

NATIVE-CENTEREDNESS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING MATERIALS: A MULTIMODAL CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON INDONESIAN ELT TEXTBOOKS' COVER

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<https://doi.org/10.24071/llt.v26i1.4647>

received 11 May 2022; accepted 27 March 2023

Abstract

This is a multimodal critical discourse analysis of three Indonesian English language teaching textbooks. The study focused on the representation of the visuals on the cover to describe English as an International Language paradigm in Indonesia. This study was a qualitative study where the data were presented in the form of a narrative story. The researcher also employed themes to answer the research questions. The result showed that the orientation of English language teaching in Indonesia was native-centeredness where correctness was the focus of the process. Meanwhile, the practice would not prepare the student to have cross-cultural communication where English was used as the *Lingua Franca*. The result was likely to be in accordance with the latest study on Indonesian teachers' perspective of the EIL paradigm which showed reluctance.

Keywords: ELT textbooks, multimodal critical discourse, native-centeredness

Introduction

A language shares the power that dominates people and society (Fairclough, 1989). Meanwhile, English has been the language for intercultural communication (Jenkins, 2014; Kachru, 1990; Kirkpatrick, 2010) so the language has power in many domains, one of which is education, which makes people aware of the need of maintaining English for their communication. The need to develop the language has been acknowledged as a must to be able to communicate in cross-cultural contexts where people do not share the same lingua-cultural background and English is the only option to facilitate the process (Jenkins, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2010; Seidlhofer, 2011). The study of critical discourse analysis or critical language study in educational domains is, somewhat, significant as the study provides information about the educational policy and the practice of language teaching and learning as the implication (Fairclough, 1989). This is in line with (Ishikawa, 2016; Jenkins, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2010; Spolsky, 2004) who suggest that the status and the spread of English as an International Language throughout the nations bring the language power in the maintenance of educational policy. Likewise, in Indonesia, the language has no specific status in the Indonesian administrative domain, but the language has been included in the curriculum as a subject to learn and has been developed as one of the prerequisites in the educational domain (Mistar, 2005).

Moreover, through the analysis of the discourse that is employed in the educational domain, critical language awareness will result in the process that gives a significant role in deciding the objective of language teaching and learning as well as developing the suitable method to fulfill the ends of its process (Fairclough, 1989).

The discussion about the status of the language has to come into consideration that the development of English all around the world has undergone a long journey before its status as an International Language (Crystal, 2003). English has been developed as a Lingua Franca to facilitate communication between people who do not share the same linguistic, cultural, and national background (Holliday, 2009; Jenkins, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2010; Seidlhofer, 2011; Widodo, 2016) so that the means of communication that is to facilitate transactional needs can be fulfilled (Griffin, 2012; Mehl, 2017; Osborn et al., 2012; Subekti, 2019). The spread of English has initiated the legitimacy of its status as a global language (Baker, 2015; Crystal, 2003) and the emergence of the new varieties of English that is known as World Englishes (Kachru et al., 2006; Kirkpatrick, 2010; Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008). The need incorporates the language in language teaching and learning (Galloway & Rose, 2018; Matsuda, 2003) is considered beneficial in way that the learning can facilitate the student to be more aware of the development of the language, able to have a cross-cultural understanding and communication and prepare the student for the globalization where English plays a pivotal role in the process.

Indonesia, in the development and the spread of the language, has been classified as a nation that belongs to the Expanding Circle (Kachru, 1990, 1992; Kachru et al., 2006; Sadeghpour & Sharifian, 2019). This consideration comes up as English has no special status in the country. However, the country still retains English as the language to be covered in the national curriculum as a subject to learn (Mistar, 2005). Following the fact aforementioned, the recent curriculum in Indonesia has been designed to assist the student in the English proficiency process by also considering the global need (Renandya & Widodo, 2016b; Widodo, 2016). Meanwhile, Indonesian education, based on the study by (Hariri et al., 2019), has a negative perception of English as an International Language and the development of World Englishes as the result of the spread of the language throughout the world. The need to encourage the student to be more aware of the kind of varieties developed in different nations has been initiated by some scholar (Franssisca & Subekti, 2022; Galloway & Rose, 2018; Isbell & Crowther, 2022; Matsuda, 2003; Olatoye, 2022; Sadeghpour & Sharifian, 2019; Shin et al., 2011) s in the accordance to the need to face global competition where the people have diverse backgrounds as well as the many varieties of language in the contact.

