

The value of multiculturalism in Indonesian language textbooks as an internalization of inclusive education in the AI technology era

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Artificial Intelligence Inclusive Education Textbooks The Value of Multiculturalism	Multicultural education at the senior high school level plays a crucial role in fostering tolerant student characters, promoting respect for diversity, and creating inclusive learning environments. This study aimed to explore the multicultural values within Grade XI Indonesian language textbooks as a form of internalizing inclusive education in the era of artificial intelligence (AI) technology. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative method, this study analysed multicultural values as the research object, with Grade XI Indonesian language textbooks serving as the research subject. Data were gathered using the scrutinizing and note-taking techniques, while the data analysis process involved data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results revealed that the Grade XI Indonesian language textbooks incorporated several multicultural values, including justice, tolerance, equality, and democracy. These values were embedded across three dimensions—knowledge, skills, and attitudes—and were represented through reading texts, exercises, and student reflective activities. These findings confirm that Indonesian language textbooks serve as a strategic medium for internalizing inclusive education. In the AI era, these multicultural values can be implemented more effectively through personalized and inclusive learning. Ultimately, the integration of value-rich textbooks and AI technology supports the creation of an equitable, inclusive education system oriented toward the well-being of all students.

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Introduction

Multicultural education at the senior high school level plays a pivotal role in cultivating student characters characterized by tolerance, inclusivity, and a profound respect for diversity. Despite this imperative, contemporary educational landscapes remain fraught with pervasive instances of school bullying, signaling a persistent underlying deficit in student tolerance. This troubling reality is corroborated by data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2023, which indicates that approximately 25% of female students and 30% of male students in Indonesia report being victims of bullying at least several times a month (OECD, 2023). Such figures underscore the systemic prevalence of harassment within educational institutions. Frequently, these instances of school bullying are rooted in a profound lack of understanding and appreciation for individual differences, whether manifested through culture, religion, ethnicity, or socioeconomic background. When students prove incapable of accepting and

respecting diversity, discriminatory and intolerant behaviors inevitably ensue. Consequently, these challenges establish a compelling imperative for implementing robust pedagogical frameworks centered on multicultural values, thereby equipping students with the critical competencies necessary to navigate pluralism and internalize inclusive attitudes.

Conceptually, multiculturalism is inextricably linked to social justice dimensions such as human rights, citizenship, identity, recognition, difference, liberty, autonomy, choice, and egalitarianism (Sohrabi, 2019). Within pedagogical contexts, it encompasses the systematic recognition and appreciation of the diverse cultural, ethnic, and religious strata present within society. Thus, multicultural education is fundamentally designed to foster tolerance, mutual respect, and intercultural understanding among learners (Zamroni, 2011). In the Indonesian context specifically, Panuntun & Aziz, (2023) posit that multicultural education is directed not merely toward facilitating academic comprehension, but more crucially toward reinforcing pluralistic consciousness and humanistic attitudes through structured learning. Nevertheless, the empirical reality on the ground—characterized by the unchecked recurrence of bullying at the high school level—indicates that the internalisation of these multicultural values has yet to achieve optimal efficacy. Ultimately, this discrepancy raises critical questions regarding the current effectiveness of multicultural instruction within the established curriculum.

The Kurikulum Merdeka (Independent Curriculum) heavily emphasizes the implementation of inclusive education that respects diversity and individual differences. This educational paradigm is rooted in the conviction that every student possesses an equitable right to learning opportunities, regardless of their background or personal conditions. Indeed, inclusive education functions as a system that guarantees equal opportunities for all children—including those with special needs or exceptional talents—to learn collectively within an equitable and egalitarian environment (Pytanza et al., 2022). The essence of inclusive education lies in the deliberate effort to cultivate safe, supportive, and non-discriminatory learning spaces that accommodate variations in culture, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, and special educational needs. Consequently, schools serve not merely as centers for knowledge transfer, but as vital vehicles for cultivating humanistic values such as tolerance, empathy, and respect for diversity. This objective aligns closely with endeavors to internalize multicultural values throughout the pedagogical process, a practice that is dynamically facilitated through various instructional media, including textbooks.

