MORAL VALUES FOUND IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOK: AN ANALYSIS OF "WHENENGLISH RINGS A BELL" FOR SEVENTH GRADE

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ABSTRACT

An investigation into the incorporation of ethical principles into the seventh-grade English textbook "When English Rings a Bell" that is utilized in Indonesian junior high schools is the focus of this qualitative study research. The research investigates the ways in which moral issues are quietly communicated through the textual and visual components of the textbook. Critical discourse and visual analysis are utilized in the investigation. This project aims to shed light on methods that can be utilized to teach moral education and cultivate values literacy through the use of textbooks. A seamless integration of moral ideals related to social awareness, environmental ethics, and gender stereotypes is revealed by the findings. Positive social standards, prosocial behaviors, empathy, egalitarianism, and ecological stewardship are all promoted through the visual and verbal descriptions. In this article, we address the pedagogical and curricular consequences of the crucial role that textbooks play in imparting moral viewpoints to students in order to mold their worldviews and build abilities in critical thinking, cultural awareness, and moral reasoning. For the purpose of fostering ethical citizenship and character education, the study comes to the conclusion that doing a thorough analysis of the moral elements that are present in textbooks might yield insights.

Keywords: *Moral values, English textbook, social awareness, environmental awareness, gender stereotype*

A. INTRODUCTION

According to Pratama and Retnawati (2018), textbooks have been an indispensable component of education in the classroom for a substantial amount of time. They have been that way because they have provided students with the skills, resources, and knowledge that have enabled them to achieve academic success. In spite of this, textbooks have a more profound and covert function in the transmission of cultural messages, social norms, and moral values of the society in which they are produced (Widodo, 2018). This is in addition to the fact that they are used for instructional purposes. These underlying value dimensions are frequently weaved in invisibly across the visuals and texts that are associated with textbooks.

In light of this, recent scholarship has called for greater acknowledgment and ntegration of moral education within textbooks, as part of a holistic learning approach attentive to the moral undercurrents in educational materials (Mahendra & Amelia, 2020). Sukma et al. (2021) contend that as cultural artifacts, textbooks inevitably reflect the prevailing beliefs, assumptions and value systems of their societal context. From transmitting religious tenets, democratic ideals or environmental ethics, textbooks contain multifaceted moral perspectives that shape students' worldviews. Making visible such moral dimensions can nourish students' critical reflection, cultural awareness and capacity for ethical reasoning.

The significance of moral education is well-established in educational philosophy and curriculum design. Values education fosters the development of personal virtues, shapes character and provides a moral compass to guide behavior and civic participation (Suryana, 2013). Jaya et al (2019) the years spent in junior high school constitute a crucial window for moral education (Shek & Zhu, 2019). This is because early adolescence is a developmental stage that is characterized by a high degree of impressionability. Students' moral imagination and cognition can be stimulated by bringing moral discussions into the open, according to Andrews's research from 2020.

In English language textbooks specifically, the inclusion of moral values provides vital opportunities to engage students in ethical issues while improving their linguistic skills (Mahendra & Amelia, 2020). Integrating moral themes and dilemmas into texts, activities and visuals enables critical reflection on values and morality. For Indonesian junior high students, analyzing the moral dimensions in their English textbooks facilitates understanding complex social issues, appreciation of diverse perspectives, and cultivation of tolerance, empathy and civic responsibility (Puspitasari et al., 2021).

Given this study's focus on examining moral values portrayed through visual illustrations in a 7th grade English textbook, it is essential to analyze prior research investigating similar themes. Puspitasari et al. (2021) utilized critical discourse analysis to investigate moral values in Indonesian primary EFL textbooks, revealing a seamless integration of values such as helping others, friendliness, politeness, tolerance, care for nature, and respect for diversity. Their study aligns with the current study's aim to decode and elucidate the techniques used to impart moral education visually in textbooks. Similarly, Setyono and Widodo (2019) noted that studies on English language textbooks frequently focus on multicultural values, gender biases, and cultural stereotypes, indicating that issues of equality, diversity, and inclusion are intrinsically linked to moral education in learning materials. This broader relevance highlights the importance of textbook analyses in addressing morality, ethics, and values transmission in education.

Additionally, Suwarno et al. (2021) emphasized minimizing gender stereotypes and misconceptions through ethical visual portrayals in Indonesian textbooks, promoting gender equity through gender-neutral language and balanced visual representations. This research underscores the power of visual imagery in transmitting moral values related to social justice and gender roles. Canh (2018) explored moral education in Vietnamese secondary school English textbooks, revealing that while reading passages convey moral values, follow-up activities often focus more on linguistic skills than reinforcing moral principles. This underscores the need for a holistic approach integrating moral education across textual and visual content and learning activities.

