

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of The Study

A multicultural education as a foundation for strengthening national identity needs to be developed by Indonesia. In other words, multicultural education can be an alternative means to resolve social conflicts in a nation's culture. Multicultural education is also considered important to bridge the differences in interests and characters in local education. It is hoped that with the concept of multicultural education that emphasizes respect for the value of local wisdom, it can minimize the issues that develop in Indonesian society. Children will also be taught how to appreciate and capitalize on the given differences in terms of language, ethnicity, race, religion, culture, and surrounding areas as a force of change through cultural education (Slamet et al, 2020).

Futhermore, Haswani et al. (2023) also mentioned how this meeting of languages, cultures, even ideologies, cannot be avoided when countries are interacting in a world that is becoming more globalized. Multicultural education is an ideology or philosophy, a set of beliefs and explanations that identify and esteem the importance of cultural diversity, personal identity, and educational opportunities of individuals, groups, and countries.

Indonesian local culture is a very rich heritage, somewhere in the generational line. It reflects identity and values a society, somehow, it takes part in the country's identity. Indonesian local culture is an identity and heritage which has to be well preserved, or else will be lost if globalization were on the rise.

Local culture would manifest through social structures, language, rituals, and everyday life because of the strong cultural values held (Yuliastuti & Sukmawati, 2020).

Based on preliminary data obtained from observations made by the researcher at SMP AL-Washliyah 16 Senayan, Sei Rampah, Serdang Bedagai, Sumatera Utara, it was found that students, both male and female students, lacked insight into local Indonesian culture. They know more about the outside culture brought by globalization. For example, they know more music and songs from outside Indonesia such as *K-Pop*, *J-Pop*, and *DJs* than national compulsory songs. This phenomenon is certainly not in accordance with the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile to be achieved in the Independent Learning Curriculum. Therefore, one way to increase students' insight into Indonesian local culture is to teach cultural insights in the textbooks used in teaching and learning activities to students.

This phenomenon is in line with research conducted by Nourzadeh et al. (2020) and Putra (2020). As stated by Nourzadeh et al. (2020), more and more young Iranians are learning Korean in Iran. This emerging phenomenon was found to be a result of exposure to Korean culture (e.g., dramas, music, and games). This validates the claim made by Putra (2022), he found that students have been exposed to English through cartoons, movies, music, drama since they were kids. They might imitate what they have seen there. Putra (2022) also found that due to enthusiasm to learn and use English, many children now cannot speak their local languages. They have been sent to English language courses since they were

kids. Their parents talk to them in English at home, like my friends. Once our local languages no longer exist, our cultures will vanish.

Furthermore, the overexposure to other nation's culture could make learners forget their own cultures and ignore those other than other nation's culture. It follows what was conveyed by Putra (2022) that too much exposure to foreign cultures can little by little remove learners' knowledge and understanding about their own cultures. Later, they will lose their sense of belonging. Our culture is our identity. The world knows us because we are multicultural like no others. We must maintain our identity.

Therefore, language education and learning, especially in English language learning, plays an important role in introducing, understanding, and preserving local culture to the younger generation of Indonesia. This is because English is one of the most important and commonly taught subjects in Indonesian schools. And the education curriculum currently used in Indonesia, namely the Independent Learning Curriculum that integrates local cultural values, can be an effective means of introducing Indonesian cultural diversity to students. Thus, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth study of the representation of Indonesian culture in educational materials, especially English teaching instruments.

As stated by Rismawati et al. (2022) that teaching materials are one of the important components in the learning process where teaching materials included all materials (both information, tools, and text) that are arranged systematically, which display a complete figure of the competencies to be mastered by students and used in the learning process for the purpose of planning and reviewing the

implementation of learning. Textbooks are the most widely used teaching materials among all other teaching materials, teaching textbooks are still considered the most important teaching materials used in the learning process.

This is in line with what was mentioned by Rahman et al. (2019) that the use of textbooks in learning has an important role for teachers and students. Textbooks for teachers contain a source of messages, information, and information about science that can be used as a reference for teaching or content that must be conveyed to students. The learners use textbooks as the main learning resource that can improve their ability to achieve learning goals. Thus, the content of textbooks contains scientific and pedagogical content that can improve knowledge, skills, and pedagogy that can improve learners' knowledge, attitudes and skills.

The book entitled "English for Nusantara" is one of the English textbooks being used for the study about content analysis that covered cultural values. The textbook is written and aligned with an updated curriculum for junior high school students. For the analysis of cultural values in textbooks, the researcher selected a newly published English textbook from The Ministry of Education and The Center of Curriculum and Books. That "English for Nusantara," textbook is designed for seventh graders. Meanwhile, "English for Nusantara" develops and builds a syllabus relevant to the recently launched curriculum, the Independent Learning Curriculum.

