

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the study background, research questions, purpose, scope, and significance.

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, English is used by many countries as a medium for communication. English is not only used in countries where it is the native language but also in countries where English is not the native language. This is known as English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). ELF interactions refer to English communication between people from different language and cultural backgrounds, none of whom English is the mother tongue (House, as cited in Seidlhofer, 2013). Firth (1996) also sees ELF as a ‘contact language’ between people who do not share a common mother tongue or a common (national) culture but choose English as their foreign language for communication (Firth, as cited in Seidlhofer, 2013). ELF has gained attention because English is now widely spoken by non-native speakers of English. In today’s globalized world (a “global village”), more people speak English as a second language than as their first language (Nagy, 2017).

In Indonesia, people start to learn from an early age, which eventually becomes an important skill. Learning English allows students to communicate with global citizens from different cultural backgrounds. Through these interactions, students can connect with the broader world and learn diverse perspectives. Engaging in English lessons at school offers

opportunities for students to broaden their understanding of social relationships, culture, and global career prospects. This is achieved by improving their English skills in listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, and presenting (Kemdikbudristek, 2022).

Currently, Indonesia has developed a new curriculum called *Kurikulum Merdeka*. According to Kemdikbudristek (2022), in this curriculum, it is stated that English is important to learn by Indonesian students, and it is expected to help learners successfully achieve the ability to communicate in English as part of life skills. This curriculum is set forth to achieve the dimensions of the *Pancasila* learner's profile namely *Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila*. The purpose of it is to be the main reference for educators in building the students' character. There are 6 dimensions in *Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila*: faithful, devoted to God Almighty, and have high moral character (*beriman, bertakwa kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, dan berakhlak mulia*), independent (*mandiri*), cooperation (*gotong royong*), global diversity (*berkebhinekaan global*), critical thinking (*bernalar kritis*), and creative (*kreatif*). In the global diversity (*berkebhinekaan global*) dimension, for example, students need to be able to interact with other cultures in order to build mutual respect. The students are expected to be open-minded in interacting with different cultures by understanding and accepting the uniqueness of each culture as a diversity of perspectives to build mutual understanding and empathy for others (Kemdikbudristek, 2022).

According to Fang (2017), most English learners will use English for various purposes, and their prospective interlocutors are likely to be non-native speakers of English (NNSEs), who outnumber the native speakers of English (NSEs). Therefore, students must be exposed to other cultures in their learning. By understanding and interacting with other cultures, they develop a deep understanding of other cultures, strengthen their self-identity, and appreciate differences.

The students can get a chance to be exposed to other cultures through many kinds of activities at school. One of them is to get knowledge from a textbook provided by the government. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 8 Year 2016, textbooks are the primary source of learning to achieve basic and core competencies and approved by the Ministry of Education and Culture to be used in education units. The textbook should consist of international culture content to give the students' knowledge about other cultures. According to Afriani, et al., (2019), students should learn about international culture because the goal of learning English is not just to communicate with native speakers of English but also with non-native speakers. Exposure to different cultures helps students to gain a cultural understanding related to the language they use, given the diversity of cultures involved.

Putra et al., (2020) studied cultural manifestations and intercultural interactions in English textbooks. The findings of the present study showed the imbalance of cultural content in the three English textbooks used in

Indonesia where cultures from Indonesia have their dominance. According to the findings, textbook publishers and authors should include more international culture content and give more examples of deep intercultural interaction. Setyono & Widodo (2019) conducted a similar study, exploring multicultural values in the officially endorsed English textbook written for Indonesian EFL (English as Foreign Language) students. They examined how those values could contribute to the intercultural competence of senior high school students, such as intercultural awareness or sensitivity. Their findings revealed a predominant focus on local Indonesian culture, leading to a lack of representation of foreign cultures. Based on their findings, they recommended the inclusion of multicultural resources from the other part of the world in English language teaching (ELT) textbooks. Both studies also emphasized the need for English teachers to creatively teach multicultural aspects, utilize multimodal resources to engage students, and add additional cultural materials to patch up the shortcomings of the textbooks.

Moreover, Jismulatif et al., (2022) investigated how foreign and Indonesian cultures are represented in 3 English textbooks used by 9th-grade junior high school students in Indonesia. Their analysis revealed an imbalance, with most textbooks focusing on Indonesian cultures and only a few incorporating other cultures. The recommendation is to include more content from English-speaking countries in English textbooks. The study emphasizes the importance, in our globalized world, for textbook writers and educators to carefully consider how culture is presented in English

language learning materials to enhance students' understanding of other cultures.

The studies outlined have demonstrated the disparity between local culture and international culture with Indonesian culture dominating. While learning a foreign language is meant to facilitate cultural exchange and sensitivity of other cultures to build intercultural competence, study emphasizing on how foreign/international culture collide in an English textbook is of importance. However, there is not much research on how English textbooks support global diversity in *Kurikulum Merdeka*. Other studies have looked at cultural content in textbooks, but not specifically how global culture helps build a sense of diversity. This gap in research is a good chance to dig deeper. By focusing on how global culture is presented in the “English for *Nusantara*” textbook, we can understand how well it aligns with *Kurikulum Merdeka*'s goals. This research aims to fill this gap by thoroughly looking into how global culture is shown in the textbook and how it contributes to making Indonesian learners more aware of global diversity. The textbook entitled “English for *Nusantara*” for 9th grade is selected for further analysis because it is written by experts approved by the Indonesian Ministry of Education. Furthermore, this textbook is recommended for use and a supplement for the implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of the study, the students need to be exposed to other cultures to expand their knowledge of other cultures, so they can develop a deep understanding of other cultures and appreciate differences. They can get that knowledge from many resources, such as textbooks containing global culture. Thus, the “English for *Nusantara*” for English textbook for 9th grade students needs to be analyzed to see whether global culture is sufficiently represented in the textbook using the table analysis of global diversity by Kemdikbusristek (2022). Two research questions are set to guide this study:

1. What global cultures are identified in an English textbook entitled “English for *Nusantara*” for 9th grade students to support global diversity vision of *Kurikulum Merdeka*?
2. How global culture are represented in “English for *Nusantara*” for 9th grade students to support global diversity vision of *Kurikulum Merdeka*?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research question, this study is conducted to identify the global culture contents in an English textbook entitled “English for *Nusantara*” for 9th grade students to support global diversity vision of *Kurikulum Merdeka*. This study also portrays how global culture is represented in the textbook to support global diversity vision of *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focused only on identifying the global culture represented in “English for *Nusantara*” for English textbook for 9th grade students and how the global culture is depicted in the textbook to support global diversity vision of *Kurikulum Merdeka*. The study used the table analysis of global diversity by Kemdikbusristek (2022).

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute to English teachers and other researchers. The teachers are expected to get an insight into the representation of global culture in the textbook and can deliver it to the students appropriately. Also, this study is expected to contribute to or reference other researchers who want to research related topics.