



# Representation of Nationalism Values in Information Texts of Indonesian Language Books for Grade III Elementary School

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## Abstracts

*This study aims to examine the representation of nationalism values in informational texts of the Grade III Indonesian language textbook based on the Kurikulum Merdeka. Using a qualitative content analysis approach, the research focused on identifying key nationalism values such as patriotism, unity, appreciation of national symbols, and respect for cultural diversity. The primary data source was the textbook "Bahasa Indonesia: Kawan Seiring", published by the Ministry of Education in 2022. The findings reveal that these values are presented both narratively and contextually, primarily through stories and descriptions of students' everyday activities. Patriotism and cultural diversity appeared most frequently and were embedded in relatable and age-appropriate content. However, the textbook showed limited representation of national symbols and heroes, indicating a need for more balanced ideological content. Despite this gap, the study concludes that the textbook has the potential to support the internalization of civic and national values among elementary school students. By integrating character education into language learning, the book contributes not only to literacy development but also to shaping students' national identity. These insights are expected to serve as valuable input for teachers, textbook writers, and policymakers in creating more value-oriented learning materials.*

**Keywords:** Nationalism, Content Analysis, Textbook, Informational Text, Elementary School

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## 1. Introduction

Instillation of nationalism values from an early age is a crucial part of character development for the nation's future generation. Nationalism values include love for the homeland, pride in national identity, respect for national symbols, and the spirit of unity and cohesion (Jeon, 2021) (Widiastui et al., 2019) (Aji & Wismanadi, 2023). As the foundational level of character building, primary education plays a strategic role in shaping children's personalities and national awareness. In this context, the educational process in schools must integrate national values into learning, both explicitly and implicitly (Rohmah & Hidayat, 2022).

The *Kurikulum Merdeka*, as the latest educational policy, emphasizes the importance of strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile, which upholds the nation's noble values, including cultural diversity and love for the homeland. Indonesian language learning holds great potential for conveying these values, as it not only aims to develop students' literacy skills but also serves as a medium for internalizing values through reading texts (Nurseptyani & Saptono, 2023). One relevant type of text for

instilling national values is informational text, which typically contains facts, character narratives, or experiences that can be used to convey messages of nationalism in a contextual manner (Setyowati & Suprapti, 2022). Empirically, previous studies have shown that the content of textbooks varies in the integration of character values. Research by (Yuliastuti & Abbas, 2020) found that many Indonesian language textbooks at the elementary level still lack explicit presentation of national figures and state symbols. In addition, (Rabiah, 2019) pointed out that the delivery of ideology in educational texts is often implicit, thus requiring a deeper analytical approach to uncover the values contained within. This becomes particularly important given that textbooks are the primary reference for both teachers and students in the learning process, and therefore have a significant influence on shaping students' national perspectives and attitudes.

Representation of nationalism values in the Grade III Indonesian language textbook for elementary schools reveals a gap between the character education goals mandated by the curriculum and the actual content presented in the textbook. Many informational texts included in the book do not explicitly or implicitly instill nationalism values such as love for the homeland, appreciation of diversity, and the spirit of unity. This discrepancy poses a problem, as textbooks are expected to serve as one of the main instruments for instilling national values from an early age. When learning materials fail to connect language instruction with national context, students miss the opportunity to understand the meaning of nationalism through meaningful reading experiences (Rosdiana, 2023). The main challenge in this context lies in designing content that can integrate nationalism values in a contextual and engaging way for primary school children. Many textbook authors tend to focus solely on linguistic aspects without considering the value content that contributes to character building (Alfira & Fathoni, 2023). As a result, the limited representation of nationalism in informational texts leads to an underdeveloped sense of national awareness among students from an early age.

