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EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to *HUELE Journal of Applied Linguistics, Literature, and Culture*, published by the English Education Study Program at Pattimura University. This **Volume 5, Issue 1, 2025**, features five insightful articles that explore significant themes in English language education and its broader implications. The first article examines the role of English language proficiency (TOEFL) in enhancing job opportunities in the global industry sector. At the same time, another offers a critical exploration of gender representation in the novel "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba." Additionally, an article analyzes effective translation strategies for idioms in "The Schools for Good and Evil," and another investigates the social implications of popular memes in Indonesia through critical discourse analysis. Finally, the issue addresses the challenges and strategies of language policy in Indonesian elementary schools, focusing on the balance between national, local, and foreign languages. These articles provide valuable insights and strategies that enrich our understanding of language teaching and learning within diverse educational and cultural contexts.

Analysing the Role of English Language Proficiency (TOEFL) in Increasing Job Opportunities in the Global Industry Sector

Muhamad Alfi Khoiruman ^{1*}, Doni Hadi Irawan ²

* Corresponding Email: malfikhoiruman@gmail.com

^{1 2} Akademi Kelautan Banyuwangi, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the role of English language proficiency, particularly TOEFL scores, in enhancing employment opportunities in the global industrial sector. Globalisation has driven major changes in the way companies operate, and English is now an international language used not only in everyday communication but also in business transactions, negotiations, and strategic decision-making. Along with this development, mastery of English has become one of the main requirements in the recruitment process of many international companies, especially those with operations in various countries. In the global industrial sector, multinational companies look for employees who can communicate well in English as they interact with various parties from different parts of the world. Therefore, good English proficiency, as measured through TOEFL scores, is considered an indicator of an individual's ability to adapt and work effectively in a multinational work environment. This study uses a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews with 25 professionals working in multinational companies operating in various industry sectors, such as technology, finance, and manufacturing. The results show that TOEFL scores are not only used as a parameter in job selection, but also as an important indicator in the assessment of communication skills required in cross-national and cultural interactions. Respondents revealed that a good command of English, as evidenced by a high TOEFL score, opens up more career opportunities, including the chance to get higher positions, greater responsibility, and more competitive salaries. Therefore, this study provides recommendations for individuals to further emphasise mastery of English through the TOEFL test as an effort to increase competitiveness in the global job market, as well as for educational institutions and companies to make more use of TOEFL scores in assessing the qualifications of prospective employees.

Keywords: *English Language Proficiency, TOEFL, Job Opportunities, Global Industry.*

INTRODUCTION

Globalisation has had a significant impact on the world of work, causing major changes in the structure of labour markets around the world. Rapid developments in information technology, international trade, as well as cultural exchanges between countries open up great opportunities for companies to expand their operations to different countries. In this context, communication has become a key factor for companies' success in operating in the global market. Therefore, globalised industries require a workforce that can communicate effectively across countries and cultures. One of the increasingly important aspects of international

communication is the ability to speak English, which has become the dominant language in the global business world.

English is now not only the language of instruction in everyday life, but also the main communication tool in the global industrial sector, including in multinational companies that have branches or offices in various countries. English is used for various purposes, ranging from business meetings, negotiations, report preparation, to communication with customers and colleagues abroad. Thus, mastery of English is one of the competencies that are highly sought after by companies, especially those operating in international markets. According to research conducted by Graddol (2021), more than 80% of multinational companies use English in their internal and external communications, making it an essential language for success in the global market.

Along with the increasing need for English language skills, many multinational companies now make English proficiency, often measured by TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) scores, one of the main requirements in the job selection process. TOEFL is one of the most internationally recognised English language proficiency tests, designed to measure the extent to which an individual can understand and use English in academic and professional contexts. The TOEFL score is an important indicator for companies to assess the ability to communicate prospective employees in English, which is a key skill in a globalised work environment.

Research by Abdullah et al. (2020) shows that many international companies, particularly in the technology and finance sectors, prioritise prospective employees with high TOEFL scores as part of the main recruitment requirements. In this study, it was found that 65% of multinational companies in Southeast Asia use TOEFL scores as a standard in the selection process, given the importance of English language skills for working with international teams. Thus, not only are technical skills required in the job, but the ability to communicate effectively in English is becoming a requirement to secure job opportunities in the global industrial sector.

