REPRESENTATION OF THE PANCASILA LEARNER PROFILE IN GRADE 12 EFL TEXTBOOKS WITH MERDEKA CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the extent to which visuals and visual texts in the Merdeka curriculum EFL textbooks for grade XII depict the characteristics of a good Pancasila student. The research employs a qualitative approach and content analysis to examine the official textbook "Bahasa Inggris Life Today" published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in 2022. The analysis focuses on how the visuals represent the six dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, including faith, global diversity, mutual cooperation, independence, critical thinking, and creativity. Findings reveal that the textbook effectively illustrates these dimensions through various visual representations and assignments, promoting character development in accordance with the Pancasila values. However, some misrepresentations were identified, particularly regarding the depiction of the Baduy tribe, suggesting the need for further analysis in future studies. Ultimately, the textbook serves as a vital resource for implementing the Merdeka curriculum and fostering students' understanding of Pancasila value.

KEYWORDS	*pancasila student profile, merdeka curriculum, EFL textbooks*

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum in Indonesia has developed in accordance with various changes over the eras since the beginning of independence until now. Historically, curriculum changes in Indonesia began in 1947 with the first curriculum, which emphasized character education and the formation of an independent and sovereign character, continuing up to the present era with the 2013 curriculum and the *Merdeka* curriculum used by schools in Indonesia (Alhamduddin, 2016; I Wayan Kandia, 2023; Iskandar et al., 2023). These changes are a natural result of shifts in the political, socio-cultural, economic, and scientific and technological systems of the nation and the country. Therefore, the curriculum, as a collection of educational programs, must be developed dynamically to meet the demands and changes of society.

In the current era, the 2013 curriculum and the *Merdeka* curriculum have been created to keep up with the industrial revolution 4.0. The characteristics of these curricula can be seen when students and teachers, who use various technological equipment and digital tools, can easily access information quickly. Thus, in recent years, a new term by the name of "*Education 4.0*" has emerged. This term refers to the application of technology in the learning and teaching process to fulfill the talents and interests of students (Elsa & Anwar, 2021; Gunawan & Shieh, 2020; Nurbekova et al., 2020; Son et al., 2023; Wang & Qiao, 2020). However, a closer look at the 2013 curriculum and the *Merdeka* curriculum reveals some notable differences that distinguish the two.

The 2013 curriculum aims to balance spiritual and social attitudes, knowledge, and abilities, and to apply them both in school and in society. Schools serve as a resource for students to apply classroom learning to real-life situations. This curriculum seeks to improve students' attitudes, knowledge, and abilities through core competencies and fundamental subject competencies. Meanwhile, the *Merdeka* curriculum emphasizes project-based learning to develop soft skills and character, along with the *Pancasila Student Profile*. This curriculum prioritizes core skills like literacy and numeracy, allowing for in-depth study over time. In other words, the *Merdeka* curriculum allows teachers to modify learning based on student capacities and to adapt to local context and material, unlike the 2013 curriculum. Although modification of learning materials in schools is permitted in the *Merdeka* curriculum, these changes must follow several provisions, such as strengthening the profile of *Pancasila* students and a commitment to developing students' non-academic skills. Therefore, the government, through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology in Indonesia, supports the implementation of the *Merdeka* curriculum by creating student books and guidelines for teachers as the main sources of textbooks (Sistem Informasi Perbukuan Indonesia, 2022).

In many countries, textbooks are used as a medium to teach learners about foreign languages and cultures while learning a Second Language (SL) or Foreign Language (FL). Moreover, English textbooks in Indonesia serve as both linguistic and cultural tools and artefacts. The gradual changes in the curriculum in Indonesia have also led to the emergence of various new textbooks, including English textbooks. According to Nasution (1987) in Andi Prastowo, English textbooks are learning materials that are easy to instruct to students and have been widely used by teachers rather than other learning materials. However, when creating a suitable English textbook, the author must exercise prudence; the content must align with the current curriculum and the intended outcomes and goals for the students. This is not only a task for teachers but also for policymakers, in this case, the Ministry of Education in Indonesia, to produce quality books for students. Through the *Merdeka* curriculum launched by Minister Nadiem Anwar Makarim in 2022, it is noted that the tools or media for teaching have changed from those in the 2013 curriculum (Andina et al., 2023; Ardianti & Amalia, 2022; Ariesanti et al., 2023; Heryahya et al., 2022; Soedjono et al., 2023). In the *Merdeka* curriculum, there are additional learning modules, a flow of learning objectives, and projects to strengthen the *Pancasila Student Profile* (P5). In addition, co-curricular activities in the independent curriculum, which aim to strengthen students' character and competence in accordance with the *Pancasila Learner Profile*, are important structures that greatly distinguish the *Merdeka* curriculum from previous curricula.

Research on cultural portrayals and their relation to the *Pancasila Learner Profile* in textbooks is frequently divided into two distinct areas. Some studies focus on representation in literature and the arts, such as songs, novels, and films. However, studies on representation in the context of foreign language learning can also be found in reputable journals. For instance, a study conducted by Ariawan (2020) aimed to explore the proper cultural contents in Indonesian EFL textbooks using intercultural perspectives. In that study, they found that both textbooks used for research included three dimensions of intercultural communicative competence: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. However, the final dimension, which is critical cultural awareness, had not yet been achieved.

