

---

*Research Article*

# **An Analysis of Cultural Stereotypes in an Indonesian Government-Endorsed ELT Textbook**

<sup>1</sup>Rifka Indah Nizar, <sup>1</sup>Willy Prasetya

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Islam Indonesia, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author: [willy.prasetya@uii.ac.id](mailto:willy.prasetya@uii.ac.id)

**Submitted:** 16/02/2024

**Revised:** 16/10/2024

**Accepted:** 16/11/2024

**How to cite this article:** Nizar, R I., Prasetya, W. (2024). An analysis of cultural stereotype in an Indonesian government-endorsed ELT textbook. *IJELR: International Journal of Education, Language, and Religion*, 6(2), 89-104. doi: <https://doi.org/10.35308/ijelr.v6i2.9107>

## **Abstract**

Cultural stereotypes in English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks may influence how students shape their perspectives towards the cultures being studied, yet little research discusses how cultural stereotypes emerge in ELT textbooks. This study aimed to describe the cultural stereotypes in an ELT textbook published by the Indonesian government. The book being analyzed was entitled English for Nusantara SMP/MTs KELAS VII for the seventh grade of junior high school. The data were collected and analyzed through content analysis using systematic coding to point out valid inferences. The findings showed that cultural stereotypes were depicted in the textbook in several ways: appearance, gender, behavior, and lifestyle. Many stereotypes were common among Indonesians, such as farmers being male and female characters having fair skin complexion. This study may provide insight into how cultural stereotypes are depicted in the textbook, and it may contribute practically to textbook designers or material developers to take into account how cultural values will be included in the textbook in order to avoid creating stereotypes for a particular culture. Furthermore, this study may also help teachers take into account cultural stereotypes in designing and selecting learning materials for students.

## **Keywords**

cultural stereotypes; English language teaching; textbook analysis

## **Introduction**

Learning materials are crucial to ELT since it can affect how students behave toward themselves and even other students. As stated by Ndura (2004), educational materials have a substantial impact on students' attitudes and beliefs toward society, other people, and themselves. Textbooks are the primary teaching material utilized by many English teachers around the world, despite technological advancements and the prominence of the internet (Richard, 2014). As a teaching resource, the



existence of the textbook has a very important role, despite the fact that the textbook may not be able to fulfill all the requirements needed during the language teaching process (Gunantar, 2017). The textbook can be a teacher, a resource, an ideology and an authority (Cortazzi and Jin, 1999).

Students' goals for learning English and gaining cultural information are greatly impacted by the textbooks they use, and the effectiveness of accomplishing these goals depends significantly on the quality of the textbooks. Since they may help teachers organize and teach students' learning materials in class, textbooks have frequently been regarded as necessary. In order for students to educate and practice cultural values in line with appropriate standards and manners, it is necessary that teachers are able to have sufficient textbooks (Setyono & Widodo, 2017).

Many textbooks currently include cultural content that can assist students in a variety of ways. Based on Cortazzi and Jin (1999), the most significant aspect of language instruction is the enhancement of intercultural communication skills as part of the learning process. Cultural values in textbooks can enhance students' sensitivity to learning about various cultures and their awareness of them. Moreover, the cultivation of intercultural skills through cultural values can provide a knowledge for students' understanding, enabling them to directly assimilate local cultural values and enhance the relevance of their learning (Baider, 2013). The intercultural component produces various positive impacts when applied and included in teaching materials, such as fostering cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, and effective communication across cultures. According to Tyarakanita et al. (2021), students' social roles are significantly shaped by the aspects depicted in textbooks (i.e., situations, tasks, and values). Therefore, teachers have a vital role to establish the learning materials that contain cultural values in it.

To involve students in language-learning activities that involve cultural complexity, English teachers should innovatively impart multicultural elements and incorporate multimodal resources (Setyono & Widodo, 2019). Bahrami (2015) also mentioned that when choosing and selecting textbooks in order to conduct a multicultural awareness in the minds of EFL learners, cultural content turns into an essential aspect. On the other hand, due to the diversity of cultural values represented in textbooks, prejudices or stereotypes that have a negative impact are often created. The influence of outside culture can be potentially detrimental for students. Especially the culture produced from the country's inner circle, specifically western culture. This is evidenced by the many studies which found that the inclusion of western culture in learning materials made students dissatisfied with their own culture. As stated by Kim (2012), teaching materials containing values from western cultures have been found in several studies to have a negative impact on students, namely in the form of students' dissatisfaction with their own culture. Based on Lu (2011), when presenting knowledge about the target culture, textbooks run the risk of being inconsistent and inaccurate. Therefore, this may lead to the perpetuation of stereotypes and the tendency to oversimplify or overgeneralize existing stereotypical perceptions of the culture.

According to Lippman (1922), stereotype is an altered thought process that is generated from culture rather than from an individual's personal experiences. The teacher must have awareness and monitor himself for possible stereotypes that will appear in the textbook so that he can respond well to students (Jane & Clarke, 1990). In minority communities, stereotypes are common. Society frequently engages in unintentionally or intentional stereotype use. Based on one of several socio-psychological theories known as "aversive racism," discussing the racist system and principles that are one of the demands of society that fluctuates in social dynamics as time passes, part of contemporary cultural aspects, giving rise to the view that stereotypes basically cannot be eliminated and naturally ingrained in humans (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986 as cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Additionally, a theory known as "social identity" states that when a person perceives an imminent risk to his or her self-esteem, they are more likely to practice stereotyping (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).