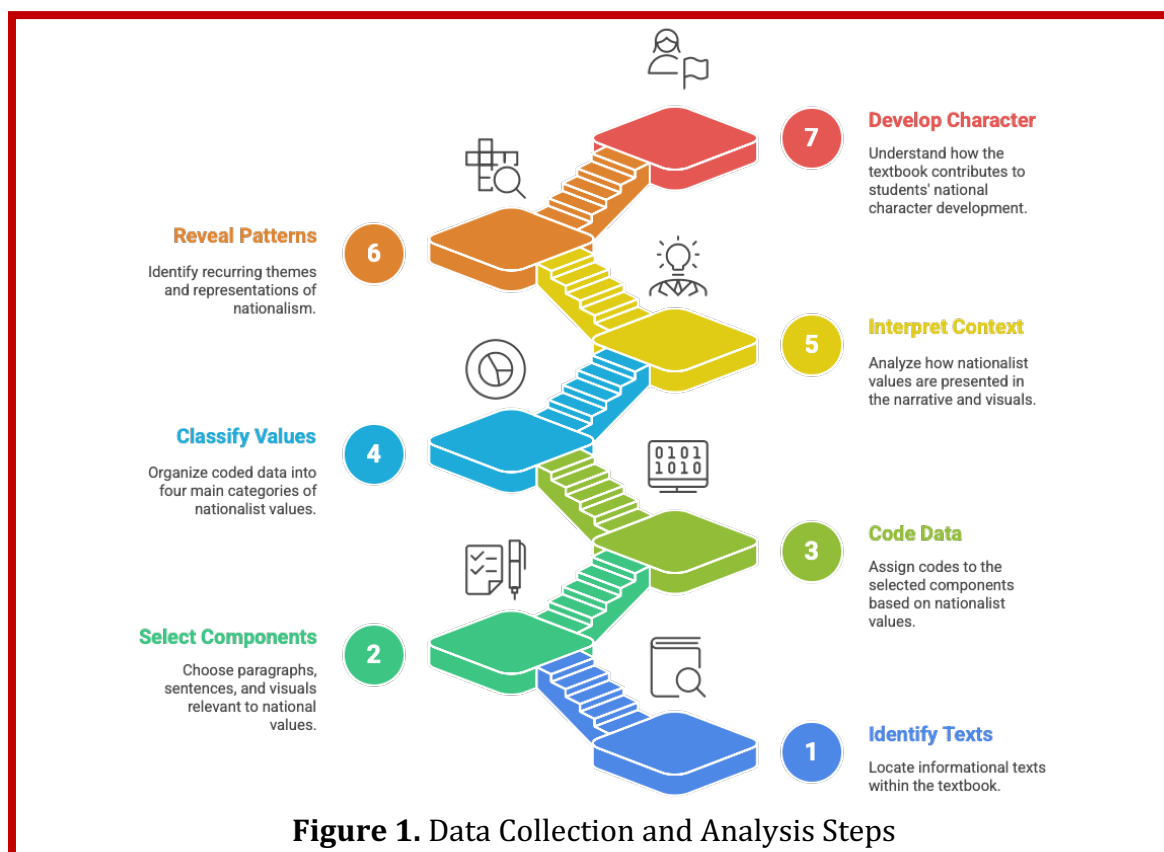
Impact extends beyond the cognitive aspect and also affects students' affective development in building a national identity and a spirit of unity in diversity. If this issue continues to be overlooked, the younger generation's ability to internalize national values may further weaken amid the currents of globalization and individualism. However, the extent to which nationalism values are represented in Indonesian language textbooks, particularly in Grade III, has not been comprehensively explored (Kumala et al., 2022). This study is therefore essential to fill that gap and provide a concrete overview of character education content in official teaching materials. The objective of this research is to identify and describe the representation of nationalism values in informational texts found in the Grade III Indonesian language textbook under the *Kurikulum Merdeka*. A qualitative content analysis approach is used as a method to trace and interpret the ideological and educational messages embedded within texts aimed at primary school children (Sulistiyono et al., 2021).

Selection of the title "*Representation of Nationalism Values in Informational Texts of the Grade III Indonesian Language Textbook for Elementary Schools*" is important to highlight, as textbooks serve as the primary medium in the learning process, not only for delivering academic knowledge but also as a strategic tool for shaping students' character from an early age. At the elementary level, particularly in Grade III, students are in a critical stage of cognitive and affective development; therefore, the

representation of nationalism values in teaching materials greatly influences the formation of their national identity. Amid the challenges of globalization that may erode national spirit, the presence of texts that convey nationalism values becomes highly relevant and urgent to examine. This study aims to explore the extent to which textbooks used in schools reflect nationalism values, while also contributing to the development of learning materials that are more enriched with the nation's character-building values

## 2. Research methods

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using content analysis, aiming to provide an in-depth depiction of the representation of nationalism values in reading texts (Waruwu et al., 2023). This approach was chosen for its ability to systematically and thoroughly describe how values such as patriotism, appreciation of diversity, and the spirit of unity are reflected in the teaching materials used by students (Soifidah & Nastiti, 2021). Through content analysis, each reading text is examined based on its content, meaning, and underlying messages, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the extent to which the textbook supports the development of national character in primary school students. The data source for this study is the Grade III Indonesian language textbook titled "*Kawan Seiring*", published by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology in 2022. This book was selected because it is an official textbook widely used in elementary schools and plays a significant role in supporting curriculum implementation. Moreover, as one of the core materials for Indonesian language instruction, the book is expected to contain texts relevant to the cultivation of students' nationalism values. By focusing on this textbook, the study aims to identify the extent to which the reading content aligns with the character education goals mandated by the government.