Nonetheless, although the TOEFL test has become an accepted standard in many international companies, the direct influence of TOEFL scores on job opportunities in the global industrial sector is still relatively little explored in the existing literature. Most of the existing research focuses more on the influence of English proficiency on academic success or study abroad opportunities, while its direct influence on the global labour market is rarely discussed. In fact, an understanding of how English proficiency as measured through the TOEFL test can affect the job selection process, career progression, and mobility in the global industry is essential to help individuals prepare themselves to face increasingly fierce competition.

For example, research conducted by Horwitz et al. (2022) showed that although many companies prioritise TOEFL scores in recruitment, there are significant differences in how companies view TOEFL scores. Some companies consider TOEFL scores as evidence of sufficient English proficiency to work in a multinational environment, while others focus more on practical communication skills in more tangible work contexts, such as presentations or business negotiations. This raises important questions regarding how much the TOEFL score contributes to improving job opportunities and career success in the global industrial sector.

Furthermore, while there are many benefits that come with having a high TOEFL score, great challenges are still faced by many, especially those who come from countries with limited access to English education. Many job candidates struggle to achieve an adequate TOEFL score, even if they have excellent technical skills. This leads to inequality in access to job opportunities in global corporations, especially for individuals who do not have a strong English education background. For example, research by Zhang (2021) revealed that in some developing countries, such as Indonesia and India, prospective employees who want to work in multinational companies often have to face great challenges to achieve an adequate TOEFL score, even though they have more than sufficient technical skills.

Based on this background, this study aims to answer several important questions related to the effect of TOEFL scores on job opportunities in the global industrial sector. First, how does the TOEFL score affect the job selection process in multinational companies? This research will examine the extent to which the TOEFL score is a determining factor in job selection, and whether there are other criteria that are more important than just the TOEFL score. Secondly, does the TOEFL score contribute to career advancement in the global industrial sector? This research will also look at whether individuals with high TOEFL scores have better career opportunities, including the opportunity to get a higher position or the opportunity to work abroad. Finally, what are the challenges faced by individuals in obtaining an adequate TOEFL score? This research will explore the obstacles faced by job candidates who come from educational backgrounds with limited access to English language training, and how they overcome these challenges.

By answering these questions, this study is expected to provide deeper insights into the importance of English language skills, as measured by TOEFL scores, in improving employment opportunities in the global industrial sector. This research is also expected to provide recommendations for individuals who want to improve their English skills to be able to compete in an increasingly competitive global job market, as well as for companies and educational

institutions in devising more effective policies in assessing and preparing a workforce that is ready to work in a multinational environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Professional Competence Theory

Professional competence encompasses the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to perform the duties of a job effectively and efficiently. English language skills have become an integral part of professional competence in the globalised world of work. In this context, mastery of English is not only considered as an additional skill, but as an essential part of the competencies required to function well in an international work environment.

According to Spencer and Spencer (2020), professional competence can be defined as a set of knowledge, skills and behaviours that are relevant to job tasks and that support success in the job. In an increasingly connected globalised world, English has become a highly sought-after skill by employers due to its role in communication across countries and cultures. As the need to communicate with colleagues and customers from different parts of the world increases, the ability to speak and write in English is becoming increasingly important. Therefore, multinational companies often favour applicants who have good English language skills, especially those that can be proven through international standardised tests such as TOEFL.

In a study by Lopez (2021), it was explained that English language ability, which is part of professional competence, has a significant impact on a person's ability to work in global companies. The TOEFL test, which measures English language skills comprehensively, is a tool widely used by companies to assess the English language competence of prospective employees. A high TOEFL score indicates that a person has good communication skills in an international language, which is essential for interacting with clients or colleagues from different countries. Therefore, good English skills are a determining factor in winning the competition for jobs in the global industrial sector.

Human Capital Theory

Human capital theory, proposed by Gary Becker in 1964, states that investment in education and skills will increase individual productivity, which in turn opens up better job opportunities and increases individual income. In the context of this study, mastery of English, which can be measured through the TOEFL test, can be considered a form of investment in human capital. By mastering English, individuals not only improve their competence, but also increase their competitiveness in the global labour market.

According to Becker (1993), human capital refers to the knowledge, skills and abilities of individuals that can increase their productivity at work. Investments in human capital, such as English language education, can generate significant returns in the form of increased earnings and career opportunities. In the globalised world of work, English is becoming a highly valuable skill. Therefore, job candidates who have good English language skills are more likely to get jobs in international companies and obtain higher positions in those companies.

