

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) has emerged as a vital component in English language education, particularly in diverse classroom settings. ICC encompasses the ability to communicate effectively and respectfully with people from different cultural backgrounds by integrating linguistic proficiency, cultural knowledge, and empathy (Byram, 1997). This approach not only helps individuals navigate cultural differences but also promotes peaceful interaction and understanding. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the role of ICC in education has gained prominence, as it equips students with the skills needed to succeed in a globalized society. Moreover, the integration of ICC into language instruction fosters mutual respect, empathy, and a deeper understanding of cultural diversity, making it a critical component in shaping future global citizens (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2009).

In the Indonesian context, classrooms reflect the country's rich cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity, making the integration of ICC and peace education especially important. As such, the Indonesian educational system faces the challenge of fostering intercultural understanding in a context where tensions between various groups sometimes arise. Ethnic and religious tensions have been an ongoing issue in Indonesia, exacerbated by the country's vast cultural and religious diversity. While Indonesia's foundational philosophy, Pancasila, promotes the idea of unity in diversity, there are still frequent instances of intergroup conflict. These conflicts are often rooted in misunderstandings, prejudices, and lack of exposure to other cultural perspectives. This situation underscores the importance of introducing intercultural communicative competence and peace education to prepare students to understand, respect, and communicate with people from different backgrounds (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

Speaking skills play a pivotal role in promoting ICC and peace education. Effective speaking instruction not only enhances linguistic abilities but also provides a platform for students to engage in meaningful communication. In

Indonesia, all English language skills like listening, speaking, reading, and writing are emphasized equally within the national curriculum. However, the choice to focus on speaking skills in this research is rooted in the unique potential of speaking activities to foster intercultural communication and peace education. Unlike the other language skills, which are often assessed in more traditional, individual-focused formats, speaking requires active interaction and collaboration, making it particularly effective in promoting intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. In fact, Byram (1997) emphasizes that speaking activities such as role-plays, discussions, and debates allow students to practice empathy, negotiate meanings, and engage with diverse perspectives. These interactions create a dynamic learning environment where students not only improve their linguistic proficiency but also learn how to communicate respectfully across cultural boundaries.

The Merdeka Curriculum offers a promising framework for integrating ICC and peace education into the English language learning process. This curriculum emphasizes learner-centered, contextualized education, which allows teachers greater flexibility to incorporate themes of diversity, social justice, and global citizenship into lessons. These themes resonate deeply with Indonesia's national values as outlined in Pancasila, Indonesia's foundational philosophy, which stresses unity in diversity, respect for human dignity, and social justice. However, despite the Merdeka Curriculum's potential to promote these values, the English for Nusantara textbook currently used in 8th-grade classrooms falls short in fully addressing ICC and peace education. My preliminary analysis reveals that while the textbook does contain some elements related to these themes, the integration of ICC, linguistic features, and peace education is superficial. The textbook does not provide sufficient content or structured activities to help students develop the skills necessary for effective intercultural communication and peaceful conflict resolution. This gap highlights the need for a more intentional and comprehensive approach to teaching ICC and peace education within the curriculum.

Furthermore, peace education complements ICC by focusing on the cognitive and emotional aspects of fostering tolerance, empathy, and social cohesion. According to Stephan (2009), peace education encourages self-reflection, enhances empathy, and equips students with conflict resolution strategies. These skills are

crucial in Indonesia, where intergroup tensions persist. Integrating peace education principles into speaking tasks provides students with the tools to communicate effectively and resolve conflicts in respectful ways. By engaging with issues like human rights and social justice, students learn to navigate difficult conversations and contribute to building a more peaceful society. Peace education in speaking tasks helps students practice constructive communication and encourages dialogue that seeks to resolve conflicts and bridge cultural divides. As Wiyanarti and Logayah (2020) emphasizes, peace education promotes tolerance and diversity by helping students develop an appreciation for different cultural perspectives and fostering a deeper understanding of social justice.

In addition to linguistic skills, fostering empathy and mutual respect through structured speaking tasks can empower students to become agents of positive change. Students who are taught to navigate cultural differences with respect and understanding are better equipped to contribute to global challenges such as inequality, discrimination, and social unrest. By providing opportunities for students to practice these skills in a supportive classroom environment, educators can help shape future leaders who are capable of navigating the complexities of intercultural relationships and contributing to peacebuilding efforts (Deardorff, 2006).

In conclusion, integrating Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) and peace education into speaking tasks within the Merdeka Curriculum offers a powerful strategy for fostering cultural understanding, empathy, and peaceful coexistence in Indonesia's diverse classrooms. While the current English for Nusantara textbook for Grade 8 provides a starting point, it requires significant enhancements to align more closely with these educational goals. The integration of ICC and peace education principles must go beyond surface-level inclusion and be embedded in the curriculum through clear pedagogical frameworks and engaging activities. With the right adaptations, English language education in Indonesia can better prepare students to navigate and thrive in an increasingly interconnected and diverse world. Such efforts are critical not only for improving English language proficiency but also for nurturing a generation of young people

who are capable of contributing to a more just, peaceful, and culturally inclusive society.