**Figure 1.** Data Collection and Analysis Steps

The data collection technique in this study was carried out by identifying and selecting informational texts in each chapter of the “*Kawan Seiring*” textbook that contained elements of nationalism. This process involved examining paragraphs, sentences, and visual components relevant to national values. The collected data were then coded and classified into four main categories of nationalist values: love for the homeland, unity and integrity, respect for national symbols, and cultural diversity. These categories served as the foundation for understanding how nationalist values are embedded in the teaching materials and the extent of their presence and depth.

The analysis was conducted by interpreting the context in which these values appeared within the narrative, illustrations, and character dialogues. This interpretation aimed to reveal the patterns of nationalism representation conveyed to elementary school students through reading experiences. Beyond identifying the explicit presence of these values, the analysis also examined how such values were implicitly constructed through storylines, character roles, and visual presentations. Through this approach, the study seeks to uncover how the textbook contributes to the meaningful and holistic development of students’ national character.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Results

##### Representation of Patriotism

The textbook presents patriotism as a foundational value through stories that introduce national symbols and foster emotional connections with the country. Through simple yet powerful narratives, students are encouraged to feel proud of their national identity and to develop a sense of belonging to their homeland.

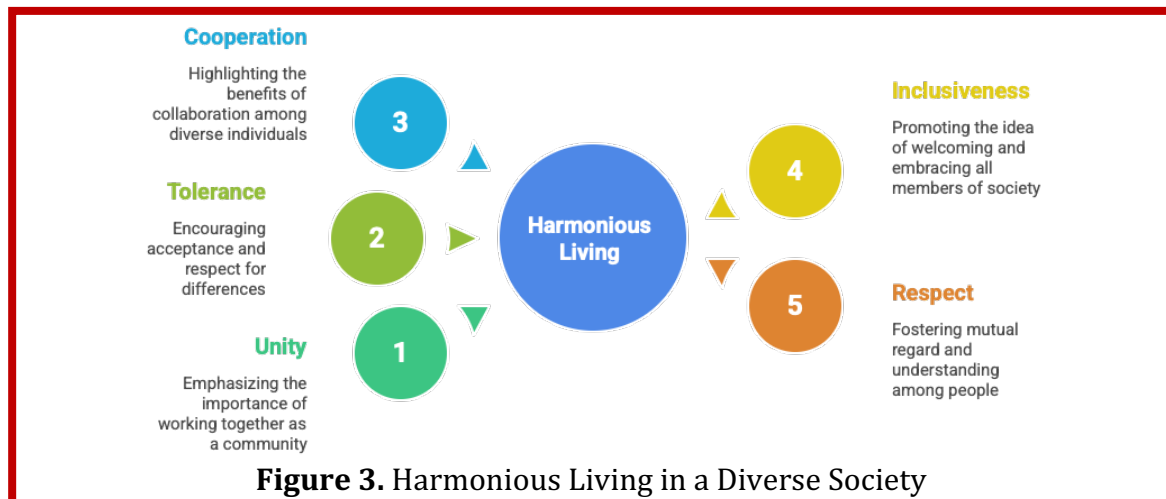


**Figure 2.** Fostering Patriotism in Education

The image titled “*Fostering Patriotism in Education*” illustrates how the value of patriotism is cultivated within the educational context through three interconnected elements. At the center lies *Patriotism* as the foundational value being taught to students. This core value is supported by three main pathways: *Narratives*, *National Symbols*, and *Emotional Connection*. Each pathway plays a vital role in conveying meaningful messages of national identity and pride. *Narratives* represent stories or texts that introduce and embed patriotic values and symbols. The *National Symbols* pathway highlights visual and historical elements that represent the country, such as flags or emblems. Meanwhile, *Emotional Connection* focuses on the affective domain, nurturing students’ feelings of pride, identity, and belonging. Together, these elements work in harmony to deepen students’ understanding of patriotism and instill a strong sense of national commitment from an early age.