Sadker and Zittleman (2010) mentioned that bias has the seven forms that appear in the textbooks, namely; invisibility, stereotyping, imbalance and selectivity, unreality, fragmentation, linguistic bias: words count, cosmetic bias: pretty wrapping. In addition, Bartmiski (2017), stereotypes have neutral and dynamic properties, both of which can have positive or negative effects depending on the objectives attained. Czopp et al., (2015) argued positive stereotypes are prejudices or subjective views about members of social groups that are favorable by highlighting benefits, features, and attributes both directly and indirectly. Despite the fact that people are preoccupied with embracing diversity, they still lack insight into how to put it into practice effectively (Czopp et al. (2015). It is still difficult to properly integrate cultural diversity that might lead to positive stereotypes in life, particularly in the teaching of languages. Although it appears that positive stereotypes have not been entirely fulfilled, the primary objective of producing multicultural values has not been achieved, as they frequently serve just as book covers that are erroneously used to judge others. Promoting positive stereotypes about a community's members might be a strategy for generating valuable and distinctive identities (Czopp et al., 2015). In addition, the potential for the emergence of negative stereotypes can be prevented by selectively self-stereotyping oneself and one's group can assist in forming and maintaining a positive self-concept (Biernat et al, 1996).

According to Bao (2016), the four cultural elements; nationality, gender, behavior, and lifestyles—that lead to the emergence of stereotypes are frequently depicted in illustrations and texts on ELT materials. In more detail, Bao (2016) identifies these four components. The notion that a person's appearance in a visual illustration might reflect their character and where they came from is known as stereotyping appearance that denotes nationality. For instance, Asian people usually have slanted eyes. In addition, there are further prejudices about Asians such as the idea that Asians define beauty as having slim bodies and white skin tone. Bao (2016) argues that it not only reduces the portrayal of different cultures, leading to preconceptions of one's appearance, but also creates misconceptions of what will actually occur in real life. The second element is gender stereotypes. In earlier research studies, gender concerns in textbooks have been discussed in great detail. The way gender is portrayed in textbooks has a significant impact because it can lead to many different interpretations of an individual.

People's perceptions of gender roles are influenced by sociocultural gender representation, and textbooks may have a direct influence on these perceptions (Tyarakanita et al 2021). Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, attitudes, traits, and other things that a particular society considers appropriate for its men and women (Hossain, 2018). The examples of gender stereotypes that frequently occur in textbooks include the idea that women only do lighter work, such as cooking, cleaning, mopping, etc. While men handle heavier tasks such as fixing broken faucets. Some men even choose to rest while their wives and daughters are preparing meals in the kitchen. In accordance with Rohmawati and Putra (2022), women are mainly associated with domestic roles, meanwhile men are less participating in domestic roles and associated with working outside.

Gender stereotypes are one of the categories of cultural stereotypes that receive the most attention. Due to gender research is often visually portrayed, as in the research of Tyarakanita et al., (2021) who examine how gender is represented in textbooks, gender research dominates much of the research on textbooks in the context of stereotypes. Gender bias has often been a discussion among researchers in studies to date. This is because cultural bias is a problem that is often found in textbooks which can create some negative impacts that affect students' perspectives on gender roles. In accordance with Cameron (1990), as cited in Gharbavi & Mousavi (2012), as gender-biased language in textbooks is frequently erroneous and unequal, it can have a negative influence on students' learning and create a discriminatory setting for them. In addition, men and women, as social beings with equally valuable qualities, should be portrayed in a balanced manner to avoid fostering feelings of injustice between



them. Students' perceptions of what is common for men and women in our culture may be influenced by distorted representations of women and men (Gharbavi & Mousavi, 2012).

Since the 1970s, gender-marked representations of men and women in instructional materials have been an important issue of concern for academics (Qasim, 2018). Third, stereotyping behavior. Bao explained that when behavior is stereotyped, it is regarded superficially and divorced from the underlying cultural values. He also explained that the stereotypes of human behavior frequently have the detrimental effect of misleading students about cultural substance, which confuses them in unintended ways. This is a result of the selection of images and text that are incompatible in textbooks, leading to inaccurate learning content. Fourth, stereotyping lifestyles. Several non-western cultures with daily lifestyles and traditional practices are occasionally portrayed negatively. For instance, Indonesian people are often viewed as less disciplined.