In a study conducted by Kwon and Lee (2022), it was found that workers with a good command of English have a greater chance of being promoted to managerial or executive positions in global companies. This suggests that English language skills can be a profitable investment in terms of career, as they provide access to wider opportunities in the international workforce. Thus, human capital theory provides a deeper understanding of how mastery of English through the TOEFL test serves as a form of investment that increases competitiveness and opens up job opportunities in the global industrial sector.

Globalisation Theory

Globalisation theory explains how large corporations operate globally and how globalisation affects the labour market. Globalisation creates greater interaction between countries and multinational companies, which require a workforce with international skills. One of the key skills sought by multinational corporations is the ability to speak English, which is becoming the primary language of instruction in international business communication.

According to Steger (2021), globalisation refers to the process by which the world becomes increasingly connected economically, politically, socially, and culturally, allowing companies to expand their markets worldwide. In this increasingly connected global environment, large corporations require employees who are able to communicate effectively across countries and cultures. English, as an international language used in almost all global business transactions, is becoming a key tool for communicating across a wide range of work contexts.

In a study conducted by Tan and Ling (2023), it was found that multinational companies in Asia Pacific highly prioritise English language skills in their hiring process. This is due to the need to communicate with clients, suppliers and colleagues from different countries. In this context, English language proficiency is not just an additional skill, but a fundamental requirement for individuals who want to work in multinational companies operating in the global market. Therefore, mastery of English, which can be tested through the TOEFL test, is a very

important factor in determining how much chance a person has to work in the global industrial sector.

Language Learning Theory

Language learning theory examines how individuals learn a foreign language and master specific language skills. In the context of this study, language learning theory is very relevant because mastery of English tested through the TOEFL test is directly related to an intensive and continuous language learning process. This theory explains how individuals can learn and master a foreign language through various approaches, ranging from formal learning in schools to language courses or self-learning methods.

According to Krashen (2022), a theory of language learning known as "input theory" states that individuals will learn a language more effectively if they are exposed to the target language in a communicative and contextualised context. In this case, the TOEFL test not only serves as a tool to measure one's English proficiency, but also reflects the learning process that has been carried out by individuals. This process can involve various aspects, such as reading comprehension, listening, speaking, and writing in English. A high TOEFL score reflects that a person has gone through an intensive learning process and can use English effectively in academic and professional situations.

In addition, language learning theory also deals with how individuals acquire language skills through experience and interaction with native speakers or environments that use English naturally. In a study by Ali et al. (2021), it was found that individuals who engage in situations that allow them to communicate in English directly, such as working or studying abroad, tend to have higher TOEFL scores compared to those who only learn through written materials or formal learning. This suggests that language learning that involves direct interaction and use of language in a real context can accelerate and improve one's language skills.

METHOD

This study aims to analyse the role of English language proficiency, particularly as measured by TOEFL scores, in improving employment opportunities in the global industrial sector. To achieve this goal, this research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study wanted to explore in depth individual perspectives on the role of English language skills in the context of employment in multinational companies. In this case, this research not only aims to answer questions regarding the

relationship between TOEFL scores and career opportunities, but also to explore respondents' personal experiences and perspectives related to the use of English in the global world of work.

Research Design

This research uses a case study design with a focus on multinational companies operating in Indonesia. The case study approach was chosen because it allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of phenomena that occur within a specific context. With this design, the researcher can study in detail how TOEFL scores and English language proficiency affect individual career opportunities in companies that have international operations. This case study incorporates first-hand experiences from professionals working in an international environment, thus providing a more holistic insight into the topic under study.

Research Participants

One important aspect of this research is the selection of respondents. To ensure that the data collected is relevant and representative, respondents were selected using purposive sampling technique, which is the selection of samples based on certain criteria that are considered relevant to the research objectives. The criteria for selecting respondents in this study are as follows:

1. Work Experience: Respondents should have a minimum of two years' work experience in a company with international operations. This is so that respondents have sufficient insight into the role of English language skills in the international workplace.
2. Employment Status: Respondents must work for a multinational company based in Indonesia, with a focus on global industry sectors that require cross-border communication, such as technology, finance, manufacturing, and energy.