### Unity and Tolerance as Social Values

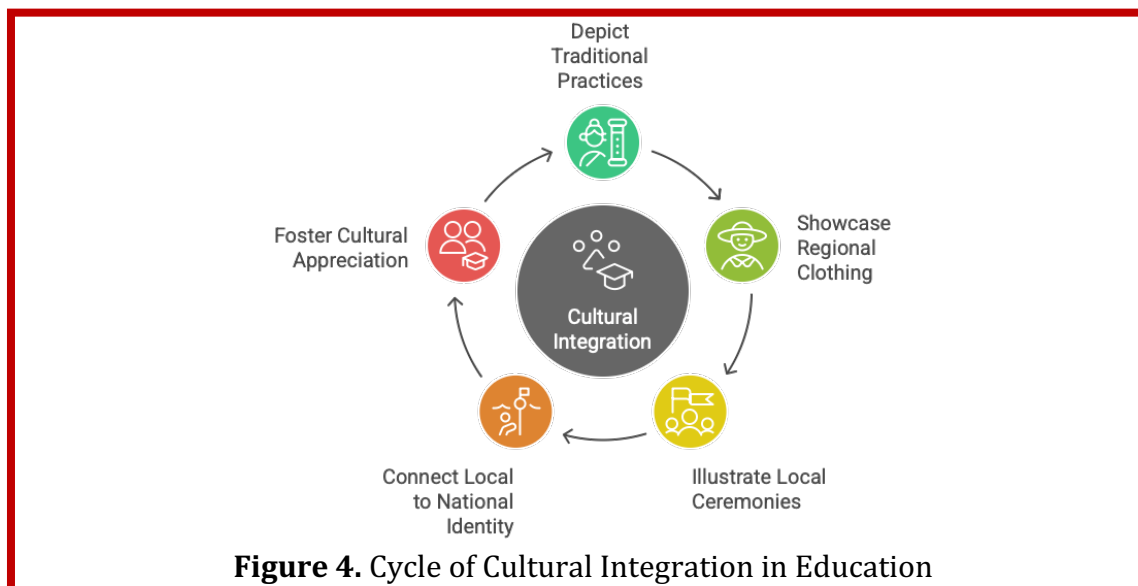
Unity and tolerance are emphasized as essential social values, especially in stories that depict cooperation among children from different backgrounds. These narratives promote inclusiveness and respect, helping students understand the importance of living harmoniously in a diverse society.



The image titled "*Promoting Harmonious Living in a Diverse Society*" illustrates five key values that collectively support the creation of a harmonious life within a multicultural community. At the center is the concept of *Harmonious Living*, surrounded by the values of *Unity*, *Tolerance*, and *Cooperation* on the left, and *Inclusiveness* and *Respect* on the right. Each of these values plays an essential role in strengthening human relationships across diverse backgrounds. *Unity* emphasizes the importance of working together as a community, *Tolerance* encourages acceptance and appreciation of differences, and *Cooperation* highlights the benefits of collaboration among diverse individuals. On the other side, *Inclusiveness* promotes openness and the welcoming of all members of society, while *Respect* fosters mutual understanding and regard. Altogether, these elements are designed to build a society where diversity is not only accepted but embraced through mutual support and shared values.