However, the representations of many cultures seen in current English textbooks have frequently been found to be overly stereotypical and unrepresentative of reality, which hinders cross-cultural understanding and respect (Bao, 2016). Grant & Wong (2018) also stated that geopolitical ideologies are frequently conveyed through textbooks and educational resources, and textbooks that oversimplify, stereotype, problematize, or neglect groups along dimensions of difference do not help language learners develop their intercultural competence. This is indeed unavoidable, but the teacher can minimize the negative impact that is generated. To avoid negative preconceptions from being spread to students, teachers must be able to select appropriate instructional materials. In order to prevent giving the students a conventionalized perspective of the target society that is likely to contribute to the development of cultural stereotypes, the content should be carefully chosen (Ponte & Alonso, 2021). However, in the context of ELT, there have been numerous limitations in research about other aspects of culture. There has been extensive research on cultural representation in ELT textbooks, but little is known about how cultural stereotypes are included in ELT textbooks.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate cultural stereotypes in an ELT textbook in the context of EFL based on the classification developed by Bao (2016). To do so, this study focused on cultural stereotypes presented through images since they were the most visible and easily discernible part of a textbook. Bao's (2016) classification informed whether an image represent a particular stereotype before it was included for further analysis. This study may offer suggestions or directions to see the correlation of research findings with an appropriate approach used by teachers in an effort to follow up on research findings so that they can be implemented in students to raise awareness of cultural values, especially in the context of multicultural students in Indonesian classroom. Educators and English Language Teaching developers hold full responsibility in dealing with any biases or stereotypes that appear in textbooks. Based on Grant & Wong (2018), there is a high demand on ELT material developers and instructors to establish the particular components (cultural bias and authenticity as recommended by Sheldon, 1988) to consider, as a guide for the selection process of text and materials being used in learning. As those two criterias are very significant to examine if the text chosen promotes intercultural competency and equity in society (Grant & Wong, 2018).

## Method

To reveal how the cultural stereotypes are portrayed in an English textbook entitled "English for Nusantara SMP/MTs KELAS VII for the Seventh Grade of Junior High School published" in 2022 by the Agency of Education Standards, Curriculum, and Assessments; Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of Republic Indonesia, a qualitative content analysis was employed as a research method for the subjective interpretation of the textual data content through the systematic coding and theme or pattern identification process (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Content analysis is a



research method for establishing replicable and valid inferences from texts to the context of their use (Krippendorff, 2004). This book was analyzed by examining individual images for cultural stereotype representation. This study focused on images because for the majority of book readers, representation was the most discernible in images instead of texts.

The content analysis method developed by Krippendorff (2004) and adapted by the researcher for both data collection and data analysis in this study. In line with the framework constructed by Krippendorff (2004), the concept of content analysis, as both a data collection and data analysis method, is divided into several systematic steps. The researcher begins with (1) Determining the research question, starting by assessing the urgency of the research related to the problem to be solved, using content analysis to gather relevant data. (2) Selecting the data resource, at this stage, the researcher chooses the type of data to be examined and analyzed in-depth. In this study, the researcher uses image data to analyze the appearance of cultural stereotypes in books. (3) Defining the unit of analysis. (4) Creating a coding scheme, the researcher enters the data analysis stage in this fourth step after systematically collecting data. The analysis begins by developing themes aligned with the content of images in the textbook. The researcher creates categories or concepts to be used for data analysis. (5) Coding process, the researcher starts implementing the coding scheme on all images based on previously established categories. (6) Adjustments to the coding scheme, at this stage, the researcher reviews the data obtained during the coding process, allowing for modifications or additions to categories. (7) Contextualization, the stage where the researcher reports the research results, presenting analyzed data in the form of interpretation and representation.

This textbook was analyzed by using Bao's framework of four distinctive elements of cultural stereotypes. Among them are nationality, gender, behavior, and lifestyles represented through cultural symbols, arts, and daily activities. This textbook written by Ika Lestari Damayanti, Yusnita Febrianti, Iyen Nurlaelawati, Pipit Prihartanti Suharto, Aji Jehan Fellani, and Raymon Rahmadhani was used as the research object. This textbook was developed based on the approach of Merdeka Curriculum, which is a Genre-Based approach which has various activities that are customized to students' characteristics to teach students how to utilize English in a variety of contexts in their daily life. Furthermore, this textbook was adopted from Pancasila Student Profile and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) from the United Nations (UN). The four language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing were represented in the 5 chapters that discussed environmental awareness, digital safety, nutrition and wellness and financial literacy in 296 pages.

## **Results**

### **Gender Stereotypes**

Gender stereotypes refers to expectations or beliefs that generalize particular roles, actions, and traits for men and women that arise in society. Gender stereotypes are often found in textbooks, reflecting preconceived notions and cultural standards. After undergoing the data analysis process, the researcher has successfully identified the most prevalent aspects in the examined textbook. The division of gender stereotypes is categorized into two aspects: gender roles and appearances. Several images below have been chosen by the researcher as representations of the occurrence of gender stereotypes for an in-depth analysis due to space limitations:

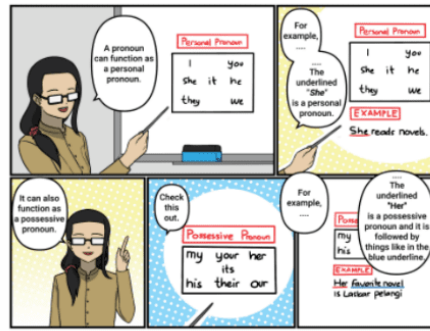
#### **a) Gender Role Stereotypes**







Pak Rahmansyah



Comic strip 1.9 Part 2 Pronouns



Comic strip 1.6 Greetings around the school

Figure 1. Occupational gender roles

Figure 1 portrays a character named Mr. Rahmansyah who is a farmer wearing traditional sarong attire. The portrayal of a farmer is stereotypically associated with the male gender. Based on the picture above, it can be seen that the stereotype of a farmer is more appropriate for men than women. In reality, the occupation of farming is not exclusive to males, as females actively participate in agriculture, playing crucial roles worldwide, such as tending to crops, managing finances, marketing agricultural produce, and more. The depiction of gender role stereotype or more specifically, it can be termed as occupation gender role, influenced by societal stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. Women are often assigned fewer tasks in agriculture due to the perception that working in the fields requires more physical strength, perpetuating gender-based divisions of labor.