This study is closely related to previous research that has been conducted on cultural representation in English language teaching materials. Several previous

studies have highlighted the importance of local culture integration in English language learning, especially in the Indonesian educational context. As stated by Elshadelin & Yumarnamto (2020), the representations of cultural content in two English textbooks used in Indonesian contexts. It concludes that there are disparities in the two textbooks' emphasis on the cultures they convey through their written content and visualizations. Representation of global and local cultures is emphasized in the "*Bahasa Inggris*" textbook. Other cultures that do not represent these two main sources are very limited. On the other hand, representations of global and other cultures are available in the "Think" textbook, but Indonesian local culture is not available in that textbook.

Additionally, Ariawan (2020) explained how cultural elements are represented in an English textbook that Indonesian senior high school students are required to use. The theoretical frameworks it utilizes consist of Cortazzi and Jin's categories of culture and Byram's checklist of cultural dimensions. According to the study, Indonesian culture is the most prevalent culture.

Moreover, Riadini & Cahyono (2021) investigated how culture-related aspects are presented in an English senior high school textbook that was produced by the Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture. To assess how well cultural values are represented in the textbook, it utilizes the use of Byram's checklist and Cortazzi & Jin's three sources of cultural information. The results demonstrate that target, source, and foreign cultures are all represented in the textbook, with the most frequent representation being that of source culture.

In addition, the previous study by Jismulatif et al. (2022) explained how foreign and Indonesian cultural content is represented in three English-language junior high school textbooks in Indonesia. Using a multicultural perspective approach, it finds that the overrepresentation of Indonesian culture leads to a deficient representation of aspects from other cultures. The analysis also reveals that the most common dimension in textbooks is the product dimension.

Futhermore, Ulfa (2022) examined the representation of local cultures in the English junior high school textbook in Indonesia. Using Moran's cultural aspects, it discovers that the textbook uses institutions, art forms, places, lives, and intellectual worth in representing local culture. Nevertheless, the investigation was unable to ascertain how other dimensions, such people and practices, were represented.

From the previous studies, it can be seen that there is a need for a deeper understanding of the Indonesian cultural representation, especially in English textbooks in the Independent Learning Curriculum "English for Nusantara" for seventh grade of junior high school. As part of the education curriculum, English textbooks are the main source in learning a foreign language and culture. Therefore, it is important to ensure that these textbooks reflect Indonesian culture accurately and in accordance with the context of students' lives in Indonesia. This study aims to analyze the extent to which the representation of Indonesian culture in English textbooks on the Independent Learning Curriculum, "English for Nusantara" textbook for seventh grade of junior high school can represent the

diversity of Indonesian culture and whether the representation is in accordance with the Independent Learning Curriculum.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting research by focusing on analyzing the representation of Indonesian culture in the "English for Nusantara" textbook aimed for seventh grade of junior high school students. Where this research aims to analyze the representation of Indonesian culture in English textbooks used in the Independent Learning Curriculum. Thus, it is hoped that this research can provide information on the extent to which English textbooks in the Independent Learning Curriculum are able to represent Indonesian local culture and contribute to increasing the understanding and appreciation of Indonesia's younger generation, especially students, of Indonesian local culture, as well as encouraging them to increasingly maintain and preserve the cultural heritage of the Indonesian nation.

### **1.2.Problem of The Study**

Based on the background of the study, the problems of this study is formulated as following:

“How is Indonesian culture represented in the English textbook "English for Nusantara" for seventh grade of junior high school?”

### **1.3.Objective of The Study**

Based on the problems of this study, the problems of this study is formulated as following “To describe the representation of Indonesian culture in

the English textbook "English for Nusantara" for seventh grade of junior high school.

#### **1.4.Scope of The Study**

The scope of this study focus on the Representation of Indonesian Cultural Content from visual illustrations in "English For Nusantara" textbook for seventh grade of junior high school. The visual illustrations focused on comic strip, picture with text, picture without text that find in chapter one until chapter five in "English For Nusantara" textbook.

#### **1.5.Significance of The Study**

The result of this study is expected not only for individual data collection but more advantageous theoretically and practically. It can be described as follows:

##### **1. Theoretically**

The results of this study are expected to provide useful information about the representation of Indonesian culture in English textbooks used in the Independent Learning Curriculum and can be reference for those who are interested in analyzing Indonesian cultural representation in English textbook.

##### **2. Practically**

The researcher expects this research are useful for:



- a). Teachers The results of this study can be useful for teachers to teach students about the types of Indonesian culture presented in the textbook.
- b). Students: Students have more opportunities to increase their knowledge about Indonesian culture.
- c). Other researchers. The results of this study can be a reference for those who want to conduct research on Indonesian cultural content in English textbooks.