Based on the preceding background and description, this study investigates the extent to which visuals and visual texts in *Merdeka* curriculum EFL books for class XII depict what a good *Pancasila* student resembles. This Indonesian textbook is an official publication of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in 2022. The book is publicly available on the official website of the Indonesian Book Information System (*SIBI*) and is used in nearly every public school in Indonesia that follows the *Kurikulum Merdeka* as their guidance. Additionally, the data in this study are derived not just from student reading materials, but also from other activities or tasks contained within the book.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researchers employed a qualitative approach and content analysis to objectively examine the contents of the English textbook "*Bahasa Inggris Life Today*" for SMA/MA grade XII. The study focused on analyzing the visuals and visual texts within the textbook that represent the values of the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila*. In addition to the main content, the cover, assessments, enrichment sections, and reflections were also included in the analysis to provide a comprehensive overview of how *Pancasila* values are depicted.

The textbook was selected because it serves as a guide for implementing the new learning recovery policy established by the Ministry of Education in 2022 and aligns with the CEFR B2 level, covering both receptive and productive language skills. Data collection was conducted through documentation, followed by content analysis to evaluate the representation of *Profil Pelajar Pancasila* in the textbook's visuals and texts, ensuring a thorough and systematic examination of character-building elements in the Indonesian education system.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study demonstrate that the textbook *Bahasa Inggris Life Today* for grade XII successfully integrates the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila* through both its visual and textual content. The book is intentionally designed to facilitate the exploration and implementation of English language skills in a conceptual and contextual manner, offering a variety of assignments that encourage students to develop all aspects of language proficiency. These assignments range from comprehension tasks to the creation of multimodal texts, which are genre-based and reflect authentic language use, ensuring that students are exposed to real-world contexts and issues such as environmental awareness, climate change, financial literacy, and digital safety.

A notable strength of the textbook lies in its project-based learning approach, which not only raises awareness of contemporary issues but also supports the *Project Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila* (P5). This initiative is aimed at fostering character development in students, aligning with the broader objectives of the *Merdeka* curriculum to produce well-rounded individuals who embody national values. The inclusion of technological tools and differentiated linguistic assessments further enhances the learning experience, catering to diverse student needs and learning styles.

The analysis reveals that the visual and visual text representations in the textbook are effective in illustrating the six dimensions of the *Pancasila Student Profile*: faith, global diversity, mutual cooperation, independence, critical thinking, and creativity. For example, dialogues and images, such as those found on page 69, depict harmonious relationships among

different ethnic groups, reinforcing the values of unity and social harmony as promoted by *Pancasila*. These representations are not merely decorative but serve as integral components of the learning process, helping students internalize and practice these values in daily life (Alhamduddin, 2016; I Wayan Kandia, 2023; Iskandar et al., 2023).

Text-based assignments are also a key feature, providing students with opportunities to engage critically with content that reflects *Pancasila* values. These tasks are structured to encourage not only language development but also the cultivation of attitudes and behaviors consistent with the national character. The assignments are supported by enrichment and reflection sections, which prompt students to connect their learning to personal experiences and societal contexts, thereby deepening their understanding of *Pancasila* principles (Hakim et al., 2021; Kamil, 2023; Millah Hanifah, Dewi Sri Wahyuni, 2022).

The comprehensive approach of the textbook is further supported by its alignment with the CEFR B2 level, ensuring that students develop both receptive (listening, reading, viewing) and productive (speaking, writing, presenting) skills in an integrative and communicative manner. This alignment with international standards enhances the credibility and effectiveness of the textbook as a tool for both language acquisition and character education.

Despite these strengths, the study also identifies areas for improvement. While the textbook generally provides a balanced representation of the *Pancasila Student Profile* dimensions, certain aspects—such as the depiction of specific cultural groups—may require more nuanced treatment to avoid misrepresentation. This highlights the ongoing need for critical evaluation and revision of educational materials to ensure that all elements of *Pancasila* are accurately and respectfully portrayed (Gerfanova et al., 2018, 2022; Sugianto & Wirza, 2021).

In conclusion, *Bahasa Inggris Life Today* serves as a valuable resource for implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum and promoting the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila* among Indonesian students. Its integration of character education with language learning is consistent with national education goals and provides a model for future textbook development. However, further research is recommended to assess the impact of these representations on students' actual character development and to explore how similar approaches can be applied across different subjects and educational levels to strengthen the integration of *Pancasila* values in Indonesia's education system.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila* is clearly represented in the textbook, with visuals and visual texts effectively supporting learning that aligns with students' characteristics, needs, and potential. Text-based assignments further enhance the representation of the six dimensions of the *Pancasila* learner profile. For future research, it is suggested to explore how these representations impact students' actual character development and to examine similar portrayals in other textbooks or educational materials to provide a broader perspective on the integration of *Pancasila* values in Indonesian education.

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