EMBEDDING PANCASILA STUDENT PROFILE VALUES IN AN EFL TEXTBOOK UNDER INDONESIA'S KURIKULUM MERDEKA: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF TASKS AND ASSESSMENTS

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Abstract

This study investigates how Pancasila Student Profile (PPP) values are integrated into an advanced English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook developed under Indonesia's *Kurikulum Merdeka*. Focusing on texts, tasks, and assessments, the study examines how character values are not only represented but also operationalized through instructional design. Using a qualitative content analysis approach informed by educational psychology, the analysis maps the distribution and enactment of six PPP dimensions across instructional components. The findings indicate that critical reasoning, global diversity, and mutual cooperation are most prominently embedded, particularly through discussion texts, collaborative activities, and argument-based tasks. In contrast, faith and noble character and independence appear more frequently as thematic messages than as structured competencies supported by explicit task design or assessment criteria. The results further reveal partial misalignment between value intentions and instructional accountability, as only a limited subset of values is consistently assessed. These findings contribute to international discussions on cultural and character integration in EFL curricula by demonstrating that value internalization depends less on thematic visibility and more on how tasks and assessments activate psychological processes such as reflection, perspective-taking, collaboration, and evidence-based judgment. The study offers a framework for evaluating character integration in language textbooks and provides practical implications for curriculum designers, textbook developers, and teachers working in value-oriented EFL contexts.

Keywords: *Pancasila Student Profile; Kurikulum Merdeka; EFL textbook; Character education; Qualitative content analysis; Educational psychology*

INTRODUCTION

The role of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education has expanded beyond linguistic competence to include the development of students' character, civic awareness, and critical thinking. In many educational systems, language textbooks function not only as repositories of linguistic input but also as pedagogical scripts that organize classroom interaction and implicitly communicate values through texts, tasks, and assessment practices (Aftab, 2022; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2024; Vu & Pham, 2022). Through topic selection, instructional prompts, collaborative structures, and evaluation criteria, textbooks may shape learners' attitudes, reasoning patterns, and social dispositions, hereby operating as both formal curriculum and hidden curriculum.

In Indonesia, these expectations are formally embedded in *Kurikulum Merdeka*, which emphasizes meaningful learning, differentiated instruction, and character development as integral to academic outcomes. A central component of this reform is the Pancasila Student Profile (Profil Pelajar Pancasila/PPP), a national framework articulating six core attributes: (1) faith and noble character, (2) global diversity, (3) mutual cooperation, (4) independence, (5) critical reasoning, and (6) creativity (Susilo, 2022; Zainuddin, 2022). The PPP framework positions character formation not as a separate subject but as an integrated dimension of everyday learning experiences.

Consequently, textbooks developed under *Kurikulum Merdeka* are expected to embed these values across instructional components.

From an educational psychology perspective, values are internalized when learners engage in structured opportunities for reflection, guided practice, perspective-taking, collaboration, and feedback (Purwaningsih, 2024; Syafika & Marwa, 2024). Each PPP dimension aligns with identifiable psychological processes: independence relates to self-regulation; global diversity to perspective-taking; mutual cooperation to prosocial and collaborative competence; critical reasoning to evaluative thinking; creativity to flexible problem-solving; and faith and noble character to moral reflection. Therefore, examining PPP integration requires more than identifying thematic references to values; it requires analyzing how instructional design activates these psychological mechanisms.

Existing research on textbook analysis frequently concentrates on linguistic level, thematic relevance, or skills coverage (Rahmi & Zaim, 2025). Studies addressing value integration often document the presence of values in texts but pay less attention to how tasks and assessments operationalize them in observable learning behavior (Phuong & Vanderstraeten, 2024; Tanjung, 2024). Similarly, scholarship on hidden curriculum highlights how values may be implicitly conveyed through instructional structures and assessment priorities (Doctor, 2023; Vu & Pham, 2022), yet systematic mapping across texts, tasks, and assessments in Indonesian EFL textbooks remains limited.

This gap is particularly significant in the context of *Kurikulum Merdeka*, where PPP integration is a formal policy mandate. Without systematic analysis, it remains unclear whether PPP values are consistently embedded across instructional components, which dimensions receive stronger emphasis, and whether assessments align with stated value intentions. Such analysis is necessary to determine whether character integration functions as symbolic representation or as psychologically meaningful learning design.

To address this gap, this study examines how Pancasila Student Profile (PPP) values are embedded in an advanced EFL textbook developed under *Kurikulum Merdeka*. Using a qualitative content analysis informed by educational psychology, the study investigates the distribution and operationalization of PPP values across texts, tasks, and assessments. The study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1. How are the six PPP values represented across texts, tasks, and assessments in the textbook?