This study explores the issue of English as an International Language by studying the image or portrayal in the English Language Teaching textbooks employed in the ELT process in Indonesia. The researcher shows how the current condition of English language learning in Indonesia is depicted by the image on the cover of the book. The covers of some textbooks in Indonesia show how Indonesia, in general, perceives the language and how this country wants the ELT process to be undergone. By looking at the textbooks that are employed in the process of teaching and learning, people can obtain information on how the new curriculum is implemented and how to run the recently developed curriculum for the sake of desirable outcome fulfillment (Setyono & Widodo, 2019). This is in line with (Griffin, 2012) promoting that communication or discourse is not value-free in a

way that contains the meaning that needs to be conveyed by giving the stimulus to result in the desired response as what is projected by the communicator.

Previous studies regarding English as International Language have been conducted to see the cultural representation and the multicultural issues framed from the contents within the textbooks (Setyono & Widodo, 2019; Shin et al., 2011). However, a recent study studies the portrayal of how the English language textbooks in Indonesia endorse the issue of English as an International Language where the monolithic standard of American and British English are rejected (Jenkins, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2010; Sadeghpour & Sharifian, 2019; Sharifian, 2013; Widodo, 2016). The EIL paradigm also embraces the pluricentric view to hold the cross-cultural understanding as what EIL is projected.

This study comprises “How do the textbooks portray the English as International Language paradigm in their covers?” and “What are the possible teaching practices as the implication of the visuals in Indonesian English language teaching textbook covers?” as the research questions that guide the research. It is hoped that the portrayal of the EIL paradigm and the possible development of the implication of the paradigm deployed by the covers. The study promotes multimodal critical discourse as a tool of analysis.

Critical discourse analysis

Language, power, and ideology have been seen as factors to convey the nature of critical discourse (Fairclough, 1989). In so doing, Critical Discourse Analysis is a method and theory developed to obtain the endowed meaning behind the text that also holds ideology and political views (Machin & Mayr, 2012). This analysis comprises the production and reception of the texts as well as how the social and cultural construct is exhibited as the means of the use of language in the communication process (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Indeed, a language shares its power to facilitate communication and emphasize meanings. On the other hand, the use of English as the language for communication has also been a realization or evidence of the power of the language and the status that is acknowledged all over the world (Crystal, 2003). Therefore, a discourse, in the process of its production and reception has transmitted the power (Machin & Mayr, 2012). In conclusion, CDA is a study comprising the relationship between power; how it is implemented and negotiated through discourse (Fairclough, 2012). The word “critical” in Critical Discourse Analysis complies with the reason and the way discourses are produced and the possible ideological meanings or the powerful interests behind the discourse due to the process of describing and focusing on the detail of the linguistic features (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

Multimodal critical discourse analysis

Meanings are not necessarily depicted in the use of language in the form of written or spoken but also it is represented through visuals or images. This is in line with (Machin & Mayr, 2012) who suggest that other semiotic modes also provide meaning. Similar to words, visuals or images can also contain or be seen in denoted and connoted view as suggested by Barthes (1973, 1977) as cited by (Machin & Mayr, 2012) which is called iconography. A representation of things can be a simple depiction of a specific event, people, place, or thing as it is. This view is denoted by looking at the image or visual. But, the picture can also suggest the abstract ideas

behind the represented visual or image. In this way, the picture is employed to connote ideas or concepts. Thus, a connoted view is about the way ideas and values are communicated through the representation of a thing(s). Another element that needs to be considered is “attributes” (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Discovering the values or ideas of visuals or images demands a clear observation of various objects found in the pictures or simply known as attributes. The objects must, in such a way, help in making the meaning by considering how they are represented. In doing so, the need for breaking the objects down is demanded which conveys the meaning of every object in isolation. The other element is the setting. The setting determines the general ideas of visuals that can connote discourse, its value, identity, and action (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