Indonesian language textbooks hold a highly strategic position in instilling the values of diversity (kebinekaan) and inclusivity. As the national unifying language, Indonesian possesses vast potential to serve as a conduit for shaping students' multicultural character. Prior research by Widasmara, (2012) examined multicultural aspects within junior high school Indonesian language textbooks and found that these materials successfully incorporated core multicultural values, such as the recognition of cultural plurality and the development of planetary responsibility. Similarly, Ramanta & Samsuri (2020) analyzed multicultural dimensions within Senior High School Pancasila and Civic Education (PPKn) textbooks, revealing an integration of values encompassing ethnohistory, religious and ethnocultural differences, tolerance, diversity, and human rights. At the primary level, research by Nafi'ah & Masyhuda (2021) demonstrated that elementary school textbooks already embed multicultural values such as tolerance, mutual cooperation (gotong royong), and respect for diversity. However, these studies remain confined to the primary and lower secondary levels, leaving an empirical void regarding how such values are operationalized within high school textbooks, which demand a higher complexity of material. Furthermore, while Ningtyas et al. (2023) identified tolerance and humanistic values within Grade XI Indonesian History textbooks, their scope was strictly limited to historical pedagogy and excluded the broader linguistic domain of Indonesian language textbooks. Crucially, literature linking the role of textbooks in fostering multicultural character with the urgent need to mitigate school bullying remains scarce, despite recent PISA data underlining the alarming prevalence of bullying in Indonesia (OECD, 2023). This specific empirical gap constitutes the primary focus that the present study seeks to address.

Textbooks, therefore, represent a strategic instrument for fostering an inclusive, humanity-oriented educational framework. Nevertheless, current literature exhibits a distinct gap, particularly concerning the comprehensive analysis of upper secondary Indonesian language textbooks. These materials function as critical media for character development, utilizing reading texts, discourses, and literacy activities to deepen student understanding of diversity. Through reading, deliberating, and reflecting upon the diverse perspectives presented within Indonesian language textbooks, students are positioned to develop empathy, tolerance, and inclusivity. Ultimately, reinforcing the multicultural values embedded within these textbooks offers significant potential to mitigate discriminatory attitudes and systematically prevent bullying behavior within educational institutions.

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) technology has precipitated significant transformations within the educational realm, fundamentally reshaping pedagogical methodologies, instructional media, and accessibility paradigms. In this context, AI facilitates a deeper student

understanding of diverse perspectives while concurrently expanding access to information regarding cultural pluralism. According to Hwang et al. (2020), AI-driven learning systems that offer personalized feedback and adaptive content have proven highly effective in enhancing student engagement and academic outcomes, thereby demonstrating the efficacy of AI in supporting inclusive and equitable learning environments. Furthermore, the deployment of AI technology plays an essential role in reinforcing educational equity and inclusion, particularly through the development of systems capable of detecting and mitigating biases within instructional materials. This capability is corroborated by Nurnaningsih & Salehudin, (2025) whose research indicates that AI-based media in early childhood education supports personalized learning along with linguistic and social development, creating an inclusive learning environment through adaptive features such as voice recognition and interactive visualizations. Within the domain of Indonesian language instruction, this technological utility is concretized through the integration of quick response (QR) codes linked to AI-powered learning platforms. By utilizing these barcodes, students can seamlessly access enrichment materials and adaptive exercises. Consequently, AI functions not merely as a pedagogical innovation, but as a critical instrument for reinforcing the internalization of multicultural values and inclusive education through Indonesian language textbooks.

A critical review of the existing literature reveals a distinct research gap: there remains a lack of comprehensive investigation that integrates the analysis of multicultural values in Grade XI Indonesian language textbooks with their relevance to strengthening inclusive education in the era of AI technology. Previous studies have predominantly focused on the utilization of technology purely as an instructional medium, failing to connect it with multicultural value content. Conversely, research regarding multicultural values in textbooks is generally limited to basic content identification, neglecting its broader relevance to inclusive education within an AI-driven landscape. To address this deficiency, the present study focuses not only on analyzing the multicultural values embedded within Indonesian language textbooks but also on contextualizing them within the framework of bolstering inclusive education in the AI era. The findings of this research are projected to offer a significant scholarly contribution by providing an integrative perspective that bridges instructional content, character formation, and the strategic deployment of educational technology. Conceptually, this study can serve as a foundational framework for developing instructional materials and designing an Indonesian language curriculum that is inclusive, adaptive, and highly responsive to student needs in the technological era.

This study aims to analyze the multicultural values embedded within Grade XI Indonesian language textbooks and evaluate their relevance as a medium for internalizing inclusive education in the era of artificial intelligence (AI) technology. The focus is specifically directed toward Grade XI textbooks due to their strategic role in the upper secondary educational continuum. At this developmental stage, Grade XI students have attained a more mature level of cognitive and affective development, rendering them better equipped to comprehend and internalize the complex social, moral, and multicultural values integrated into the instructional materials. Consequently, the selection of these specific textbooks is expected to provide a more profound understanding of their capacity to support the internalization of inclusive education within the school environment. Beyond merely identifying the representation of multicultural values within the textbooks, this inquiry also seeks to explore how the integration of AI technology can reinforce the internalization of inclusive education, ensuring it occurs more effectively and equitably. Ultimately, this research is projected to offer a tangible contribution to the development of instructional materials that are equitable, inclusive, and contextualized within the digital era, while simultaneously playing a pivotal role in cultivating learners who possess high social awareness and a strong sense of humanitarian responsibility.

