates two male students in Indonesian SD uniforms meeting a teacher in front of the school gate who is wearing a kebaya and songket skirt, and her hair is styled in a traditional bun. This scene appears from the perspective of the meaning of the denotation. The image depicts a teacher adopting traditional attire and encouraging the students to empathize with and appreciate Indonesian culture by dressing in traditional attire for formal or informal occasions. Then, interpretations are drawn regarding its connotative implication. This can be observed from the teaching materials that cover cultural features of many countries, such as cuisine, traditional clothes, and beliefs, which will extend the students' perspectives as citizens of the world (Shin et al., 2011). Specifically, this can be seen from the resources that cover cultural aspects of Indonesia. Due to the fact that these images are representative of Indonesian culture, this visual content contains cultural aspects that are considered to be source culture (SC).

The visual content in the Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture's elementary school EFL textbook represents three cultural diversity values, according to the findings. In addition to representing cultural diversity principles, the visual images depict social and cultural issues and the actual circumstances of a diverse Indonesian school. The visual representations encourage students to improve their Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), respect cultural diversity, and be open-minded to various ethnic backgrounds and beliefs in Indonesia.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture developed an elementary school English textbook that included four categories of cultural diversity values. These values were studied in the current research. The four categories of cultural diversity values that will be examined are: four image demonstrating respect for other people's traditions (ROPT), three image demonstrating appreciation for women's equal rights

(AWER), three image demonstrating appreciation for other people's cultural products (AOPCP), and regrettably, no image demonstrating appreciation for other people's perspectives (AOPP). Three pictures are used to depict the source culture (SC), but none of them are used to represent the target culture (TC) or the international culture (IC). Therefore, it can be said that the majority of the pictures used to illustrate cultural diversity ideals mostly depict the source culture. In conclusion, the results of this research show that the textbook under investigation presents values of cultural variety in an unbalanced manner. The cultural ideals portrayed in the textbook do not correspond to the target culture.

In order to address the unequal presentation of cultural diversity values and cultural source material, writers and teachers play an essential role. English teachers should become active participants by selecting acceptable EFL textbooks, assessing and analyzing cultural diversity values and cultural sources, and providing feedback to the publishers in their roles as evaluators and consumers of EFL textbooks. More visuals representing cultural diversity values should be included in English textbooks that emphasize AOPP in order to correct the imbalance and aid language learners in developing their ICC via visuals. English instructors should take an active part in providing numerous supplementary activities connected to the images supplied in the textbook to improve the usage of the cultural diversity values being portrayed. This may be accomplished by having students compare the differences and similarities between many cultures and nations. Problem-solving activities, role-playing scenarios, and/or case studies may help students become more aware of cultural variety and raise their ICC. Therefore, future research objectives should include studies that examine the cultural diversity ideals portrayed via graphics in EFL textbooks.

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