Furthermore, it needs to also consider the “salience” or prominent thing in the visual (Machin & Mayr, 2012). This way of analyzing is attempted by doing a clear examination of the composition of the features that are, by will, made to stand out. The reason for making the object “stand out” is to promote the symbolic value of the object. In so doing, there are aspects to indicate salience. They are:

1. a potent cultural symbol that symbolizes value held by culture or society.
2. the size that indicates the importance of objects; the bigger, the more important
3. color in which the more important thing will have more saturation or contrast in the object.
4. the tone that in a such way works in the same way with the use of color
5. focus that emphasizes the specific level of importance of the object by considering the perspective.
6. foregrounding that creates the importance of the object by considering the placement of the objects; front, back, left, right, etc.
7. overlapping also works the same way as foregrounding which indicates the placing of the object over other objects; whether they are placed in front, side by side, and so on.

Moreover, a strong proposal by (Machin & Mayr, 2012) states that there is no neutral way of representing a person in any language. This means that due to the representation of a person, there is a tendency to describe aspects of identity in a way they are related to a certain discourse. In other words, the way in representing someone or a person is done to give a frame to emphasize a particular identity. For example (taken from (Machin & Mayr, 2012) (p.77):

1. *Muslim man arrested.*
2. *The Father of two daughters arrested.*

These two sentences may refer to the same person, but the way they frame or emphasize the idea is different in a way that example number one represents one’s ‘otherness’ by putting one’s personal identity and the other doesn’t. This phenomenon is called “representational choices” that deliver the associations of values, ideas, events, or activities (Machin & Mayr, 2012). The most represented thing means the most influential thing that leads to a certain emphasized idea. Below are the representation strategies in visual communication (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

1. Positioning the viewer concerning people inside the image

In defining the relationship of people inside the image, it demands a close observation of several aspects, they are:

- a. Distance: distance in an image depicts social relations. The closer the distance is the closer the relation, likewise the case in a real life.
- b. Angle: the angle of seeing something relates to the engagement of people in contact.

2. Individualization and collectivization

- a. Individuals and groups

The image that represents the individual in isolation may suggest that the idea is completed by only putting one person in a certain situation, condition, or event. Although the representation of individualization may suggest various interpretations, the image of people in isolation is a depiction of a single subject dealing with a certain condition that comes as the emphasis of the idea. On the other hand, when the image represents a group of people or collectiveness, it indicates that they come from a homogenized group or they are supposed to be “homogenized”. It creates a sense that they belong to one group, they are from the same background, or they are not separable.

- b. Generic and specific depictions

In depiction of a picture or image, it could represent individuals or specific people. People in the picture can be depicted as Native American, Jewish, or Black. However, the picture could also suggest the depiction of a typical Native American, Jewish, or Black person. The specific depiction happens to represent the stereotype representation by looking at the way they dress, look, and the way people, in an exaggerated way, are described through their physical features.

- c. Exclusion

In this way of depicting someone, it needs to also consider the other ways of not representing other characters. The possibility of representing other characters may suggest different connoted meanings of a visual. We need to think about the reason these omitted characters are excluded from the picture.

English as an international language

The spread of English throughout the nations results in the notion of “English as an international language” (Crystal, 2003) and makes the language the common shared language or *Lingua Franca*. The spread and the status of the language have made a language for accommodation in a cross-cultural setting the power shared the language (Crystal, 2003; Jenkins, 2014). In recent years, the spread of the language to all-region in the world has shaped the language to make such acculturation and adjustment so that the language can facilitate the people in their communication as the development of language acquisition is considered as the media of communication between people in which the process will end up to goals accomplishment (Crick, 2017; Griffin, 2012; Herrick, 2008; Mehl, 2017). In line with this, the new variety of the language has to come to consider as the effect of

the spread which then produces the phenomena of *World Englishes* (Jenkins, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2010). English monolithic is a term to describe a standard English based on its origin; England and America or Anglo institutions of global hegemony (Pennycook, 2007). People have to consider how English is localized and challenge this view in a way to see the diversity in the language by considering the use of the language in the inner to the expanding circle (Kachru et al., 2006). The local varieties show the identity of the speaker as well as the various regions and nations where English is used.