Method

This study utilizes a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the multicultural values contained within the Grade XI Indonesian language textbook titled *Cerdas Cergas Berbahasa dan Bersastra Indonesia* (Marwati & Waskitaningtyas, 2021). The research subjects are the multicultural values embedded within the book, whereas the research object is the overall content of the textbook. The analysis is focused on four operational indicators: the value of justice, the value of equality, the value of democracy, and the value of tolerance. These four indicators serve as a coding guide to identify and categorize text fragments that represent multicultural values.

The unit of analysis is established at three levels: (1) the word/sentence unit containing statements or terms relevant to the indicators; (2) the paragraph unit presenting narratives, dialogues, or expositions containing values; and (3) visual elements/illustrations representing specific cultural aspects, social relationships, or attitudes. The selection of these units of analysis is intended to ensure that the identification of values captures both brief utterances and broader narrative contexts.

Data collection utilizes the scrutinizing and note-taking technique following a systematic procedure. The first step involves an initial reading (skimming) to map the textbook structure and determine chapters or sections that potentially contain multicultural values. The second step is a close reading of the selected sections to locate quotations or elements relevant to the indicators. Each finding is recorded in a structured log sheet with columns for: page number, unit of analysis, identified indicator (value of justice/value of equality/value of democracy/value of tolerance), original quotation, and a brief interpretative note. Subsequently, the collected data are documented in an analytical table to facilitate the processes of data reduction, categorization, and reporting.

The research instrument is the researcher themselves acting as the human instrument. Operationally, the researcher developed a log sheet containing the operational definition of each indicator and examples of coding criteria. First, the researcher coded all potentially relevant data segments; these codes were subsequently re-examined and refined during a second round of coding. The researcher also wrote analytical memos explaining the rationale for code selection and preliminary interpretations for each ambiguous case. To mitigate subjectivity, an inter-coder check was conducted: one researcher independently coded 20% of the sample; if discrepancies were found, the researcher and the peer discussed them until a consensus was reached. Additionally, the researcher periodically engaged in self-reflection to document personal assumptions and the mitigation steps taken to enhance the objectivity of the analysis.

Data analysis followed the stages outlined by Miles and Huberman: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the data reduction stage, the researcher filtered and summarized relevant quotations, categorized text fragments according to the indicators, and eliminated duplicative or irrelevant quotations. Data display was conducted through the log sheets and analytical tables. The conclusion drawing stage was performed by analyzing the frequency and patterns of each indicator's occurrence, comparing results across different sections of the book, and cross-referencing the findings with multicultural theoretical frameworks and related literature.

The validity of the study was evaluated through detailed triangulation. Source triangulation was applied by comparing findings from various sections of the book (instructional materials, literary texts, exercises) to evaluate the consistency of value representation. Methodological triangulation was conducted by combining the scrutinizing-note-taking technique, documentation tables, and inter-coder checks to ensure coding validity. Theoretical triangulation was applied by interpreting the findings through more than one theoretical perspective to mitigate the risk of a single interpretation. Furthermore, two experts in multicultural education were requested to review the results of the analysis to provide independent feedback (expert judgment). All analytical decisions, inter-coder discussions, memos, and expert feedback were stored in an audit trail file as evidence of transparency and to support the credibility and replicability of the study.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study indicate that within the Grade XI Indonesian language textbook titled *Cerdas Cergas Berbahasa dan Bersastra Indonesia untuk SMA/SMK Kelas XI*, authored by Marwati & Waskitaningtyas (2021), there are four distinct types of multicultural values. These four values consist of 41 data points for justice, 38 data points for equality, 49 data points for democracy, and 27 data points for tolerance. These values are embedded across three dimensions—namely knowledge, skills, and attitudes—and are represented in the form of reading texts, exercises, and student reflective activities. However, the distribution of these multicultural values is uneven, with the highest concentration occurring within reading texts. Nevertheless, all four multicultural values support the process of internalizing inclusive education. The breakdown of the multicultural values present in the textbook is elaborated below.

Multicultural Values

A. The Values of Justice

Justice is conceptualized as a virtuous disposition that encourages individuals to contribute to the collective good and achieve societal well-being through an orderly social life (Abdollah & Mohsen, 2020). Based on the analysis of multicultural values within the Grade XI Indonesian language textbook titled *Cerdas Cergas Berbahasa dan Bersastra Indonesia untuk SMA/SMK Kelas XI*, 41 data points representing the value of justice were identified. These values of justice are embedded across three dimensions—namely knowledge, skills, and attitudes—and are represented through reading texts, exercises, and student reflective activities.

One manifestation of justice within the textbook is the value of social justice. Social justice refers to the equitable distribution of wealth, resources, and opportunities to enhance societal well-being, ensuring that liberty and equality are upheld as fundamental human rights (Molle, 2018). This concept encompasses fair

treatment and the impartial distribution of social benefits, while actively addressing issues of oppression, privilege, and power (Perkins & Rodriguez, 2021; Simmons, 2025). Furthermore, social justice in education emphasizes the recognition of individual diversity and the provision of equal opportunities to ensure that every learner can participate and develop optimally within social life (Datta, 2021).