According to Nurhafizah et al. (2021), in rural areas, agricultural responsibilities are segregated by gender, where men and women have distinct roles. This aims to achieve effective and efficient agricultural outcomes, contributing to gender-based wage disparities between male and female farmers, resulting in gender inequality (Setiawan, 2017). Furthermore, the representation of occupations for each gender in the textbook does not vary significantly. The occupations depicted in the images throughout the book are mainly represented by the professions of teachers and farmers, with the rest focusing on visual depictions of junior high school students in Indonesia. A common stereotype in Indonesian society is the belief that the teaching profession is more suitable for women due to the assumption that women possess natural characteristic of patience and empathy. The profession of a teacher is portrayed fairly for both genders, not exclusively depicting only one gender in the role of a teacher. Therefore, the researcher cannot conclude how widespread or limited the coverage of occupations is between men and women.



Comic strip 1.4 Three students are introducing themselves

Figure 2. Boys and Girl talk about their interest in mobile games



Predominantly, the hobby of playing online games is often associated with males. This habit or hobby is deeply ingrained in boys and teenage boys as a favorite pastime. Not only as a means of leisure, but males often spend an extended amount of time exclusively engaged in gaming. Playing online games is considered a habit or behavior that reflects the masculine side of an individual due to playing online games is an activity that is mostly done by males. Women share an interest in playing online games to the extent of generating income through such platforms. For instance, a large number of female esports players have gained popularity, altering the myth that only men are skilled at playing mobile games. The conversation between a male and female student planning to play games together illustrates that the habit of playing games is equally represented for both genders in this book. Every human has the right to pursue their interests regardless of gender. According to Paaßen (2017), stereotypically associating women with male gamers can be detrimental as it may hinder them from benefiting from positive aspects of playing video games, such as fostering opportunities in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).



Figure 3. Female and male doing domestic chores

The researcher chose this theme based on the adaptation of the construct integrated in this research as well as based on the data findings in the textbook. Gender equality is demonstrated as men and women are depicted in equal roles, particularly while performing domestic tasks; both genders are characterized as performing the task of cleaning the house. Hence, it can be said that the author classifies several images that are considered to have a tendency towards representing the roles of women and men in social life. Not only women or feminist values, this theme also includes the inequality of social roles that men may face in social life.

Thus, the existence of stereotypes which may be reflected in the images produced in textbooks can trigger certain assumptions in students. The roles of women and men are proven to be equal in many ways, for example as represented in several pictures above, housework, which has long been considered the task of most women, actually shows that housework is the task of both men and women. For example, mopping, washing clothes, cleaning the room, cooking, etc which are often considered the work of housewives as women, but in this textbook, there are no significant negative perceptions because it is depicted that housework is actually the task of all individuals, and is not based on gender. The above also includes an image of a father cooking on a special day because his wife got a promotion at her workplace. These images break the stereotype that only women should do household chores, while men's duty is only to work outside.



## b) Physical Appearance Stereotype

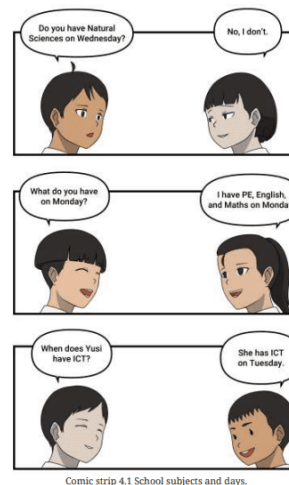
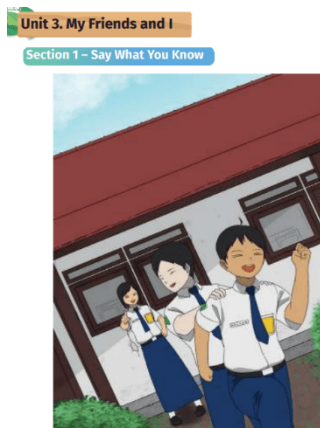


Figure 4. The characters with various skin tones

The Physical appearance stereotype is the perception, belief, and judgment regarding how the physical appearance of an individual should look based on a specific gender. According to the data presented, the images of women have been largely dominated by the representation of brighter or white skin with straight hair. In contrast, the representation of men in the textbooks are way more diverse. This speaks to the social construction that white skin is the ideal of beauty for women in Indonesia, whereby many women are obsessed with using skincare products to make their skin look white or bright. Numerous individuals have come to accept this standard of beauty, which is widely disseminated through Indonesian media, including cosmetic advertising, which consistently features white skin models. Wulan (2017) states that the idea of “white” has been showing up in a number of beauty advertisements lately. This problem arises when educational materials spread among students promote the idea that women essentially require to be white, particularly for those women who must have a light skin color in order to be viewed as attractive.