These previous studies highlight a gap in the literature regarding the thorough analysis of moral dimensions in visual illustrations, particularly in 7th grade English textbooks. While the present study aims to address this gap, offering insights for curriculum developers, material designers, and educators in promoting moral literacy and values education for
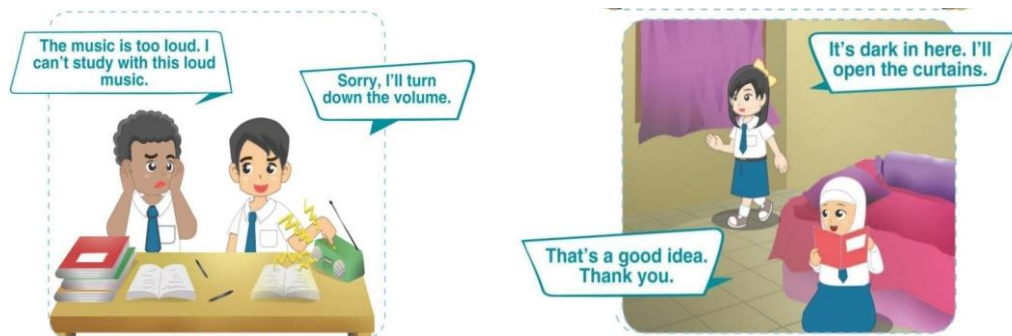
students.

B. METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative approach to examine the integration of moral values in the English textbook "When English Rings a Bell" for seventh-grade students, combining critical discourse analysis and visual analysis. Using Fairclough's (1989) method, the textual analysis focuses on vocabulary, grammar, and rhetorical devices to uncover ideological messages related to morality. The visual analysis, based on Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotic theory in their Grammar of Visual Design (GVD), decodes visual elements like color, framing, and composition to reveal embedded moral values. Data collection applies these frameworks to systematically analyze the textbook's verbal and visual aspects, mapping language patterns against moral frameworks and decoding visual representations to reveal moral positioning. The findings will interpret how textual and visual communication work together to normalize particular moral assumptions within the text.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This part discussed the result of the study analyzed and found from the illustration and image in the English textbook "When English Rings a Bell" for the seventh grade of Junior High School. The aim of the discussion focused on analyzing and finding the moral values in the textbook.

1. Social Awareness

Picture 1.1 and Picture 1.2 about Social Awareness

Picture 1.1 portrays two male students studying together at a desk filled with books, with a radio playing music loudly. The dialogue reveals Student 1 politely yet directly communicating his need for a quiet environment to concentrate, stating "The music is too loud. I can't study with this loud music." Student 2 receptively responds by saying "Sorry, I'll turn down the volume," demonstrating willingness to cooperate and empathize with his peer's request.

Visually, the shift from the loud music initially disrupting Student 1's concentration to Student 2 lowering the volume represents the development of social awareness and conflict resolution through compromise. Student 1 establishes interpersonal boundaries by expressing how the loud music impacts his studies. Student 2 acknowledges this concern by

verbally apologizing and visually adjusting the radio volume, exhibiting growth in understanding how one's actions affect others. The discourse analysis reveals considerate yet assertive communication strategies. Meanwhile, the environmental transition from an obstructive atmosphere to a studious setting symbolizes the emergence of empathy.

Picture 1.2 shows two female students in a bedroom with closed curtains. Student 1 states "It's dark in here. I'll open the curtains," proactively offering assistance by recognizing her peer's struggle reading with insufficient lighting. Student 2 responds appreciatively by saying "That's a good idea. Thank you," validating the helpful initiative to address this minor yet annoying obstacle.

The way the initial darkness made it difficult to read is visually contrasted with the later illumination from opened curtains, highlighting the effectiveness of tiny actions in conquering obstacles. The vocal offer made by Student 1 reveals social awareness and proactive problem-solving. The appreciation expressed by Student 2 highlights the advantages of open communication in facilitating cooperative solutions. The dialogue and illustration work together to promote social responsibility, emphasize the effects of actions on other people, and model interpersonal awareness.

Together, these narratives serve to model conflict resolution through compromise, fostering interpersonal awareness and mutual understanding. The discourse analysis examines politeness strategies and receptiveness, while the visual critique decodes environmental transitions reflecting internal shifts. This aligns with social psychology and communication theory principles on empathy, proactive problem-solving, and verbal-nonverbal integration in shared spaces (Gudykunst, 2017; Guerrero & Floyd, 2006).

Social awareness is an important activity that demonstrates concern for the local social environment. According to Ryan et al. (2017), social awareness inspires individuals to lend a hand whenever necessary. This means that a person with social awareness is constantly looking for ways to help their community. Fauzi et al. (2017) emphasized social awareness as an attitude that assists others in need, suggesting that the author aims to convey the moral value of social awareness to students, especially when their friends are struggling to learn. Reflecting on personal experiences and relating them to the message or theme of the illustrations can help apply the message of social awareness to one's own life and promote positive change in communities.