The value of justice within the textbook is exemplified in the short story *Malaikat Juga Tahu* (Even Angels Know), which highlights the life of an individual with autism, maternal love, the meaning of sincere love, and the complex struggle among justice, sacrifice, and life choices. The following excerpt from the short story illustrates the value of justice:

"Jangan bicara soal adil dan masuk akal. Aturan kamu, aturan kita, tidak berlaku bagi dia... kamu tidak tinggal di rumah ini. Kamu tidak mengenalnya seperti Mami." (Marwati & Waskitaningtyas, 2021)

The excerpt highlights the existence of dilemmas surrounding justice within a family structure. Within the context of this narrative, justice is questioned because a specific character receives different treatment compared to other family members. However, the story also asserts that this exception arises not from favoritism, but rather from the character's distinct special needs. This dynamic reflects the notion that authentic justice does not always entail identical treatment, but must also account for individual conditions, limitations, and humanitarian considerations. This perspective aligns with the findings of Acar & Sivis (2023) which demonstrate that justice is not invariably conceptualized as equal distribution, but rather as the provision of treatment that accommodates varying individual needs.

In addition to the value of justice, the Grade XI Indonesian language textbook also encompasses themes of injustice. Injustice within the textbook manifests in relation to procedural violations in legal or investigative handling. This form of injustice is reflected in reading texts—specifically short stories—that emphasize breaches of procedural justice during the handling of a case, wherein the actions taken deviate from established regulatory frameworks. The following excerpts illustrate this theme:

"Aku dituduh melatih anak-anak menjadi pemberontak hanya karena mengajari mereka mengaji..." (Marwati & Waskitaningtyas, 2021)

"Dia istri pemberontak! Hanya itu yang kutangkap dari bahasa Indonesianya yang kacau-balau lagi pelan." (Marwati & Waskitaningtyas, 2021)

The excerpt is drawn from the short story titled *Mengapa Mereka Berdoa kepada Pohon* (Why They Pray to Trees) by Faisal Oddang. This quotation demonstrates a severe violation of justice, wherein arrests, detentions, and executions are carried out entirely without due process. In this scenario, "accusations" are utilized as pretexts for execution, completely bypassing investigation, legal defense, or formal trial. This narrative illustrates how absolute power is wielded to assert dominance and establish institutionalized injustice.

Based on the content analysis, the Grade XI Indonesian language textbook incorporates dimensions of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These dimensions aim not only to train linguistic competencies but also to instill core life values, including the concepts of justice and injustice. The representation of justice within the book conveys that fairness does not invariably equate to identical treatment, but must thoughtfully account for individual conditions, limitations, and humanitarian sentiments. Consequently, students do not merely extract passive lessons from the value of justice within the text; they also critically engage with the depictions of injustice. The theme of injustice in the Grade XI Indonesian language textbook illustrates breaches of procedural justice, as reflected in punitive actions like arrests, detentions, and executions executed outside any legal framework. By exposing students to these values, the curriculum enables them to comprehend the structural forms of injustice that occur in society and their subsequent ramifications. Ultimately, pedagogy that integrates issues of justice and injustice through diverse learning experiences can effectively help students develop critical consciousness, social empathy, and a sustained commitment to realizing a more equitable and democratic society (Egan-Simon, 2022).

B. The Value of Equality

Equality can be conceptualized as a foundational ideal born out of resistance against practices of dominance and discrimination within society. It represents human dignity and worth, which are manifested through the fulfillment of justice and well-being across all facets of life (Barir, 2014). This concept asserts that every individual possesses an inherent right to equal treatment, free from distinctions based on social class, status, economic condition, race, ethnicity, or religion. Within the framework of multicultural education, equality entails not merely the granting of identical rights, but also the systemic recognition of diversity, the eradication of discrimination, and the provision of equitable opportunities for every

individual to participate and develop optimally (Abacioglu et al., 2023; Banks & Banks, 2021; Elias & Mansouri, 2023).

The content analysis of the Indonesian language textbook revealed 38 data points representing the value of equality, embedded across three dimensions—namely knowledge, skills, and attitudes—and represented through reading texts, exercises, and student reflective activities. This value of equality underscores that all human beings, irrespective of socio-economic, cultural, racial, or religious differences, possess equal status, standing, and dignity. The inclusion of equality values within reading texts serves as a vital instrument for student character education, specifically by instilling mutual respect, fostering solidarity, and cultivating the awareness that differences must never be leveraged as a justification for discrimination or oppression. The presence of the value of equality within the textbook is illustrated by the following excerpt:

“Perempuan di pekarangan itu tahu sesuatu yang orang lain tidak. Abang adalah pendengar yang luar biasa... Ia pun menyadari... sahabat yang luar biasa.” (Marwati & Waskitaningtyas, 2021)

