

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a general overview of the research to provide readers with a comprehensive understanding of the study's orientation and framework. It outlines the research background, research problems, research focus, research objectives, research significance, research assumption, research scope, and operational definitions.

### **1.1 Research Background**

Character education has an important role in shaping students' personality, behavior, and moral values. Character education aims to shape positive traits such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect for oneself and others (Hamidah et al., 2022, p. 3585). In the context of education, character development is as important as academic achievement because it helps students grow into responsible, ethical, and socially conscious individuals. According to (Ismail & Imawan, 2023, p. 86), when students face various social and moral challenges in everyday life, character education provides them with the values and attitudes needed to make good decisions and contribute positively to society. Therefore, character education should be an integral part of all educational practices and materials, including Textbook (F. Z. Sari & Ma'rifatullah, 2024, p. 244).

Textbooks are not only a medium for delivering knowledge, but also a tool that can foster good moral values. According to Renette et al. (2021, p. 319),

textbooks serve as the primary source of learning, incorporating supplementary materials, instructional guides, and curriculum based activities, while encouraging student engagement and promoting character development aligned with national education goals. The presence of character education in textbooks is expected to have a positive influence on student behavior both inside and outside the classroom.

In English textbooks, particularly those used in Indonesian Senior High Schools, visual elements such as pictures are usually included to support students' understanding of the material. These pictures are often used to illustrate dialog, describe situations, or represent cultural and social themes (Chandra & Yuliani, 2024, p. 580). Visuals in textbooks have the ability to represent and convey certain values and ideologies implicitly. The existence of pictures as an element in multimodal texts has the potential to influence not only in linguistic aspects, but also in the social and moral dimensions of learners. As stated by Basya et al. (2025, p. 76), illustrations presented through pictures are able to provide concrete representations that support readers' understanding of the concept of character education more comprehensively. Pictures should not be viewed as a neutral component of the textbook. It should be critically examined to understand the character messages it carries. Therefore, investigating the presence and representation of character education values in pictures is important.

In the context of education in Indonesia, character education has become a national priority. The Merdeka Belajar policy designed by the Ministry of Education and Culture is a strategic step to form quality Human Resources (HR) through the application of character values to develop students' thinking skills and creativity (Rosadi & Mun'amah, 2023, p. 47). As stated in the National Education

System Law (UU SISDIKNAS) No. 20 of 2003 article 3 which says; national education functions to develop the ability and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to educate the nation's life, aims to develop the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, noble, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. Meanwhile, moral problems are still found in society such as free sex, drug abuse, theft and even criminal acts committed by teenagers (N. P. Sari et al., 2022, p. 151). This implies that although character education has been promoted, its implementation may still be lacking or ineffective.

Based on this reality, the researcher considers that character education is an important aspect of education that needs more serious attention. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing how character education values are represented through learning media, specifically in English textbooks. To support this research, the researcher conducted a literature review by examining relevant journal articles published within the last ten years (2015–2025). A total of 29 articles were identified. All of them discussed English textbooks used in Indonesia at various levels of education, including elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school. Among these articles, 3 focused on elementary school textbooks, 13 on junior high school textbooks, and 13 on senior high school textbooks.

Since the focus of this research is on English textbooks used at the senior high school level, the researcher only analyzed 13 articles further. From the review, it was found that only 4 articles specifically examined the representation of character education values in English textbooks for senior high schools in

Indonesia. This finding shows that research on character education values in English textbooks for senior high school is still relatively limited.

All four studies employed a qualitative content analysis approach and generally analyzed textbooks developed under the 2013 Curriculum. One notable example is the study conducted by Sucita Mova Lestari, Feny Martina, and Irwan Satria in 2023, which investigated a Grade X English textbook published by Grafindo Media Pratama and based on the 2013 Curriculum. The study found 18 types of character education values present in the textbook, the majority of which (82.14%) were conveyed implicitly. The most frequently emphasized values were creativity, diligence, and discipline (Lestari et al., 2023, p. 11). Nevertheless, it is important to note that the 2013 Curriculum has now been replaced by the Merdeka Curriculum, leading to revisions in the textbooks used in schools in accordance with the new policy. Among the four studies, only the research by Hadna Suryantari focused on an English textbook developed based on the Merdeka Curriculum. This study aimed to explore the representation of the Pancasila Student Profile values within a Grade X English textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. The findings revealed that all dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile were successfully integrated into the textbook content (Suryantari, 2022, p. 242).

This condition indicates that studies on the representation of character education values in English textbooks based on the Merdeka Curriculum have not received much academic attention. To address this gap, the researcher aims to conduct a study on the Grade X English textbook entitled “Bahasa Inggris: Work in Progress untuk SMA/SMK/MA Kelas X,” published by the Ministry of

Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (KEMENDIKBUDRISTEK) in 2022. This research uses a Critical Discourse Analysis approach. Therefore, the researcher considers this study important in order to make a scientific contribution to the development of character education studies and to enrich the literature related to Critical Discourse Analysis in the context of English language learning at the Senior High School level.