## Ethnicity and Culture Stereotype

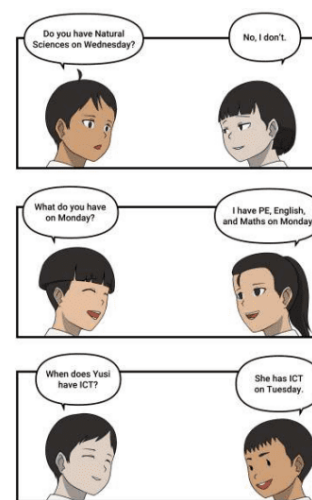
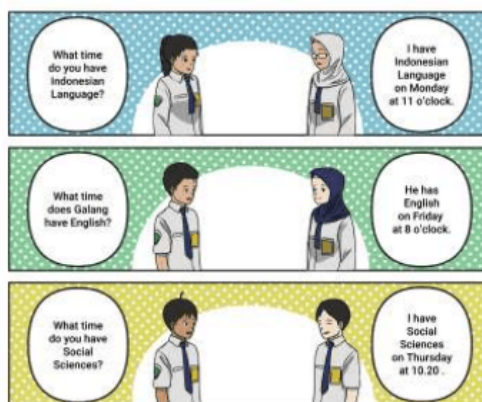


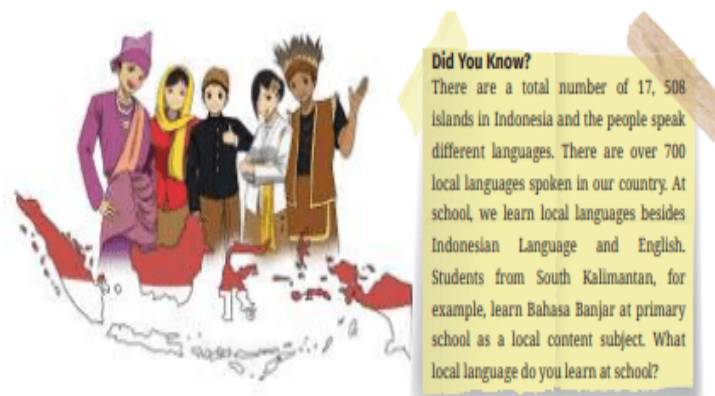
Figure 5. The representation of various race and skin colors



Ethnicity and culture stereotype is beliefs or assumptions that can influence the mindset on how to perceive the characteristics, traits, or behavior of a particular ethnic or cultural group. The images in the textbook under consideration depict the identities of numerous communities found in various regions of Indonesia. These images showcase a diversity of physical appearances that illustrate ethnic distinctions in Indonesia. This is evident in the depiction of people with different skin tones, including tans, browns, and whites in the textbook. Indonesia has many ethnic groups, each with its own uniqueness, including Javanese, Sundanese, Malay, Batak, Dayak, Buginese, Papuans, and many others. The Javanese ethnicity is one of the largest populations among others.

The Javanese people are characterized by a tan skin tone and are primarily distributed in East Java, Central Java, and West Java. On the other hand, the Sundanese ethnic group tends to have white skin and mostly resides in West Java. The Batak ethnic group is located in North Sumatra and is characterized by a tan skin tone. Then, Bugis ethnic group, the majority of them inhabit the South Sulawesi province. Next, there is the Dayak ethnic group, the majority of whom reside on the island of Borneo. They have a skin tone that tends to be a dusky yellow. Lastly, there is the Papua ethnic group, originating from Papua. The characteristic skin color of the Papua ethnic group is dark brown, accompanied by curly hair.

The illustrations in the books under study accomplish an excellent responsibility of describing the physical characteristics of various races that demonstrate disparities in skin tone. This book aims to teach students how to respect one another's cultural diversity, particularly from a racial perspective connected to the element of nationality-associated cultural stereotypes. This shows how the book utilized positive stereotypes properly. This textbook seeks to portray the beauty of life accompanied by the diversity of ethnic groups, as seen in the picture above where they are all friends without the negative perceptions toward others ethnic. The characters in the textbook make a deliberate effort to showcase a variety of skin tones, eliminating concerns of either underrepresentation or overrepresentation of specific ethnic. The depiction of ethnicity does not mention certain traits or comments that can generalize a judgment of a tribe or ethnicity.



*Figure 6. The representation of Indonesian Culture*

Numerous local cultural values are shown in the textbook. This textbook highlight Indonesian cultural products through traditional clothes from various parts of Indonesia. There doesn't exist a dominant region—rather, all regional representations are given fairly in order to fully contradict any unfavourable presumptions. The image above shows characters wearing traditional attire from Sulawesi, Sumatra, Java, and Papua. In this case, the image above does not indicate the presence of negative stereotypes towards a particular ethnic group or ethnicity. Furthermore, providing information

about the number of islands in Indonesia is an added positive point for this book. The imparting of cultural knowledge can offer insights to students while engaging in language learning.

## Disability Stereotype

a. Read a text about Made, the Basketball Player.



Picture 1.4 Made



Picture 1.3 Galang and Friends.