The excerpt demonstrates that despite his limitations, the male character (Abang) is treated as an equal individual who can serve as an excellent interlocutor and listener, rather than being looked down upon. Although the character Abang is depicted as an individual with mental disabilities, he is continuously treated with equal dignity by his family and those closest to him. This narrative choice indicates that the Indonesian language textbook incorporates the internalization of equality values, specifically regarding the attainment of equal human rights to be treated with decency. Furthermore, another dimension of the value of equality within the textbook is illustrated by the following excerpt:

“Aku tak mau jadi wanita pemenuh kuota! Sebuah hinaan atas karya perempuan. Mana ada karya diukur dari tampang!” (Marwati & Waskitaningtyas, 2021)

The quotation highlights the struggle of a female character who vehemently rejects physical discrimination. The presence of a patriarchal culture that discriminates against women generates gender inequalities that marginalize them, thereby restricting women's access to various domains, including education and participation in the public sphere. The pervasive impact of this patriarchal culture necessitates systematic changes to achieve genuine gender equality in society (Herdania, 2025; Syahputra et al., 2021).

Based on the aforementioned excerpts, the Indonesian language textbook functions not only as a tool for practicing linguistic skills but also as a vital medium for constructing awareness regarding the importance of equality. Through the textual content, students learn that equality encompasses more than just identical treatment; it fundamentally requires the recognition of differences, respect for the dignity of every individual, and the provision of equitable opportunities for all. Consequently, the inclusion of equality values within the textbook can foster mutual respect, promote the acceptance of diversity, and encourage students to practice fairness in their daily lives.

C. The Value of Democracy

Democracy is characterized by the broad participation of citizens, equality of rights, freedom of expression, and respect for human rights as fundamental principles (Dahl, 2001). Within educational contexts, schools can serve as arenas for democratic practice through dialogue, respect for differences, and the active participation of learners (Dewey, 2024). Through linguistic activities, students learn to articulate opinions, respect alternative perspectives, and construct arguments; thus, the Indonesian language textbook functions not only as a tool for linguistic skill development but also as a medium for internalizing democratic values.

Previous research demonstrates that critical-literacy-based Indonesian language instruction helps learners comprehend both linguistic aspects and socio-cultural contexts, while simultaneously fostering reflection, dialogue, and the democratic evaluation of information (Mukti et al., 2025). Furthermore, Sofiyatunnisa & Susanto (2025) found that the Kurikulum Merdeka Indonesian language textbooks incorporate critical thinking elements of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila (Pancasila Student Profile), such as acquiring and processing information, analyzing and evaluating reasoning, and reflecting on one's own thoughts. These findings align with Lyiscott et al. (2023) and Graf et al. (2024) which show that discussion activities, reasoning regarding social issues, and students' active engagement in learning can reinforce critical thinking skills, participation, and competencies that support a democratic lifestyle. This evidence confirms that Indonesian language textbooks serve not merely as literacy tools, but as vital mechanisms for internalizing democratic values. In the AI era, democratic values become increasingly pertinent as they encourage students to cultivate critical thinking, evaluatively process digital information, and participate responsibly in digital interactions (Ng et al., 2021; UNESCO, 2023).

The content analysis of the Indonesian language textbook revealed 49 data points representing the value of democracy, embedded across three dimensions—namely knowledge, skills, and attitudes—and represented through reading texts, exercises, and student reflective activities. The textbook incorporates materials closely tied to social, cultural, and environmental realities, thereby not only developing language skills but also nurturing a critical disposition and openness. Through reading, writing, and discussion activities, learners acquire the capacity to think rationally, respect diverse opinions, and participate actively in learning, all of which constitute core democratic practices (Tilaar, 2017). Consequently, language learning serves not only as a means of communication but also as a vehicle for shaping democratic character and a participatory school culture (Winataputra, 2016).

The manifestation of the value of democracy within the Grade XI Senior High School Indonesian language textbook is illustrated by the following excerpt:

“Program ini sekaligus mengajak masyarakat memasuki cara hidup rasional dan terbuka terhadap perubahan.” (Marwati & Waskitaningtyas, 2021)

The excerpt demonstrates that democracy encourages society to be critical, rational, and open to new ideas and technologies. Within the context of school-level education, this quotation reflects democratic values, as learners are invited to engage in critical thinking, appreciate novel ideas, and foster a tolerant disposition toward the diverse perspectives that arise during the learning process. In addition to the textual excerpt discussed above, the value of democracy is also identified within examples of paragraph development patterns. This democratic value is illustrated as follows:

“Pemerintah lewat Kementerian Pertanian berniat menambah luas lahan sawah guna menciptakan ketahanan pangan nasional.” (Marwati & Waskitaningtyas, 2021)

The quotation highlights governmental efforts to reinforce national self-reliance in the agricultural sector. The expansion of paddy fields is viewed as a strategic measure to guarantee the availability of staple foods, mitigate import dependency, and maintain socio-economic stability. From a democratic standpoint, this reflects the state's responsibility to fulfill the basic needs of its citizens, while concurrently inviting the public to comprehend the importance of collective action for the common good.