### **1.2 Research Problem**

Based on the background of the study, the research problem is formulated as follows: “How are character education values represented in the pictures of tenth grade English textbook?”

### **1.3 Research Focus**

Based on the research problem, this research focuses on analyzing how character education values are represented through the pictures found in tenth-grade English textbooks published by KEMENDIKBUDRISTEK. The study want to know the types of character values illustrated in these pictures, in accordance with Article 2 of the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2018.

### **1.4 Research Objective**

Based on the research problem above, the objective of this research is to describe the Character Education Values represented in the English textbook published by KEMENDIKBUDRISTEK in 2022 for tenth grade, entitled "*Bahasa*

*Inggris: Work in Progress untuk SMA/SMK/MA Kelas X,"* especially in the pictures in the English textbook.

## **1.5 Research Significance**

This research hopefully can provides both theoretical and practical contribution:

### **1.5.1 Theoretical Contribution**

The result of this research hopefully can contributes to the development of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), especially in its application to visual elements within educational contexts. By focusing on how character education values are represented in textbook pictures, the study enriches interdisciplinary knowledge at the intersection of language, education, and visual media. It also supports the advancement of visual literacy and discourse awareness in the field of English language education.

### **1.5.2 Practical Contribution**

Practically, the research offers valuable insights for textbook authors, illustrators, and curriculum developers in designing visual materials that consciously embody and promote character education values. It helps English teachers and educators become more critical and reflective when utilizing visual content in the classroom, aligning picture interpretation with national character-building goals. Additionally, the findings can inform educational policymakers in evaluating the quality and ideological implications of pictures in textbooks. Lastly,



this study can serve as a useful reference for future researchers interested in visual discourse, character education, or educational material analysis.

### **1.6 Research Assumption**

This research is based on the assumption that pictures in educational textbooks are not neutral or merely decorative, but rather serve as a medium for conveying certain ideological messages and values. The researcher assumes that the visual elements in the tenth grade English textbook such as facial expressions, gestures, symbols, clothing, activities, and settings are intentionally or unintentionally embedded with character education values as outlined in the Indonesian Minister of Education Regulation No. 20 of 2018. Furthermore, the researcher assumes that these visual representations can be critically analyzed using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, which enables the uncovering of social practices and ideological meanings behind the pictures.

### **1.7 Research Scope**

This research is limited to the analysis of visual elements found in the tenth grade English textbook titled *"Bahasa Inggris: Work in Progress untuk SMA/SMK/MA Kelas X"*, published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education in 2022. The study specifically focuses on how character education values are represented through pictures, including components such as facial expressions, gestures, symbols, clothing, activities, colors, settings, etc. It does not examine the textual or linguistic content of the textbook. The analysis is conducted using

Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, which includes three stages (description, interpretation, and explanation). The character values explored are based on the 18 values stated in the Indonesian Minister of Education Regulation No. 20 of 2018. Therefore, the scope of this research is clearly defined by its subject matter, data source, and analytical approach.

## **1.8 Operational Definition**

Based on the title of this study, the researcher would like to define the key terms used in this study operationally. The definitions aim to ensure conceptual clarity, prevent potential misinterpretation and explain how each term is specifically applied in the context of the research, so it can help the reader to understand the problem being studied correctly. The key terms as follow:

### **1.8.1 Representation**

Representation is defined in this study as the way character education values are constructed and conveyed through visual elements in the textbook. The analysis of representation focuses on identifying recurring visual themes, patterns, and symbols that illustrate or suggest specific character values, as framed by the CDA approach.

### **1.8.2 Character Education Values**

In this study, character education values are operationalized as specific moral and civic principles visually represented in the textbook pictures. These values include religiousness, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, nationalism, patriotism, appreciation of



achievement, friendliness, love of peace, love of reading, environmental care, social care, and responsibility. The values are recognized through the depiction of actions, interactions, symbols, and contexts within the illustrations.

### **1.8.3 Picture**

Picture refers to observable components of visual elements in textbooks that convey meaning and support the representation of character values. In this study, visual elements include facial expressions, gestures, symbols, activities, colors, clothing, setting within the socio-cultural context, etc. These components become the main indicators to analyze how character education values are presented visually.

### **1.8.4 Tenth Grade English Textbook**

The tenth grade English textbook is the object of analysis in this study. The textbook was published by KEMENDIKBUDRISTEK in 2022 under the title *"Bahasa Inggris: Work in Progress untuk SMA/SMK/MA Kelas X,"*. Operationally, the textbook serves as the main data source from which all visual materials containing potential representations of character values are collected and analyzed.