### Strengthening Local Cultural Identity

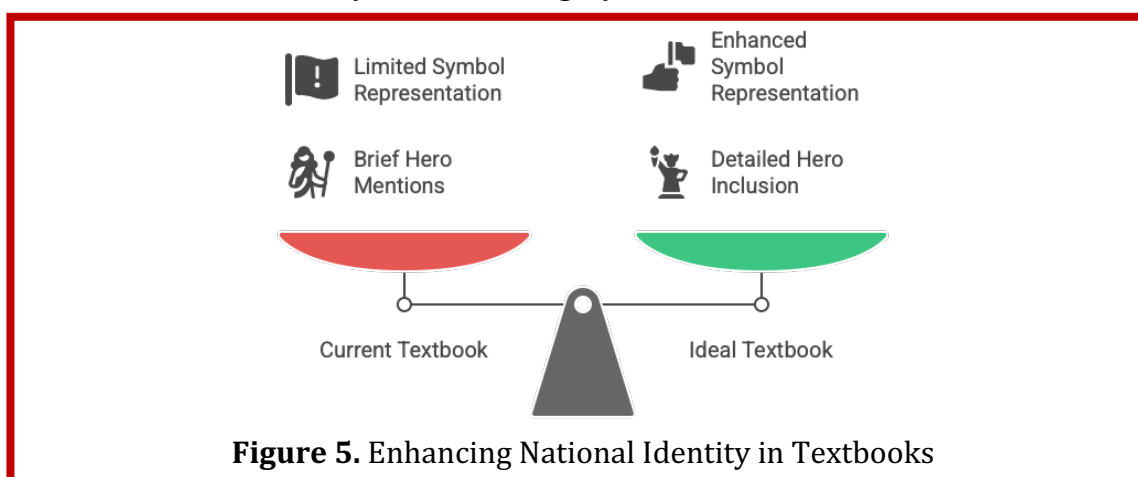
The integration of local cultural identity into the textbook is effectively illustrated through various elements such as traditional practices, regional attire, and local ceremonies. These representations not only enrich the content but also serve as a bridge between students' immediate cultural environments and the broader national identity. By highlighting the uniqueness of each region within Indonesia, the textbook encourages students to develop a sense of pride in their heritage while fostering an understanding of the country's diverse cultural landscape. This approach supports character education by promoting cultural awareness, respect for differences, and a stronger emotional connection to national unity.



The image titled "*Cycle of Cultural Integration in Education*" presents a circular model that emphasizes how cultural elements can be systematically integrated into the educational experience. At the center is *Cultural Integration*, which serves as the core goal. The cycle begins by *Depicting Traditional Practices*, where students are introduced to everyday customs and rituals of different cultural groups. It then moves to *Showcasing Regional Clothing*, which helps highlight the visual and symbolic aspects of cultural identity. The process continues by *Illustrating Local Ceremonies*, which emphasizes the importance of communal events in preserving cultural heritage. Following this, educators can *Connect Local to National Identity*, helping students understand how regional cultures contribute to the broader national culture. Finally, this cycle aims to *Foster Cultural Appreciation* by building respect, empathy, and pride in cultural diversity. When all these elements are consistently presented in educational materials, students are more likely to develop a strong sense of cultural identity and mutual respect within a pluralistic society.

### The Absence of National Symbols and Hero Representation

One notable gap in the textbook is the limited representation of national symbols and historical figures. Important icons like the Garuda Pancasila or national heroes are either missing or only briefly mentioned, which may reduce opportunities for students to connect with the country's historical legacy.





The image titled "*Enhancing National Identity in Textbooks*" illustrates the comparison between current textbooks and the ideal version in terms of fostering national identity. On the left side, the current textbook is represented by a tilted red scale, indicating an imbalance due to its limitations. These include *Limited Symbol Representation* and *Brief Hero Mentions*, which suggest that national elements such as flags, emblems, and historical figures are either underrepresented or only superficially introduced. This limited content may result in students having a weak or unclear understanding of their national identity. In contrast, the right side represents the *Ideal Textbook*, depicted with a balanced green scale, showing improvement and enhancement. It emphasizes *Enhanced Symbol Representation* and *Detailed Hero Inclusion*, which implies a more comprehensive integration of national symbols and stories of national heroes into the learning materials. This ideal approach would enable students to engage more deeply with their cultural and historical heritage, encouraging a stronger sense of pride and identity. The visual clearly communicates that a shift toward more meaningful content is necessary for textbooks to play a more effective role in national character education.

### The Effectiveness of Everyday Narratives in Reinforcing Nationalism

Everyday situations are used effectively to convey national values. Stories about helping friends, participating in school activities, and keeping the environment clean make abstract values more concrete. These relatable narratives make it easier for young learners to internalize and practice nationalism in their daily lives.