Within the context of school education, this excerpt can serve as material for critical learning in the Indonesian language subject, particularly when analyzing reading texts themed around food security. Teachers can facilitate discussions regarding the relationship between government policies and societal needs. Consequently, students not only practice linguistic competencies but also learn to cultivate democratic consciousness in the form of social awareness, a sense of responsibility, and the understanding that national development necessitates the active participation of all citizens. In this manner, text-based learning frameworks are capable of bridging democratic theory with the daily realities of the students' lives.

D. The Value of Tolerance

Tolerance is defined as the capacity to respect and appreciate the differences of others, even when individual perspectives diverge. This definition aligns with the instructional material within the textbook, which invites students not only to comprehend diversity but also to actively appreciate differences as a form of national wealth. Through stories, poetry, and articles, learners are guided to understand that tolerance serves as the cornerstone for establishing a harmonious and democratic society. Furthermore, the application of tolerance values within this textbook is operationalized through collaborative activities such as discussions and debates. This finding is corroborated by Rodiyana et al. (2023) who demonstrate that learning environments providing space for students to engage in open discussions and articulate their opinions can effectively cultivate tolerant dispositions toward diverse viewpoints while enhancing mutual respect for others.

The content analysis of the Indonesian language textbook revealed 27 data points representing the value of tolerance. These data points are embedded across three dimensions—namely knowledge, skills, and attitudes—and are represented through reading texts, exercises, and student reflective activities. One manifestation of the value of tolerance within the Grade XI Senior High School Indonesian language textbook is located in chapter four, activity one, within a short story titled *Malaikat Juga Tahu* (Even Angels Know) by Dee Lestari. The following excerpt illustrates this value of tolerance:

“Perempuan itu bisa bebas bercerita masalah percintaannya yang berjubel dan selalu gagal. Tidak seperti kebanyakan orang, Abang tidak berusaha memberikan solusi.” (Marwati & Waskitaningtyas, 2021)

This excerpt demonstrates a deeply sincere manifestation of tolerance. The female character in the narrative feels completely at ease disclosing her tumultuous romantic complications to Abang for a single,

straightforward reason: Abang never judges her or attempts to offer unsolicited advice. In contrast to most people, who often immediately propose solutions or evaluate a relationship, Abang accepts her stories unconditionally. He responds in his own unique manner, such as by discussing music or humming a melody. This represents the true essence of tolerance—namely, the willingness to accept, listen to, and comprehend the experiences of others without judgment. Such a disposition is critical within inclusive education because it assists learners in developing empathy, social consciousness, and an appreciation for individual diversity (Rosepti, 2022). This attitude is highly vital within an inclusive educational framework, wherein each learner is valued as an individual with distinct communication styles and emotional needs.

Furthermore, another compelling aspect emerges from the perspective of the female character, who deeply appreciates Abang's method of communication. This attitude demonstrates that respect for individuality constitutes an integral component of multiculturalism. This aligns with research conducted by (Widiatmaka & Hidayat, 2022) which posits that multicultural education enables learners to appreciate diverse forms of expression, backgrounds, and modes of thinking, thereby fostering a tolerant character within the school environment. In tandem with this view, Umar & Nurrohman (2024) assert that multicultural education plays a pivotal role in developing tolerant attitudes through the habituation of communal living, respect for diverse backgrounds, and the instillation of mutual respect during daily social interactions. Paradoxically, alongside the value of tolerance, themes of anti-tolerance are also present within the reading selections of the Grade XI senior high school textbook. The manifestation of anti-tolerance within the textbook is illustrated as follows:

"Mereka bertengkar, seperti hendak berbunuh-bunuh, karena beda pilihan keyakinan politik, antara Moskow dan Peking." (Marwati & Waskitaningtyas, 2021)

The aforementioned excerpt reflects a form of anti-tolerance born out of ideological divergence. The conflict, depicted as nearly escalating into physical violence, underscores how fanatical adherence to political views can fracture human relationships. The inability to accommodate differing political beliefs results in the erasure of dialogue, even transforming differences into pretexts for mutual harm. This constitutes a dangerous form of anti-tolerance, as it prioritizes hostility over the understanding and appreciation of diversity. Within pedagogical practices, teachers can utilize both textual examples as instruments for reflective discussion to help learners comprehend the respective impacts of tolerance and intolerance, develop empathy, and appreciate diverse perspectives within an inclusive classroom environment (Widiatmaka & Hidayat, 2022).