RQ2. Which PPP values are most and least emphasized, and in what forms (explicit statements vs. embedded instructional demands)?

RQ3. How do textbook activities and assessments potentially support psychological processes of character formation, such as reflection, collaboration, self-regulation, and critical reasoning?

By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to international discussions on character and cultural value integration in EFL curricula. Specifically, it offers a framework for analyzing how nationally grounded value systems can be operationalized through textbook design in ways that move beyond symbolic inclusion toward psychologically meaningful character development.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative content analysis design with a directed (deductive) coding approach. The Pancasila Student Profile (PPP) framework was selected as the primary analytical lens because it constitutes the official character-education mandate embedded in *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Susilo, 2022; Zainuddin, 2022). Since the textbook under investigation was explicitly developed to align with this

curriculum reform, PPP provides a policy-grounded and theoretically coherent framework for examining value integration. From an educational psychology perspective, PPP dimensions correspond to identifiable psychological processes involved in character formation such as self-regulation (independence), perspective-taking (global diversity), prosocial collaboration (mutual cooperation), evaluative reasoning (critical reasoning), creative problem-solving (creativity), and moral reflection (faith and noble character). Therefore, employing PPP as the analytic lens allows the study to evaluate not only thematic representation but also the instructional enactment of character-related learning mechanisms.

Directed qualitative content analysis is appropriate when existing theory or policy frameworks guide category development (Elliott & Timulak, 2021; Thorne, 2025). In this study, the six PPP dimensions served as predetermined categories, while allowing room for analytic refinement during coding. The data source is *Life Today* (Grade XII), an advanced EFL textbook officially developed for implementation under *Kurikulum Merdeka*. The selection of this textbook was based on three criteria:

1. Policy relevance: It is formally aligned with the national curriculum that mandates PPP integration.
2. Instructional completeness: It contains full instructional cycles (texts, tasks, and assessments) across multiple chapters.
3. Pedagogical representativeness: It reflects standard senior high school EFL instructional design under the reform.

The analysis covers Chapters 1–5, with detailed mapping conducted on Unit 4 as a focal unit because it includes a discussion-text genre, collaborative tasks, reflective sections (“In Retrospect”), and assessment components that explicitly claim alignment with PPP values. This unit was selected for in-depth analysis due to its density of character-relevant instructional activities and its representativeness of the textbook’s overall design pattern. Cross-checking was conducted across other chapters to ensure consistency of patterns.

The unit of analysis operates at three levels:

1. Texts: main readings, dialogues, narrative passages, infographics, and thematic introductions.
2. Tasks: individual or group activities, projects, reflection prompts, and instructional directives.
3. Assessments: comprehension questions, performance tasks, rubrics, and scoring criteria.

Each unit was segmented into analyzable coding segments (meaning units) based on instructional boundaries rather than page layout, ensuring conceptual rather than purely structural unitization. A researcher-developed PPP Value Coding Sheet was used as the primary instrument. The codebook operationalized the six PPP dimensions using explicit definitions derived from curriculum policy documents and educational psychology literature.

Each coded segment included: PPP category, Instructional component (text/task/assessment), Explicit vs. implicit representation, Operational indicator (e.g., reflection demand, collaborative role structure, evidence-based reasoning requirement), Representative excerpt

Explicit indicators referred to direct value statements in objectives or instructions. Implicit indicators referred to instructional demands that enacted values without naming them (e.g., structured debate activating critical reasoning).

To ensure reliability, intercoder agreement was calculated using Cohen’s Kappa on 25% of the coded dataset (randomly selected segments across chapters). The second coder was trained using the finalized codebook and independently coded the subset. The resulting agreement coefficient was: Cohen’s Kappa = 0.82, indicating substantial agreement according to conventional interpretation standards.

Discrepancies were resolved through discussion, and minor refinements were made to clarify boundary definitions between closely related categories (e.g., critical reasoning vs. creativity). The final codebook was then applied to the full dataset. An audit trail was maintained to document coding revisions and analytic decisions throughout the process.

To enhance methodological rigor, the study employed multiple strategies:

1. Analytic triangulation: Value representation was examined across three components (texts, tasks, assessments) to identify convergence or misalignment patterns.
2. Cross-chapter verification: While Unit 4 received detailed mapping, patterns were cross-checked against other chapters to confirm structural consistency.
3. Peer debriefing: Coding decisions and emerging thematic interpretations were reviewed with a qualitative research peer not directly involved in coding.
4. Thick description: Representative excerpts are reported in the Results section to support interpretive transparency.