Figure 7. The portrayal of disability

Disability stereotype is common assumptions that form within society regarding the abilities and value of an individual with disabilities. People with disabilities often seem to have their roles separated and discriminated against in society, especially in the context of employment (Rohmer et al. 2016). In addition, they generally encounter negative treatment and attitudes from society. As mentioned by Rohmer et al. (2016), although ideas and attitudes about people with disabilities may not always be aversion-based, implicit attitudes which are frequently internalized or unconscious tend to be negative. This is due to the limitations they have so that their existence is often considered different from most other people.

This theme refers to the only image representation in the textbook which depicts the condition of a disabled student but is still able to play one type of sport. Although the number of these items is relatively small compared to the number of representations of other items, the fact that the author of the book has considered many aspects to include these images, is proof that there is sensitivity towards a certain group of groups whose existence is often ostracized by the surrounding society. Gaps in the rights that people with disabilities should receive are still frequently encountered in everyday life. This habit may have emerged because of the stereotype that people with disabilities do not have the same abilities as normal people in general. Textbooks can have significant impacts on how students without disabilities perceive their classmates with disabilities. Hence, the representation of basketball athletes with a disability image in student textbooks is a positive first step in shaping student character and directing students to idealistic ideas which show that all humans have the same opportunities regardless of whatever differences or shortcomings they may have.

## Discussion

### Gender Stereotypes

Based on the data result, in the Figure 4, several negative stereotypes persist, particularly in the form of a lack of diversity in the portrayal of skin tones in women. Elbalqis et al. (2020) conducted a similar study titled “Gender and Visual Images: Looking back at how stereotypes are presented in textbooks.” The research aimed to explore gender stereotypes within the Indonesian English textbook titled “When English Rings a Bell,” published in 2017. The authors noted that the physical appearance component in the images was divided into five parts, one of which was skin color. However, in contrast with the

findings of the researcher's study, Elbalqis et al. (2020) discovered that the textbook contained numerous images of women with darker skin tones and many images of men with lighter skin tones. In summary, the research indicated that dark skin was not exclusively associated with males, and bright skin was not exclusively linked to females (Elbalqis et al., 2020). The results of this analysis, in fact, stand in contrast to the findings of the author's research. While the type of book subjected to analysis shares a common context, specifically the Indonesian English Textbook, it is crucial to acknowledge the substantial differences in the curricula employed.

Furthermore, the previous study conducted by Rohmawati and Putra (2022), who analyzed occupational gender stereotypes in an Indonesian English textbook titled "When English Rings a Bell." In that study, the results indicated that men are significantly less involved in domestic roles compared to women. Instead, men's jobs and responsibilities are mainly associated with activities outside the home. The comparison in terms of percentages shows that men engaging in household tasks only accounted for 26.3%, while women accounted for 73.7%. This indicates gender inequality in domestic tasks. This demonstrates that the results of the author's research are contrasting with the findings of Rohmawati and Putra's study, despite both studies utilizing English textbooks within the Indonesian context. The discrepancy lies in the curriculum employed. "When English Rings a Bell" aligns with the 2013 curriculum, whereas the book "English for Nusantara," investigated by the writer, adheres to the "Merdeka" curriculum. These two curricula markedly differ in various aspects, encompassing their focus, approaches, objectives, and implementations. The independent curriculum places emphasis on character and moral development, while the 2013 curriculum concentrates on students' academic proficiency in a broader sense. Hence, a noteworthy distinction exists between the research result of the previous study and the author's study concerning gender roles stereotypes.

Rong et al. (2021) conducted a similar study titled "Gender Bias in the Curriculum: A Reflection from the English Textbook." The textbook used in the study was from Malaysia, which is a country in Southeast Asia. The research findings on the Family Relation component revealed that women dominated in household cleaning activities, while men were depicted performing challenging tasks, reflecting masculinity. Women were portrayed engaging in household activities that tended to be perceived as easier. These differences may also be influenced by variations in the curriculum embedded in the textbook itself.

From the data gathered by researchers, even though there are still several gender stereotypes found in this textbook in the form of physical appearance, the overall portrayal in this book makes a concerted effort to reduce and avoid stereotypical values in gender. The book incorporates principles of equality to minimize negative perceptions that may influence students during the language learning process. Several images above signify that English textbooks in Indonesia have experienced improvements, particularly in terms of domestic roles, which are always associated with women, have been depicted fairly in this book. The expected output is to incorporate positive values that provide equal opportunities to all individuals regardless of gender, thus avoiding discrimination and other negative impacts.

### **Ethnicity and Culture Stereotype**

The data analysis on ethnic and cultural components in this book reveals positive stereotype values rather than highlighting negative aspects that could lead to misleading stereotypes for students. This is evident in Figure 5, which illustrates various representations of skin colors as a reflection of the diversity of ethnicities in Indonesia. There is no predisposition towards specific skin tones as a characteristic of a particular ethnicity. The book strives to present a variety of skin colors in each depicted image. In contrast to previous research findings, Bowen and Hopper (2022) discovered an evident imbalance in racial representation, resulting in a bias favouring certain skin colors in English textbooks. Specifically, their quantitative and qualitative study revealed that, overall, the presence of



different races in the five widely studied ELT textbooks was predominantly skewed toward the white race, constituting 67.90%. Other racial categories included Black at 12.38%, Asian at 9.71%, and others at 10.01%. Bowen and Hopper's research outcomes differ from the author's findings, and this variance could be attributed to disparities in the racial demographics of the countries where the materials are produced. The substantial prevalence of white individuals in the US, accounting for 61.6%, and in the UK, reaching 86%, as reported by Bowen and Hopper (2022), may contribute to this contrast.