Multicultural Values Indonesian Language Textbooks as an Internalization of Inclusive Education in the Era of Artificial Intelligence Technology

Inclusive education represents a pedagogical system that guarantees equitable learning opportunities for all students—including children with special needs—to develop personally, socially, and intellectually within a shared environment (Baihaqi & Sugiarmin, 2006; Pytanza et al., 2022). Furthermore, inclusive education plays a pivotal role in fostering empathy, respect, and an appreciation for diversity, thereby supporting the creation of a more inclusive and mutually respectful society (Díaz-León et al., 2024; Pozas et al., 2023; Saporno, 2025). Consequently, the internalization of inclusive education needs to be systematically pursued, one method being through instructional materials that embed multicultural values. This ensures that learners become habituated to thinking, behaving, and acting fairly, respecting differences, and upholding humanitarian values within societal life.

The textbook *Cerdas Cergas Berbahasa dan Bersastra Indonesia untuk SMA/SMK Kelas XI* functions not merely as a tool for language instruction, but also as a vehicle for character development that actively supports inclusive education. The findings of this analysis demonstrate that four distinct multicultural values—namely justice, democracy, equality, and tolerance—are integrated within the learning materials, reading texts, exercises, and reflective activities. These values serve a vital function in shaping students into individuals capable of respecting differences, which constitutes an essential foundation for the realization of inclusive education.

Nevertheless, the distribution of multicultural values within the textbook remains uneven, as they are predominantly presented through reading texts rather than through exercises and reflective activities. This finding indicates that the textbook still tends to prioritize the cognitive dimension over the deep internalization of values. In contrast, effective multicultural education must extend beyond a conceptual comprehension of diversity to actively encourage reflection and the practical application of values in daily life (Banks, 1993). As a consequence of this imbalance, learners may potentially grasp multicultural concepts theoretically without necessarily implementing them in their social behavior. Moreover, if multicultural values appear primarily in textual forms without corresponding activities that stimulate reflection and social practice, students' opportunities to cultivate tolerant, inclusive dispositions and a

respect for differences will remain sub-optimal. Therefore, a deliberate equilibrium among reading texts, exercises, and reflective activities is required to ensure that multicultural values are internalized more optimally, thereby effectively contributing to student character formation.

The disparity in the distribution of multicultural values within textbooks can be mitigated through the utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which has the capacity to facilitate more personalized, interactive, and inclusive learning experiences. AI supports the internalization of multicultural values through the provision of content that is adaptive, interactive, and culturally relevant, while remaining responsive to learner diversity (Dwi & Alif, 2024; Sivaci & Hakkoymaz, 2026). AI enables the seamless integration of multicultural values across all facets of learning—not solely through reading texts, but also within adaptive exercises and digital reflective activities. AI-driven learning systems that offer personalized feedback and adaptive content recommendations have been empirically shown to enhance student engagement and optimize learning outcomes (Hwang et al., 2020). Consequently, the deployment of technologies such as educational chatbots, AI Digital Textbooks (AIDTs), automated translators, and adaptive learning platforms can serve as a strategic mechanism to fortify the internalization of multicultural values within Indonesian language instruction (Assefa, 2026; Elliott & Kim, 2025).

The value of justice embedded within the textbook constitutes a core tenet of multiculturalism, inextricably linked to the internalization of inclusive education, which aims to cultivate attitudes of respect for diversity, equality, and humanity. The research findings indicate that the Indonesian language textbook embodies the value of justice, thereby teaching respect for diversity and the provision of equitable opportunities for all individuals. These results are congruent with studies demonstrating that the integration of multicultural values—including justice and equality—can heighten students' consciousness regarding the appreciation of differences and support the cultivation of an inclusive school culture (Sudrajat et al., 2025; Widjaja et al., 2025). From a multicultural paradigm, justice does not invariably equate to identical treatment; rather, it entails the provision of tailored support commensurate with individual needs. The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI)—via educational chatbots, automated translators, and AI Digital Textbooks (AIDTs)—substantiates this principle by delivering adaptive and personalized learning experiences tailored to the cognitive abilities, needs, and backgrounds of learners. This technological mediation fosters more equitable learning opportunities and a profoundly inclusive educational environment (Elliott & Kim, 2025). AI-driven learning systems enable students to receive differentiated pedagogical support aligned with their specific literacy levels, linguistic proficiencies, or special educational needs. Ultimately, this paradigm allows students to internalize the concept that justice fundamentally requires the provision of individualized support to ensure that everyone attains equitable learning opportunities.

The value of equality serves as an essential foundation in inclusive education, as it asserts that every learner possesses equal rights, opportunities, and access to education without discrimination. Inclusive education represents the concrete realization of this value by providing equitable learning opportunities for all students, free from discrimination based on specific differences or limitations, to cultivate a learning environment that supports equity, recognizes cultural values, and actively engages all students throughout the instructional process (Azwar, 2024; Nadhiroh & Ahmadi, 2024). Within the framework of AI-driven instruction, the internalization of equality values can be reinforced by providing materials and media that fairly represent various social groups, such as women, minority groups, and persons with disabilities. AI technologies, including AI image generation and adaptive learning platforms, enable all learners to gain equitable educational access tailored to their specific needs and characteristics, thereby fostering an awareness of the paramount importance of respecting equal rights and human dignity.