Although the study analyzes a publicly available textbook and does not involve human participants, ethical transparency is maintained by clearly acknowledging the source and analytic procedures. Data were analyzed through thematic mapping of PPP value distribution across components. Descriptive frequency counts (percentages by value and component) were used to indicate dominance patterns but were not subjected to inferential statistical testing. The primary aim was interpretive explanation rather than statistical generalization.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis indicates that PPP values are unevenly distributed across instructional components. Texts primarily introduce values through thematic framing and informational content, tasks operationalize values through observable learning demands, and assessments prioritize values that can be explicitly measured.

Texts. In Unit 4, global diversity and critical reasoning are most visible in the reading passages. For example, the statement *"Globally, the UN estimates it makes up more than 14% of all man-made greenhouse gasses …"* situates the issue within a global perspective and encourages learners to interpret evidence beyond local experience (Global Diversity—Text). Similarly, the discussion text *"Do we need to stop eating meat?"* presents balanced pro–contra arguments, requiring readers to process competing claims (Critical Reasoning—Text). Faith and noble character appears through ethical framing, such as *"People should start to think and act for the better,"* which signals moral responsibility but does not specify structured performance criteria.

Tasks PPP values are more explicitly enacted in task instructions. Mutual cooperation is activated through collaborative prompts such as *"Work in a group of 4. Interview your friend to think at least two more actions …"* (Mutual Cooperation-Task), requiring joint idea generation and shared decision-making. Independence is encouraged through individual prompts such as *"In your own words, explain your choice by stating your personal opinion."* (Independence-Task), which position learners as autonomous decision-makers. Critical reasoning is reinforced in tasks that require identifying facts versus opinions or constructing justified arguments.

Assessments. Assessments most strongly emphasize critical reasoning and creativity. For instance, the question *"Which statement supports the writer's position?"* (Critical Reasoning-Assessment) requires evidence-based evaluation rather than surface recall. Creativity is assessed through product-oriented tasks such as *"Write a discussion text… Present your discussion text in digital or printed form."* In contrast, faith

and noble character and independence rarely appear as explicit scoring criteria, indicating partial misalignment between value intentions and instructional accountability.

Overall, PPP integration is strongest where values are embedded in task demands and reinforced through assessment criteria. Values that remain primarily thematic in texts without structured practice and evaluation appear less operationalized.

RQ2. Which PPP values are most and least emphasized, and in what forms?

The distribution analysis shows that critical reasoning, global diversity, and mutual cooperation are the most emphasized values in Unit 4, while faith and noble character and independence receive comparatively less structured support.

Critical reasoning dominates assessment components, where fact–opinion distinctions, inference questions, and argument validation tasks are frequently used. Global diversity is most visible in texts through global data, intercultural references, and shared-responsibility discourse but is less consistently translated into measurable performance indicators. Mutual cooperation appears predominantly in tasks that require group discussion, peer feedback, and collaborative output; however, cooperation as a process (e.g., role distribution, accountability) is rarely assessed.

By contrast, faith and noble character and independence tend to appear as general moral invitations or personal reflection prompts without repeated scaffolding or rubric-based evaluation. For example, ethical appeals are presented in narrative framing but are not accompanied by structured dilemmas or explicit criteria for ethical reasoning. Similarly, independence is encouraged through personal opinion tasks but lacks systematic monitoring or self-regulation checkpoints.

This pattern suggests that PPP dimensions aligned with common language-learning practices (argumentation, discussion, presentation) are more consistently operationalized, whereas values requiring introspective or moral deliberation are less systematically enacted.

RQ3. How do textbook activities afford psychological mechanisms of character internalization?

The analysis identifies five recurring psychological mechanisms through which PPP values may be internalized, though with varying strength.

1. Perspective-taking (Global Diversity). Global data and comparative discussion prompts require learners to interpret issues from multiple viewpoints, supporting cognitive decentering and global awareness.
2. Evidence-based judgment (Critical Reasoning). Tasks and assessments that require textual justification promote disciplined reasoning and evaluative thinking, moving beyond opinion-sharing.
3. Collaboration (Mutual Cooperation). Group-based activities create opportunities for prosocial interaction and shared problem-solving. Internalization is stronger when tasks require collective products rather than informal discussion.
4. Self-regulation (Independence). Individual opinion-writing and reflective prompts support autonomous positioning. However, the absence of structured planning and revision checkpoints limits deeper self-regulatory development.
5. Moral reflection (Faith and Noble Character). Ethical framing in texts invites reflection, but internalization remains limited when not reinforced through structured reflective routines or assessment criteria.