1.2 Identification of The Problem

The integration of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) and peace education into English language instruction remains a critical challenge in Indonesian classrooms. While the Merdeka Curriculum offers an opportunity for a more contextualized and learner-centered approach to teaching these essential components, current textbooks such as English for Nusantara fall short in effectively incorporating ICC and peace education. The existing content lacks depth in addressing the cultural and social diversity of Indonesian students, leaving gaps in fostering intercultural understanding and empathy.

Furthermore, the existing materials do not provide sufficient activities or strategies to guide students in developing the skills necessary for effective intercultural communication and peaceful conflict resolution. Despite the presence of superficial elements related to these themes, the textbooks do not adequately equip students to navigate cultural differences, manage conflicts, or engage in respectful dialogue across cultural boundaries. This is particularly important in a country like Indonesia, where ethnic and religious tensions persist, and students need the skills to engage in constructive communication that promotes unity and mutual understanding.

In addition, there is a need for more structured speaking tasks that enable students to practice empathy, negotiation, and active listening, which are central to both ICC and peace education. Speaking activities such as role-plays, discussions, and debates have proven to be effective tools in enhancing students' linguistic abilities while simultaneously fostering intercultural dialogue. The current materials, however, do not sufficiently leverage these opportunities to develop these competencies.

The gap in integrating ICC and peace education in the English curriculum further exacerbates the challenge of preparing students to be global citizens who can contribute to peacebuilding efforts in a diverse society. The current state of English language instruction does not fully align with Indonesia's national values,

as outlined in Pancasila, which emphasize unity in diversity, respect for human dignity, and social justice. Therefore, a more comprehensive and intentional approach is needed to ensure that ICC and peace education are embedded within the English language learning process, providing students with the necessary tools to engage with and contribute to a culturally inclusive and peaceful society.

These issues underscore the necessity of developing intercultural-based speaking materials that not only enhance linguistic proficiency but also cultivate empathy, tolerance, and social cohesion among students. Such an approach is crucial for addressing the challenges posed by Indonesia's cultural diversity and preparing students to navigate an interconnected, globalized world.

1.3 Limitation of the Study

This research is limited to development of intercultural-based speaking material for eight grade junior high school students with linguistic practice and peace education in Merdeka Curriculum.

1.4 Statements of Research Questions

Based on the background of the study and the identification problems, research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What are students' needs in English Speaking material?
2. How is the supplementary model of intercultural and peace education material for English speaking developed?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

Based on above questions of research, objectives are formulated as follows:

1. To know students' needs for English Speaking material
2. To develop the supplementary model of intercultural and peace education material for English speaking

1.6 Significance of the Research

The significance of the research gives benefit theoretically and practically. These significances are discussed in the following section below:

1. Theoretical Significance

This research acts as a reference for integrating intercultural communicative competence and peace education into English language teaching, particularly in developing speaking materials.

2. Practical Significance

a) For Students:

The developed materials provide a reference for improving speaking skills, intercultural understanding, and peace education values, preparing students for diverse and global interactions.

b) For Teachers:

This research provides a reference for designing and implementing speaking lessons that incorporate intercultural communicative competence and peace education, aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum.

c) For Other Researchers:

This research provides a reference for designing and implementing speaking lessons that incorporate intercultural communicative competence and peace education, aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

To ensure clarity and avoid misunderstandings regarding the focus of this research, the following sections provide detailed definitions of key terms used throughout the study:

1. Intercultural-Based Speaking Material

Refers to English language teaching resources specifically designed to integrate intercultural communicative competence. These materials aim to help students understand, engage with, and communicate across diverse cultural perspectives while practicing speaking skills. This approach encourages the development of global awareness and cultural empathy through targeted speaking tasks.

2. Linguistics Features

Refers to the specific elements of language, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and discourse, that students are expected to practice and master through speaking activities. These features are integral to language acquisition and fluency, and the materials designed for this study focus on helping students refine their speaking abilities in these areas.

3. Peace Education

A pedagogical approach that integrates the concepts of peace into the learning process. It focuses on promoting understanding, tolerance, conflict resolution, and peaceful interactions among students. Through peace education, students develop the skills necessary to engage in respectful dialogue and foster harmonious relationships in both their local and global communities.

4. Merdeka Curriculum

Refers to Indonesia's educational framework that emphasizes freedom in learning, providing students with opportunities for creative, independent, and personalized learning experiences. It prioritizes the development of competencies, character, and local culture, while integrating intercultural communicative competence and peace education to equip students for global citizenship.

5. Successive Approximation Model (SAM)

An instructional design methodology that emphasizes iterative development and refinement of teaching materials through rapid prototyping, feedback, and continuous improvement. SAM allows for a flexible and responsive approach to designing educational resources, ensuring that materials evolve based on user input and effectiveness in real-world classroom settings.