Additionally, Bowen and Hopper noted that the local community tends to associate the term "native English speakers" exclusively with white individuals, thereby overlooking the diverse range of races that also use English as their primary language. This perspective persists despite the fact that several other races use English as an official language in their respective countries, such as India and the Philippines. In contrast, Indonesian textbooks have adopted the recent curriculum known as the "independent curriculum," incorporating global diversity values across all subjects. This strategic inclusion aims to cultivate mutual respect and encourage open-mindedness among students.

### **Disability Stereotype**

The representation of individuals with disabilities in this book is significantly limited compared to the other components, occurring only twice. This indicates that the issue of disabilities remains underrepresented in Indonesian EFL textbooks. Despite being limited in quantity, the book is noteworthy for its effort to address disability issues, a subject rarely explored in student textbooks, particularly within the Indonesian context. This reflects the government's initiative to enhance student awareness of disability-related concerns and reduce negative stigmas associated with people with disabilities. Therefore, it is crucial to enhance students' awareness regarding the presence of disability-related issues. This awareness enables students to recognize the abilities and uniqueness of each individual, fostering tolerance for diverse differences rather than solely focusing on shortcomings. Moreover, awareness of disability issues can prompt students to develop empathy towards those around them who may have special needs, thereby contributing to the creation of a positive social environment.

Compared to previous similar research' findings, Cheng and Beigi (2011) found that textbooks for English as a foreign language (EFL) in Iran frequently ignore the needs of students with disabilities, a common issue in almost all educational systems. Specifically, only 15 representations of individuals with disabilities were identified in the four high school-level EFL textbooks examined. Cheng and Beigi also noted that images depicting disabilities were not explicitly presented as examples in the textbooks. The findings of Cheng and Beigi align with the results of the researcher's study. This may be attributed to the enduring negative societal stigma towards disabilities. Such perspectives or stigmas may arise from a lack of understanding and awareness of disability issues, stemming from the insufficient representation of individuals with disabilities in everyday life. Therefore, the significance of incorporating representations of disability issues in media, the workplace, and particularly in education must be included, as it enables students to develop sensitivity and awareness towards individuals with disabilities.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the emergence of cultural stereotypes in the examined book does not significantly indicate negative stereotypes that can influence students' attitudes and perception patterns. The selected book adopts the Curriculum of Merdeka, aiming to achieve an advanced Indonesian education that is sovereign, independent, and instills personality through the development of Pancasila Students. Based on the findings after various data analysis processes, it was discovered that gender, ethnicity,





and culture, as well as disability, are three components of cultural stereotypes. The analysis of each image's results can indicate the inclusion of various cultural values, providing students with a more diverse and contextual understanding. Each image already portrays widespread diversity without the hegemony of any particular communities or groups. The researcher found that this book has succeeded in implementing the values of cultural diversity in Indonesia, expanding students' thoughts, insights, perceptions, and mindsets more broadly.

However, there are still certain issues that illustrate unfavorable stereotypes. There are still negative stereotypes related to the constant portrayal of female characters with fair skin complexion that might maintain the stereotype of fair skin as a beauty standard. The government's efforts in developing and improving the content of learning materials in textbooks have been deemed successful. Still, it is recommended that negative representations, such as the dominance of women with lighter skin tones, were eliminated. Future research may consider the use of quantitative methods to generate more valid and accurate data.

## References

- Bahrami, N. (2015). Evaluating the Representation of Cultural Elements in an In-Use EFL Textbook. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 6(3), 128-137.
- Bao, D. (2016). Cultural pigeonholes in English language teaching materials. *English Language Teaching World Online*, 8, 1-18.
- Bartmiński, J. (2017). What does it mean for stereotypes to “reside in language”. *Stereotypes and linguistic prejudices in Europe*, 115-135.
- Paaßen, B., Morgenroth, T., & Stratemeyer, M. (2017). What is a true gamer? The male gamer stereotype and the marginalization of women in video game culture. *Sex Roles*, 76, 421- 435.
- Baider, F. (2013). Cultural Stereotypes and Linguistic Clichés: their usefulness in intercultural competency. *International Journal for Cross-Disciplinary Subjects in Education*, 4(2), 1166-1171.
- Biernat, M., Vescio, T. K., & Green, M. L. (1996). Selective self-stereotyping. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 1194-1209.
- Cheng, K. K. Y., & Beigi, A. B. (2011). Addressing Students with Disabilities in School Textbooks. *Disability & Society*, 26(2), 239-242.
- Cortazzi, M., & Jin, L. (1999). Cultural Mirrors, Materials and methods in the EFL classroom. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Culture in Second Language Teaching and Learning*. Cambridge University Press: USA.
- Clark, I. (2016). A qualitative analytic case study of subliminal gender bias in Japanese ELTs. *SAGE Open*, 6(3), 215824401665343. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244016653437>.
- Czopp, A. M., Kay, A. C., & Cheryan, S. (2015). Positive Stereotypes Are Pervasive and Powerful. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 10(4), 451-463. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691615588091>
- Dalimunthe, M. A., Irawanto, B., & Budiawan, B. (2020). Representation of Papuan identity in the reporting of local newspapers in Yogyakarta. *International Journal of Social Science Research*, 2(3), 34-44.
- Elbalqis, P., Wijaya, M. S., & Rohmatillah, R. (2020). Gender and Visual Images: Looking back how stereotypes are presented in textbook. *English Education: Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris*, 13(2), 80-103.
- Gharbavi, A., & Mousavi, S. A. (2012). A content analysis of textbooks: Investigating gender bias as a social prominence in Iranian high school English textbooks. *English Linguistics Research*, 1(1), 42-49.