Method

This study explored the portrayal of English as an International Language phenomenon where a monolithic view of “standard” English is rejected (Jenkins, 2014). This paradigm holds the belief that identity should be embraced in the language. The study attempted to do critical discourse analysis on the covers of several English textbooks in Indonesia to find the representation of English as an International Language either acceptance or reluctance. The study employed a multimodal critical discourse analysis proposed by (Machin & Mayr, 2012). This study was a qualitative study where the data are represented in the form of words or narratives. The researcher generated two themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to answer the research questions of the study. They are (a) English language teaching textbooks in Indonesia representing the reluctance of English as an International Language Paradigm and (b) Indonesia is not ready yet to penetrate the EIL pedagogy in the implemented curriculum. The first theme was to answer the first research question and the second theme was to answer the second research question.

This study analyses three English textbooks in Indonesia. One book is published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture for grade VII and two books are published by a private publisher; one for grade VII and the other one for grade IX. The researcher chooses these three books because they represent the best topic of this study which is about native-centeredness in the English language curriculum.

Findings and Discussion

The findings of this study were presented by employing the generated themes. The findings are represented as follows:

English language teaching textbooks in Indonesia are representing the reluctance of English as an international language paradigm

The visuals in the English textbooks in Indonesia represented that the country was not ready yet to include the EIL paradigm in the pedagogy. The researcher only focused on the connoted meanings as being portrayed by the covers. Below mentioned are the representations of the cover of the textbooks and the connoted meaning.

There were one slogan and three big pictures on the cover. “When English Rings a Bell” could be divided into two interpretations. The first one was by considering the slogan as one clause and the other one was by considering it as a phrase “rings a bell”. The first interpretation could be represented as the condition that English is the “guest” who came from a different place and to be able to be in, he needs to ring a bell. However, ringing a bell is not a habit of Indonesian; people

usually knock the door or greet when being a guest. Ringing a bell could represent how Indonesia should do what the guests “usually do” even when the “host” was Indonesia. Here, the orientation was that the host should adapt to the habit, culture, and norms of this “foreign guest”. This view was rejected by the EIL paradigm that “glorifies” the inner circle country as the one who set up the “rule” or what so-called “standard”. Second, when it comes to the phrase “ring a bell” means “sound familiar” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019). To make it sound familiar is to be able to adapt, adjust and “legitimize” whatever English brings. There was no reflected attempt to include the Indonesian culture or at least other cultures than English in the teaching.

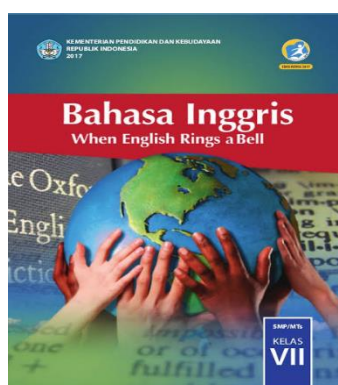


Figure 1. The representation of the English textbook’s cover by Kemendikbud RI

Secondly, the globe was a representation of the global condition, the spread of the language, and the importance of the language. In today’s context, English has been considered the global language (Crystal, 2003) where the language is considered important to be mastered. It also implied that English equalled the “world” which was why many hands, the second image, held and carry “it” on the head. It was such hegemony that the language was the symbol of honor and dignity. Many people carried “the globe” on their heads so that other people may see clearly that they upheld the language. Many hands with different skin colors indicated many races and nationalities that tried to make the “globe” a place on the high by upholding it; the representation of hegemony of the language. Such hegemony, in the EIL paradigm, is rejected as there is also a need to promote local context and varieties as the result of the language spread (Ishikawa, 2016b; Jenkins, 2014; Pennycook, 2007). On the other hand, the representation of the American continent was also the main focus of the globe as it was represented clearly on the globe and put in the center (Machin & Mayr, 2012). America belongs to the inner circle country (Kachru, 1990) and is considered as one standard English in the EFL paradigm. This represented that the upholding movement was also to glorify America as a remarkable country in making English become an International language because of the power of the country (Crystal, 2003; Holliday, 2009)

Cover of the textbooks and connoted meanings



Figure 2. Representation of globe and hand from the English textbook's cover by Kemendikbud RI