In addition to the value of equality, the value of democracy is also identified within the Indonesian language textbook, which integrates the development of linguistic competencies with democratic character formation through discussions, argumentation, collaborative projects, and reflection on socio-cultural issues. Through these activities, learners acquire the capacity to articulate their opinions politely, respect alternative viewpoints, and build mutual consensus, thereby allowing democratic values such as tolerance, responsibility, and active participation to be internalized during the learning process (Sya'bani & Kholidya, 2023). Furthermore, the value of democracy is strongly linked to inclusive education, as it fosters a learning environment that upholds solidarity, equality, freedom of expression, and deliberative decision-making (Setyowati, 2015). In the context of AI-based learning, the internalization of democratic values can be strengthened through virtual discussion simulations, AI-driven debates, and digital text analysis, which enable students to critically explore diverse socio-cultural perspectives. The deployment of AI also assists students in developing digital literacy skills, critical thinking, and sensitivity toward a diversity of perspectives, which form the bedrock of democratic participation in a multicultural society (Dwi & Alif, 2024). Consequently, the integration of AI not only reinforces language proficiency but also consolidates

the internalization of democratic values as an integral part of an inclusive education paradigm that honors diversity and the participation of all learners.

Furthermore, the value of tolerance was also identified within the textbook. The value of tolerance constitutes a critical aspect of student character formation, particularly within the context of Indonesia's pluralistic society. The integration of tolerance values within inclusive education also reinforces the creation of a school culture that respects diversity. The utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI) can strengthen the internalization of tolerance values through the presentation of multicultural content, cross-cultural dialogue simulations, and digital visual media that depict cultural diversity more concretely. Technologies such as AI image generation and digital visual platforms enable learners to comprehend diverse cultural expressions and alternative perspectives, thereby fostering an open-minded disposition and appreciation for differences. This finding aligns with research demonstrating that AI-driven digital visual platforms are capable of expanding cultural horizons and enhancing students' multicultural understanding (Ward et al., 2025). Consequently, the deployment of AI not only supports language instruction but also serves as an effective mechanism for nurturing tolerance as one of the core values within inclusive education.

The multicultural values identified within the Indonesian language textbook are also inextricably linked to school bullying prevention efforts, as they encourage students to respect cultural, ethnic, religious, and socio-economic diversity. In this study, values such as tolerance, equality, empathy, and respect for differences are represented through various texts and learning activities that can assist in reducing prejudice and discriminatory attitudes. Moreover, the representation of diverse characters and social experiences within the textbook can cultivate empathy and develop students' capacities to understand the perspectives of others, which is vital for constructing positive social relationships and mitigating tendencies toward bullying behavior. Students who possess a robust understanding of diversity and strong empathetic dispositions tend to be more capable of accepting differences and avoiding behaviors that harm others. Therefore, textbooks function not merely as sources of knowledge, but as vital instruments for internalizing multicultural values that support the creation of a school culture that is inclusive, safe, and free from bullying (Banks, 1993; UNESCO, 2019). The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) can reinforce the internalization of these values by facilitating learning experiences that are more adaptive, interactive, and responsive to student diversity. Consequently, the convergence of multiculturalism and AI technology holds significant potential as an effective strategy for constructing an inclusive school culture while concurrently preventing the emergence of bullying behaviors.

Conclusion

The textbook *Cerdas Cergas Berbahasa dan Bersastra Indonesia Kelas XI* incorporates four multicultural values—namely justice, equality, democracy, and tolerance—which are represented through reading texts, exercises, and reflective activities. This finding indicates that the textbook functions not only as a tool for language instruction but also as a medium for internalizing inclusive education, which assists learners in respecting differences, upholding humanitarian values, and rejecting discrimination. To fortify the internalization of these values, Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology can be concretely integrated into Indonesian language instruction through AI-based adaptive learning that tailors material to individual student needs, reflective chatbots that guide students in reflecting on the values of justice, equality, democracy, and tolerance after reading a text, and multicultural digital simulations that enable students to interact with diverse social and cultural perspectives. Consequently, the collaboration between the textbook and AI not only enhances the effectiveness of language learning but also supports the realization of education that is more inclusive, participatory, and appreciative of diversity.

Declarations

- Author contribution** : Sakinah Isna Firmani was responsible for the overall research project. She also led the manuscript writing and collaboration with the other authors. Diah Rahma Cahya Agustyowati participated in data collection and translation. Fathul Hidayati and Ruli Nur Safitri revised the manuscript. All four authors approved the final manuscript.
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