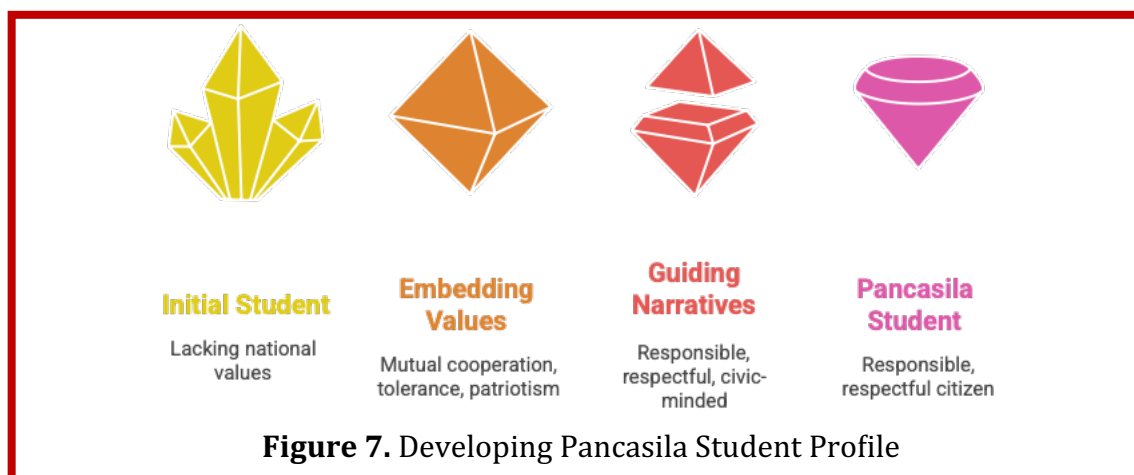


The image titled "*Building Nationalism Through Everyday Narratives*" presents a three-level pyramid that shows how nationalism can be developed in students through relatable storytelling. At the base of the pyramid is *Everyday Situations*, which refers to familiar and meaningful contexts from daily life. These stories help convey national values in ways that are simple and relevant, allowing students to understand how values like cooperation, respect, and responsibility are applied in real-life experiences. The second level, *Concrete Values*, focuses on how stories make abstract national values more understandable and real for students. Through well-structured narratives, students can recognize and relate to values such as unity and dedication. At the top level

is *Internalized Nationalism*, which reflects the stage where learners begin to practice these values naturally in their daily lives. This layered process shows that meaningful narratives can play a powerful role in helping students gradually absorb and live by the principles of nationalism.

### The Book's Contribution to Shaping the Pancasila Student Profile

The textbook contributes to the development of the Pancasila Student Profile by embedding values such as mutual cooperation, tolerance, and patriotism into its content. These narratives guide students in becoming responsible, respectful, and civic-minded individuals in line with national educational goals.



The image titled "*Developing Pancasila Student Profile*" illustrates the progressive transformation of a student into an ideal Pancasila learner. The process begins with the *Initial Student*, who is described as lacking national values. At this early stage, students have not yet developed a clear sense of national identity or social responsibility. This phase serves as the foundation upon which character education can be built. As the process continues, students move through stages of *Embedding Values* and *Guiding Narratives*, where values such as mutual cooperation, tolerance, and patriotism are introduced and reinforced through meaningful stories and role models. These values guide students toward becoming more responsible, respectful, and civic-minded. The journey culminates in the formation of the *Pancasila Student*, who embodies the core principles of Pancasila and acts as a responsible and respectful citizen. This visual framework highlights how character education and value integration are essential for shaping students who are ready to contribute positively to society.

## 3.2 Discussion

### Representation of Patriotism

The value of patriotism serves as a central component in the representation of nationalism within the third-grade Indonesian language textbook. This aligns with (Arasyid et al., 2022) view that patriotism is a fundamental foundation in shaping national identity. The text "*Aku dan Si Merah*" illustrates how national symbols, such as the red and white flag, become a starting point for instilling pride and emotional connection among students toward their country. Such representation is also supported by findings from (Suparji, 2023), who revealed that emotional engagement of children with texts containing nationalistic values enhances retention and



comprehension of those values. Furthermore, (Wachdani & Thohir, 2022) emphasize that narratives connected to students' everyday lives are generally more effective in instilling national values.

### **Unity and Tolerance as Social Values**

The texts "Sahabat dari Seberang" and "Kami Bermain Bersama" present narratives of inclusivity and acceptance among children from diverse cultural backgrounds. This representation reflects the principle of diversity as emphasized in the *Merdeka Curriculum* (Sulthoniyah & Muhith, 2024) and the theory of social integration proposed by (Sobri et al., 2021). The incorporation of unity and tolerance values in elementary textbooks reinforces the habit of living harmoniously and respecting differences. The approach used aligns with the recommendations of Lestari and (Fajri & Dafit, 2022), who suggest that fictional narratives with multicultural settings are more easily understood by children in grasping the concept of unity.