Secondly, the globe was a representation of the global condition, the spread of the language, and the importance of the language. In today's context, English has considered the global language (Crystal, 2003) where the language is considered important to be mastered. It also implied that English equaled the "world" which was why many hands, the second image, held and carry "it" on the head. It was such hegemony that the language was the symbol of honor and dignity. Many people carried "the globe" on their heads so that other people may see clearly that they upheld the language. Many hands with different skin colors indicated many races and nationalities tried to make the "globe" place on the high by upholding it; the representation of hegemony of the language. Such hegemony, in the EIL paradigm, is rejected as there is also a need to promote local context and varieties as the result of the language spread (Ishikawa, 2016b; Jenkins, 2014; Pennycook, 2007). On the other hand, the representation of the American continent was also the main focus of the globe as it was represented clearly on the globe and put in the center (Machin & Mayr, 2012). America belongs to the inner circle country (Kachru, 1990) and is considered as one standard English in the EFL paradigm. This represented the upholding movement was also to glorify America as a remarkable country in making English become an International language because of the power of the country (Crystal, 2003; Holliday, 2009).



Figure 3. The representation of "Oxford English Dictionary"

The last was the "Oxford English Dictionary". The use of this kind of dictionary asserted the "standard" that people should fulfill in the process of learning. In the EFL paradigm, people would consider the British English variety as the standard variety of the language.

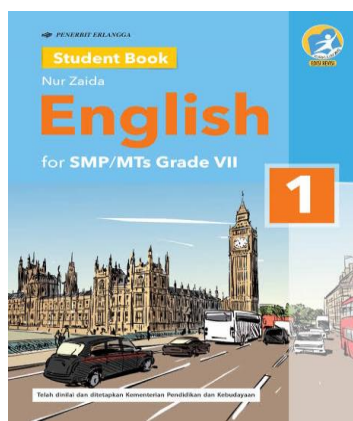


Figure 4. The second English textbook's cover from *Erlangga* Publisher

The second textbook represented native-centeredness as the only focus of the book. England belongs to the inner circle country and the origin of the language (Crystal, 2003; Kachru, 1990). One of the reasons for the spread of the language is also because of British colonization (Crystal, 2003). The publisher might think that the best way to represent English was also to represent the “origin” country. Meanwhile, English has undergone such a process that makes it belong to everyone as a global language, *Lingua Franca*, and a language for inter-cultural communication (Crystal, 2003; Holliday, 2009; Jenkins, 2014; Pennycook, 2007; Sharifian, 2009). Thus, it was not quite representative of the current situation if English was only seen as the inner circle belonging or all about the inner circle country. The spread of the language demands a further discussion of how the language can facilitate cross-cultural communication, the pedagogy that supports the current situation, or at least the acknowledgment of the implication of the spread of the language such as *World Englishes*. The case might show different outcomes when the cover also attached the other countries as they also developed English in the communication process. This coincided with the “excluded” as a strategy to see the possibility of the discourse and its implication (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

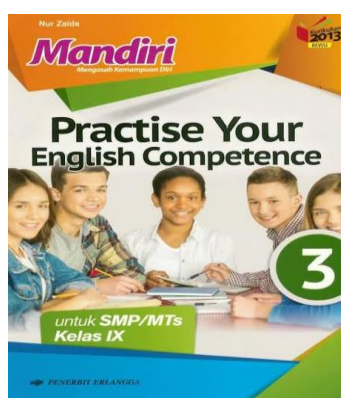


Figure 5. The English third textbook's cover from *Erlangga* Publisher

The third book was a book developed for a third-grade student in junior high school. On this cover, there was an excerpt “*Practice Your English Competence*” as the focus of the book as it was put on the center (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Here, the excerpt might only be the title of the book. However, the other focus of the book

was also the collectiveness of the subjects (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Collectiveness indicates that the subjects belong to one group and are not separable. This meant the need to use language between people all over the world.



Figure 6. The depiction of coloured boy in the third textbook's cover

However, the representation of a colored boy was also put in the center, to be exactly below the "*Practice Your English Competence*". Considering the representation of identity in visuals by (Machin & Mayr, 2012), the boy here represented a pivotal role in showing the idea. By putting the boy in the center of the group, the focus was on the boy. This was the kind of person that was related to the excerpt in the book as they were placed on the same overlapping element (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

This boy was placed in the back and surrounded by white friends. When someone or something is put on the back it might indicate the importance of the object/ subject. Besides, the white kids surrounding the boy also represent that English was in our surroundings. The gap between the boy and the kids was also seen that was different from the gap between the whites. This indicated that the "standard" which was represented by white kids and "non-standard" which was represented by a colored boy was real and demanded consideration.