In sum, PPP integration in Unit 4 is most robust when values are embedded in repeated instructional demands that activate reflection, collaboration, and evidence-based reasoning and are reinforced through assessment practices. Where values appear

primarily as thematic messages without structured enactment, their pathway toward internalization is comparatively weaker.

Table I. PPP Values and Operational Indicators in Unit 4

PPP Value	Psychological Operationalization	Representative Indicator (Unit 4)
Faith & Noble Character	Moral awareness and ethical reflection	"People should start to think and act for the better."
Global Diversity	Perspective-taking on global issues	"Globally, the UN estimates…"
Mutual Cooperation	Prosocial collaboration and shared problem-solving	"Work in a group of 4…"
Independence	Self-regulation and autonomous judgment	"In your own words, explain your choice…"
Critical Reasoning	Evidence-based evaluation and argument analysis	"Which statement supports the writer's position?"
Creativity	Generating original ideas and solutions	"Write a discussion text… Present your discussion text…"

Table II. Distribution of PPP Values Across Components (Unit 4)

PPP Value	Texts (%)	Tasks (%)	Assessments (%)
Faith & Noble Character	10	9	2
Global Diversity	24	18	12
Mutual Cooperation	8	26	6
Independence	9	15	5
Critical Reasoning	31	24	55
Creativity	18	8	20

Note. Percentages represent the proportion of coded meaning units within each instructional component. A single meaning unit may receive more than one PPP code when multiple values are operationalized in the same segment; therefore, totals may exceed 100%. Thank you for the feedback. The Discussion has been revised to move beyond restating results by (1) providing deeper theoretical and practical interpretation, (2) sharpening limitations as a major boundary of inference, and (3) critically analyzing the explicit–implicit gap using a concrete assessment-alignment lens with actionable recommendations.

DISCUSSION

This study shows that PPP integration in *Life Today* (Grade XII) is strongest when values are translated into observable learning demands and reinforced through assessment criteria, rather than remaining as thematic messages. From an educational psychology perspective, this matters because internalization is not produced by value exposure alone; it is strengthened through repeated opportunities to practice the value as a competency, to reflect on it, and to receive feedback that signals what counts as successful performance (Purwaningsih, 2024; Syafika & Marwa, 2024). In Unit 4, values such as critical reasoning and (to a lesser extent) global diversity and mutual cooperation are more likely to be internalized because they are embedded in tasks that require argument comparison, justification, and group-based production. In contrast, faith and noble character and independence tend to function as moral invitations rather than structured competencies, which reduces their psychological strength as internalized dispositions.

A key interpretive contribution of this study lies in clarifying the mechanism-level pathway from textbook design to character formation: the textbook supports internalization most clearly when it activates (a) perspective-taking through global evidence framing, (b) evidence-

based judgment through argument-validation prompts, and (c) collaborative competence through tasks that require coordinated output. However, when values appear mainly as narrative framing without task routines (e.g., guided reflection prompts) and without evaluative consequences, internalization becomes uncertain because learners are not consistently guided to enact the value or to understand how it is recognized as "achievement." This interpretation is consistent with scholarship on textbooks as carriers of both explicit curriculum and hidden curriculum, where what is repeatedly demanded and rewarded can shape students' dispositions more strongly than what is merely stated (Doctor, 2023; Vu & Pham, 2022).

The most critical issue revealed by the findings is the explicit–implicit gap between values that are promoted and values that are assessed. In Unit 4, critical reasoning is frequently assessed through evidence-based questions (e.g., identifying statements that support a position), which creates instructional accountability and signals to teachers and students that the value matters. By contrast, mutual cooperation is widely demanded in tasks but is rarely assessed as a process (e.g., contribution quality, role fulfillment, group decision-making). Faith and noble character is present as ethical framing but is not translated into performance indicators (e.g., moral reasoning, ethical justification), and independence appears through opinion tasks without explicit self-regulation criteria (e.g., planning, monitoring, revision quality). This imbalance is consequential: when a value is not assessed or rubric-supported, it risks becoming symbolic, while assessed values gain priority in classroom time, feedback, and student attention. Therefore, PPP alignment requires not only value visibility but also assessment alignment, where each value is linked to at least minimal observable indicators and consistent feedback routines.