### **Strengthening Local Cultural Identity**

The inclusion of local culture in textbooks serves as a bridge between local and national identity. For instance, the text "*Upacara di Kampungku*" introduces local cultural practices as expressions of love for the homeland. This is supported by research from (Hussein, 2024), which found that students are better able to grasp the concept of nationalism when it is linked to their own cultural realities. A similar view is expressed by (Shirai, 2019), who argues that integrating local culture into learning fosters students' affective engagement. A study by (Ali, 2023) also reveals that the incorporation of locality in narratives encourages a stronger construction of national identity.

### **The Absence of National Symbols and Hero Representation**

Although social and cultural values are prominently featured, there is a noticeable absence in the representation of national symbols and historical figures. The findings indicate that symbols such as the Garuda Pancasila emblem, the national anthem, and figures like Soekarno and Kartini are not explicitly presented. Yet, according to (Datchuk et al., 2021), national symbols serve a pedagogical function in reinforcing students' collective memory of national history. This is further supported by (Özçınar & Yılmaz, 2024), who argue that introducing national heroes in textbooks helps shape students' role models based on the values of struggle. The study by (Alfira & Fathoni, 2023) also highlights the importance of biographical narratives as a means of fostering children's patriotic character.

### **The Effectiveness of Everyday Narratives in Reinforcing Nationalism**

The delivery of nationalistic values through children's daily activities such as studying, playing, helping friends, and maintaining a clean environment has proven to be effective. This finding is consistent with the views of (Kumala et al., 2022), who state that embedding ideology in educational texts becomes more impactful when it is presented within familiar contexts for the reader. Research conducted by (Suroyya et al., 2024) supports the idea that reflective narratives in textbooks help children better understand moral and national values. This conclusion is also strengthened by the textbook content analysis by (Andriyanto, 2024), which found that the use of everyday narratives improves the effectiveness of character-building related to nationalism in elementary education.

### The Book's Contribution to Shaping the Pancasila Student Profile

Overall, the third-grade Indonesian language textbook has demonstrated its contribution to shaping the character of Pancasila students. Values such as mutual cooperation, patriotism, tolerance, and cultural identity are reflected in narratives that are simple yet rich in meaning. These findings are consistent with research by (Rismayanti & Wibawa, 2024), which emphasizes that textbooks should serve as a primary tool in supporting the development of the Pancasila student profile. Furthermore, a study by (Dahnial, 2024) shows that national literacy embedded in elementary textbooks strengthens students' critical thinking and social awareness.

**Table 1.** Representation of Nationalism Values in the Third-Grade Indonesian Language Textbook

No	Nationalism Value	Example of Representation in Textbook
1	Patriotism	Text " <i>Aku dan Si Merah</i> ", illustration of a flag ceremony
2	Unity and Tolerance	" <i>Sahabat dari Seberang</i> ", playing together across ethnicities
3	Local Cultural Identity	" <i>Upacara di Kampungku</i> ", traditional clothing, regional games
4	National Symbols and Figures	(Minimal representation)
5	Everyday Life Narratives	Helping friends, cleaning the school, playing together
6	Pancasila Student Profile	Mutual cooperation, tolerance, patriotism

The Indonesian language textbook functions not only as a tool for language learning but also as a medium for transmitting the nation's ideological and moral values. Strengthening the representation of national symbols and historical figures should be a key focus in future textbook development to ensure a balanced integration of social, cultural, and historical values.

### 4. Conclusion

This study concludes that the Grade III Indonesian language textbook under the *Kurikulum Merdeka* incorporates representations of nationalism values in a narrative and contextual manner, particularly through informational texts. Values such as love for the homeland, unity, tolerance, and appreciation of cultural diversity are explicitly presented in the form of stories, descriptions of children's activities, and character dialogues. The narratives are closely related to students' everyday lives, allowing national messages to be well understood and emotionally accepted by primary school readers. The findings also reveal a lack of representation of national symbols and heroes. The limited inclusion or portrayal of national emblems such as the Garuda Pancasila, the national anthem, and inspirational national figures indicates that the historical and symbolic aspects of nationalism are not fully addressed. These aspects are essential for strengthening students' understanding and appreciation of their national identity. Therefore, the development of future textbooks should incorporate these elements in a contextual format that aligns with students' developmental stages. In doing so, Indonesian language textbooks can serve a dual purpose: not only as a medium for teaching language skills but also as a strategic tool for shaping national identity and student character.

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