The way they clothed also represented the gap between non-standard and standard. The more colorful the standard that means attraction and the more "plain" or "innocent" the non-standard was also considered as a "broken-variety" (Hariri et al., 2019; Young & Walsh, 2010).



Figure 7. The depiction of the colored boy on the third textbook's cover (2)

The above image was about a white boy putting his pen on a colored boy's book. This movement was likely to be the activity when someone teaches; directing the learner to the book, making notes for them, and showing the example. The way the colored boy held the book was also significant in the way it faced the white boy's direction which showed the activity of showing something or asking something. This, in the EIL paradigm, showed that the orientation of the language

is still the inner circle country. The US and UK are the only standards to look upon in the process of language acquisition (Ishikawa, 2016b).

Indonesia is not ready yet to Penetrate the EIL pedagogy in the implemented curriculum

This theme was in accordance with the second research question about the possible teaching practices as the implication of the visuals in Indonesian English language teaching textbook covers. (Machin & Mayr, 2012) suggest the possible implication can be exhibited through the discourse employed. Following the data aforementioned. The possible English teaching practices in Indonesia will hold the native standard English or simply native-centeredness. The implication of the practice is the view of correctness as the focus. Cross-cultural communication issues will not be discussed as the focus of EIL pedagogy. Language creativity and identity representation will not be a focus on teaching the language. the language will always perceive as a foreign language that holds no pluricentric view in the practice (Baker, 2015; Ishikawa, 2016a; Jenkins, 2014; Pennycook, 2010).

The reluctance to include the other varieties as they are considered broken English will also become a possible practice in English teaching in Indonesia. This is in line with (Hariri et al., 2019) who discovered the tendency in classifying English varieties other than UK or US as broken English. The study also reflects the reluctance of Indonesian English practitioners to include them in the pedagogy. This reluctance brings the student to a serious stake when they are expected as close as the native in using the language. There will be an underestimation of people whose English is very accented as their local languages dominate the way they pronounce the word. By considering at the current structures of Indonesia curriculum “*Kurikulum Merdeka*” in Indonesia as stated in *SK Kepala BSKAP No. 8 Tahun 2022*, the focus of learning process in on the ability to employ all skills (reading, speaking, listening and writing) within a wide range of text. The focus of learning is then neglecting the need of using the language within an intercultural communication that may involve native and non-native speaker interactions as well as the interaction between non-native speakers. Besides, the focus doesn’t consider the need to put local contexts that students may find those materials relevant and familiar to them as how the concept of communicative language teaching suggest (Renandya & Widodo, 2016a). Meanwhile, this second research question was only a prediction of possible practices in Indonesia. The discussion was employed by considering the analysis of the first research question.

Conclusion

In this study, the researcher attempted to find the hidden agenda, value, and/or ideas by looking at the visual or image (multimodal critical discourse analysis). (Fairclough, 1989) suggests that hidden meaning can be found in the use of discourse. This is supported by Barthes (1973, 1977) as cited by (Machin & Mayr, 2012) who propose that discourse can denote and connote. This study found that the covers of some English textbooks in Indonesia held “native-centeredness” as the desirable practice and outcome. The representation of some symbols in the covers revealed that this reluctance might result in the non-pluricentric view in the practice that held the monolithic standard of the inner-circle countries as the only standard to refer to in the process. The trends of the EIL pedagogy demand the

process to realize new shifts in the pedagogy (Sharifian, 2009). The process should cover metalinguistic awareness rather than grammar mastery, focus on strategies rather than rules, negotiation rather than correctness, language as a hybrid rather than language as homogeneous, language as changing rather than language as static, L1 as resources rather than L1 as a problem, and so on (Canagarajah, 2006 as cited in (Sharifian, 2009) (p.232). Further study is hoped to also consider the content of the textbooks implemented in Indonesia to confirm whether or not the cover shows the best representation of the contents.

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