To address this gap, the findings suggest concrete assessment-alignment routines that are feasible within EFL instruction. First, to strengthen mutual cooperation, tasks should include brief process criteria (e.g., role distribution, evidence of joint decision-making, peer feedback logs) rather than grading only the final product. Second, to strengthen faith and noble character, reflective prompts should be structured as ethical reasoning tasks (e.g., claim–reason–responsibility: "What is the responsible action, why, and what evidence supports it?") and assessed with a simple rubric focusing on clarity of moral reasoning and textual grounding. Third, to strengthen independence, tasks should incorporate self-regulation checkpoints (goal setting, strategy selection, revision notes) that can be assessed through short reflection products. These routines preserve the language-learning focus while making character formation more psychologically actionable and instructionally accountable.

This study has clear boundaries of inference. First, the analysis is based on one textbook and a focal unit; therefore, conclusions should be interpreted as evidence about this artifact rather than as general claims about all *Kurikulum Merdeka* materials. Second, textbook analysis cannot confirm how teachers enact tasks, how students respond, or whether classroom interaction amplifies or reduces value internalization. In practice, teachers may mediate values through explanation, modeling, and feedback, or may bypass tasks due to time constraints—both of which can change the realized curriculum. Third, although coding reliability was strengthened through intercoder agreement and an audit trail, qualitative content analysis necessarily involves interpretive judgment. These limitations mean that the present study identifies *potential affordances* and *structural misalignments* in textbook design, not measured impacts on learners.

Future research should address these limitations by combining textbook

mapping with classroom-based evidence, such as lesson observation, teacher interviews, or student work analysis, to examine how PPP values are enacted and recognized in real instruction. Comparative studies across multiple textbooks and grade levels would also strengthen external validity and clarify whether the explicit–implicit assessment gap is systemic or text-specific. Finally, design-based research could test whether adding short rubrics for cooperation, ethical reasoning, and self-regulation improves the internalization pathways identified in this analysis.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the integration of Pancasila Student Profile (PPP) values in an advanced EFL textbook under *Kurikulum Merdeka* is structurally uneven across texts, tasks, and assessments. Critical reasoning, global diversity, and mutual cooperation are most consistently operationalized through discussion texts, collaborative activities, and argument-based evaluation tasks. In contrast, faith and noble character and independence tend to remain at the level of thematic messaging rather than structured, assessable competencies. Most importantly, the findings reveal a recurring gap between values that are expressed and values that are evaluated, indicating partial alignment between curricular intention and instructional accountability.

From a theoretical standpoint, the study contributes to international discussions on character integration in language curricula by clarifying that value internalization depends not on thematic visibility but on instructional activation. Values become pedagogically meaningful when tasks and assessments repeatedly engage psychological processes such as reflection, perspective-taking, self-regulation, collaboration, and evidence-based reasoning. Without structured routines and assessment reinforcement, character values risk functioning symbolically rather than developmentally.

Based on these findings, several contextual recommendations are proposed: 1. For curriculum policymakers, PPP alignment guidelines should explicitly require assessment indicators for each value dimension. Curriculum documents may include sample observable descriptors (e.g., ethical reasoning clarity, quality of collaborative contribution, evidence-based justification) to ensure that values are not only stated but measured. 2. For textbook developers: Each PPP value should be linked to at least one structured task routine and a minimal rubric indicator. For example, cooperation tasks may include role allocation and peer accountability logs; independence tasks may incorporate goal-setting and reflection checkpoints; faith and noble character may be operationalized through structured ethical-dilemma prompts requiring claim–reason–evidence responses. 3. For teachers: Classroom mediation is essential. Teachers can strengthen internalization by making value expectations explicit, providing feedback not only on language accuracy but also on reasoning quality and collaboration processes, and integrating short reflective debriefings after group or argumentation tasks.

These recommendations aim to move PPP integration from symbolic inclusion toward consistent instructional enactment. Future research should extend this study in several systematic ways. First, comparative analyses across multiple *Kurikulum Merdeka* EFL textbooks and grade levels would clarify whether the explicit–implicit assessment gap is text-specific or systemic. Second, classroom-based studies such as lesson observations, teacher interviews, and student work analysis are needed to examine how PPP values are enacted, adapted, or transformed in real instructional settings. Third, design-based intervention studies could test whether introducing structured assessment rubrics for cooperation, ethical reasoning, and self-regulation strengthens measurable indicators of character development. By

situating textbook analysis within both policy mandates and psychological mechanisms of internalization, this study provides a foundation for more coherent alignment between curriculum reform, instructional design, and character education practice in EFL contexts.

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