- Grant, R., & Wong, S. H. E. L. L. E. Y. (2018). Addressing cultural bias in ELT materials. *Jl Liontas, T. International Association, & M. DelliCarpini (Eds.), The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching*, 1-8.
- Gunantar, D. A. (2017). Textbooks analysis: Analyzing English as a foreign language (EFL) textbooks from the perspective of Indonesian culture. *Language Circle: Journal of Language and Literature*, 11(2), 173-182.
- Hsieh, Hsiu-Fang & Shannon, S. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative health research*. 15. 1277-88. 10.1177/1049732305276687
- Jackie F.K. Lee (2018) Gender representation in Japanese EFL textbooks – a corpus study, *Gender and Education*, 30:3, 379-395, DOI: [10.1080/09540253.2016.1214690](https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2016.1214690)
- Cheng, Karen & Beigi, Amir. (2011). Addressing students with disabilities in school textbooks. *Disability & Society*. 26. 239-242. 10.1080/09687599.2011.544063.
- Kim, H. (2011). Social and cultural issues in some EFL textbooks in Korea. *Science and Technology*, 10, 30-39.
- Jeong, M., & Kim, J. (2012). Needs Analysis and Development of Teaching Materials for Elementary English Underachievers. *English Teaching*, 67(3).
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). Problematising Cultural Stereotypes in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(4), 709–719. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588219>
- Lippmann, W. (1922). Public opinion. *New York: MacMillan*.
- Lu, L. (2012). The formation of cultural stereotypes in English language textbooks. In *Education and educational technology* (pp. 709-713). Springer Berlin Heidelberg.
- Ndura, E. (2004). ESL and cultural bias: An analysis of elementary through high school textbooks in the Western United States of America.
- Nurhafizah, S., Isnaini, I., & Yatim, Y. (2021). Pembagian Kerja Petani Penggarap Sawah di Nagari Padang Ganting Kecamatan Padang Ganting Kabupaten Tanah Datar [Division of Work for Farmers Cultivating Rice Fields in Nagari Padang Ganting, Padang Ganting District, Tanah Datar Regency]. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 5(3), 6671-6678.
- Ponte, M. D. C., & Alonso, A. C. (2021). Emerging Stereotypes about the Target Culture through Popular Culture and Cultural Heritage References in EFL Textbooks. *World*, 11(1).
- Porreca, K.L., (1984). Sexism in current ESL textbooks. *TESOL Quarterly* 18(4), 705-724.
- Qasim, Z. (2018). Gender Representation in English Textbooks: A Quantitative and Qualitative Content Analysis. *Journal of Educational Sciences & Research*, 5(2).
- Richards, J. C. (2014). The ELT textbook. *International perspectives on materials in ELT*, 19-36.
- Rohmawati, S., & Putra, K. A. (2022). Occupational Gender Stereotypes in Indonesian Secondary School English Language Textbooks. *VELES (Voices of English Language Education Society)*, 6(1), 160-175.
- Rohmer, O., & Louvet, E. (2016). Implicit stereotyping against people with disability. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 21(1), 127–140. doi:10.1177/1368430216638536
- Sadker, D. and Zittleman, K. (2010) Gender bias: From colonial America to today's classrooms. In J.A. Banks and C.A.M. Banks (eds) *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives* (7th edn, pp. 125–151). New York: John Wiley & S.
- Setiawan, E. (2017). Konstruksi Sosial Pembagian Kerja Dan Pengupahan Buruh Tani [Social Construction of the Division of Labor and Wages of Farm Workers]. *YINYANG: Jurnal Studi Islam, Gender Dan Anak*, 12(1), 19–34. <https://doi.org/10.24090/yinyang.v12i1.2017.pp19-34>
- Setyono, B., & Widodo, H. P. (2019). The representation of multicultural values in the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture-Endorsed EFL textbook: a critical discourse analysis. *Intercultural Education*, 30(4), 383-397.
- Sheldon, L. E. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT journal*, 42(4), 237-246.
- Tyarakanita, A., Drajadi, N. A., Rochsantiningsih, D., & Nurkamto, J. (2021). The representation of gender stereotypes in Indonesian English language textbooks. *Sexuality & Culture*, 25(3), 1140-1157.



- Woodward-Smith, E. (2014). Chapter Ten Enhancing Student Awareness Of Cultural Stereotypes: The Languaging Of Intercultural Clichés. *Languaging Experiences: Learning and Teaching Revisited*, 222.
- Wulan, R. R. (2017). The myth of white skin: A postcolonial review of cosmetics ads in Indonesia. In *SHS Web of Conferences* (Vol. 33, p. 00048). *EDP Sciences*.