2. Environmental Awareness

Picture 2.1 about Environmental Awareness

From the illustration and conversation above, we know that it reveals environmental awareness and appreciation for nature. Visually, the vibrant garden backdrop filled with plants, animals and trash bins creates an engaging atmosphere that symbolizes the beauty of the natural world. The conversation reveals how the students observe and value different aspects of the park environment.

Siti says that she likes the park because it is shady and has colorful flowers. This shows that she appreciates the natural beauty of the park. Lina agrees with Siti and says that the park is wonderful. Edo then points out the butterflies, which Dayu finds pretty. This shows that the students are observant of the wildlife in the park. Beni then mentions the garbage cans, which he says can be used to keep the park clean. This shows that Beni is aware of the importance of environmental stewardship. Finally, Udin says that he likes studying in the park because the weather is nice, the park is beautiful, and it is a beautiful day. This shows that Udin enjoys the overall experience of being in the park.

Together, these interactions highlight awareness of nature's splendor, stewardship and the overall benefits of being in the park. The students' social collaboration and reading activity amidst this setting also reflects a positive learning spirit. As research shows, environmental education can nurture pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors by fostering connections with nature (Rickinson et al., 2013; Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2013).

Additional studies emphasize the importance of early environmental education. Şimşekli (2015) found that integrating environmental awareness in elementary textbooks improved student ecological knowledge and attitudes. Similarly, Thirupathy & Mustapha (2020) showed that green concepts in science textbooks increased positive environmental perspectives among secondary school children.

Environmental awareness involves knowledge and skills to protect the environment, which textbooks can impart to teach sustainability (Fang et al., 2022). Starting from a young age helps instill values of ecological care and personal accountability (Ardoin & Bowers, 2020; Rahmawati et al., 2020). Schools play a key role through integrating lessons on preserving nature to shape students' moral character. By cultivating mindsets that demonstrate environmental impacts, academic institutions can promote the development of eco-friendly habits within society more broadly (Gabriela & Sugiarto, 2020).

This textbook illustration and dialogue successfully provide an engaging tool to build students' environmental literacy. The vibrant visuals and appreciative conversation promote awareness of nature's beauty and the importance of environmental stewardship. Integrating these ethics helps nurture moral values and sustainable mindsets from an early age.

3. Gender Stereotype

Picture 3.1 about Gender Stereotype

The provided illustration, along with its accompanying caption, which is sourced from a Grade 7 English textbook, serves as a multifaceted teaching tool that can be subjected to discourse analysis. The caption begins with the statement, "It is seven o'clock in the evening. Edo and his family have dinner together. His father cooks a delicious roasted chicken." This caption effectively establishes the temporal and situational context for the depicted scenario.

The illustration provides a valuable teaching tool that can be analyzed through discourse analysis. One notable aspect is the portrayal of Edo's father cooking dinner, challenging gender stereotypes that associate domestic duties primarily with women (Lewis & Lupyan, 2019). This representation aligns with more recent research advocating for diverse and non-stereotypical depictions in educational materials to reduce prejudice (Armstrong et al., 2015). Edo's father taking on a non-conventional role serves as an example of breaking down stereotypes. Moreover, the family gathered for a meal promotes community values in daily life. This resonates with studies showing family involvement benefits children outcomes (Edwards & Pratt, 2016).

By presenting this inclusive gender role depiction, the textbook encourages questioning traditional norms and sharing domestic duties equitably regardless of gender. This enables critical reflection on gender representations in media and students' own lives, motivating them to support equality (Ahmad & Shah, 2019). Educators can develop nuanced understandings of how gender roles are socially constructed and sustained.

This discourse analysis of the illustration and caption effectively provides students with a platform for introspection regarding the representation of gender roles not only in media but also in their everyday lives. It motivates them to consider alternative narratives that break away from societal expectations and actively support gender equality. This approach is consistent with research that suggests that critical reflection and introspection can help to promote social awareness and positive attitudes among students (Freire, 1970). By providing students with a platform for critical reflection and introspection, educators can help them to develop a more nuanced understanding of the social and cultural contexts in which gender roles are constructed and perpetuated.

D. CONCLUSION

Upon analyzing the 7th-grade English textbook, "When English Rings a Bell," this research has unveiled subtle yet impactful moral values interwoven into its fabric. Employing a qualitative approach that combines critical discourse and visual analysis, we have identified three key themes: Social Awareness, Environmental Awareness, and challenging Gender Stereotypes.

The illustrations and text convey the importance of polite communication, cooperation, and empathy, promoting social awareness. Environmental Awareness is evident in depictions of students appreciating nature and emphasizing the significance of environmental stewardship. Notably, the textbook challenges Gender Stereotypes by showcasing non-traditional family roles, encouraging inclusivity.

This study underscores the influential role of textbooks in shaping students' values. By recognizing and integrating moral lessons, educators can foster empathy, critical thinking, and a more inclusive society. Moving forward, curriculum designers should prioritize the nuanced integration of moral values to enhance both academic and ethical development in students.

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