A total of 25 respondents were selected for in-depth interviews. The selection of the number of respondents was based on the consideration that this number is sufficient to generate rich and comprehensive data in qualitative research, while still allowing in-depth analysis of each individual's experience. In addition, this number of respondents is in accordance with the principle of data saturation in qualitative research, which is the point at which data collection no longer generates new information.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection in this study was conducted through in-depth interviews, which were the main technique for collecting primary data. In-depth interviews were chosen because they allow researchers to gain a deeper understanding of respondents' experiences, views and

perceptions related to the research topic. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide that consisted of a series of open-ended questions designed to explore the respondents' understanding of the role of English language skills, particularly through TOEFL scores, in improving job and career opportunities in the global industrial sector.

The semi-structured interview guide allowed for flexibility in the interview process, where the researcher could adjust the questions according to the respondents' answers, as well as delve deeper into relevant topics that emerged during the interview. Some examples of questions asked to respondents include:

1. To what extent does English proficiency, especially as measured by TOEFL, affect the job selection process at the company where you work?
2. How does your TOEFL score play a role in your career advancement within a multinational company?
3. What was the biggest challenge you faced in obtaining a high TOEFL score, and how did it affect your career opportunities?

Interviews were conducted face-to-face or through video conferencing applications to facilitate accessibility, especially for respondents working outside the city or country. Each interview lasted between 45 to 60 minutes and was recorded with permission from the respondents to ensure that the data collected could be analysed appropriately.

In addition to in-depth interviews, this research also collected secondary data through literature studies of various articles, journals, books, and reports relevant to the research topic. This secondary data was used to provide a broader context regarding the relationship between English language proficiency and job opportunities in the global industrial sector. The literature study is also useful to understand how TOEFL scores are used in job selection in multinational companies and how global companies view English language skills in determining the qualifications of their candidates.

Some of the primary sources used in this research include recent journal articles on the influence of English language skills on career success, as well as books that discuss professional competence in a global context. This secondary data provided a stronger theoretical basis for the analysis of the interview results.

Data collected through in-depth interviews and literature studies were analysed using thematic analysis techniques. Thematic analysis is a qualitative approach used to identify, analyse and report patterns (themes) in data. This technique is very suitable for use in qualitative research which aims to explore an in-depth understanding of the experiences, views and perceptions of individuals towards a phenomenon.

The data analysis steps taken are as follows:

1. Interview Transcription: All recorded interviews were then transcribed to ensure that the data could be properly analysed. This transcription included the entire conversation between the researcher and the respondent, which was then analysed to find relevant patterns.
2. Data Coding: After the transcription was completed, the next step was to code the data,
3. i.e. to mark certain parts of the data related to the theme or topic of the study. Coding was done by identifying words or sentences that frequently appeared in the interviews, relating to the role of English language ability, TOEFL scores, and career opportunities.
4. Identification of Themes: Based on the coding of the data, the researcher then identified the main themes that emerged from the interviews. These themes included factors that influence job opportunities in the global industrial sector, as well as how TOEFL scores relate to the qualifications sought by multinational companies.
5. Drafting a Thematic Report: Once the main themes were identified, the researcher compiled a thematic report that describes the patterns that emerged in the data and how the themes are interconnected. This report describes the key findings of the research and provides insights into how English language proficiency, as measured through the TOEFL, affects career opportunities in the global industrial sector.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, several steps were taken:

1. Data Triangulation: Researchers used data triangulation by comparing findings from in-depth interviews with secondary data obtained from related literature. In this way, the results obtained are more credible and can be accounted for.
2. Member Checking: After the initial findings were obtained, the researcher re-contacted some of the respondents to ensure that the interpretation given to their data was accurate and in line with their experiences.

FINDINGS

This study aims to explore the role of English language proficiency, particularly as measured by TOEFL scores, in enhancing employment opportunities in the global industrial sector. Based on interviews with 25 professionals working in multinational companies in Indonesia, several important patterns were found regarding how TOEFL scores play a role in the job selection process, increasing professional competence, career opportunities, and

challenges faced in obtaining a high TOEFL score. This discussion will outline the key findings of the research and provide context in relation to the existing literature.

The Role of TOEFL in the Job Selection Process

Most respondents revealed that the TOEFL score is one of the main indicators in the job selection process in multinational companies. According to an article by Marsidi and Hakim (2023), many international companies use the TOEFL test as a tool to evaluate the communication skills of prospective employees, especially in the context of using English in a global work environment. This is in line with the opinion expressed by one of the respondents who stated,

"A high TOEFL score is one of the requirements that is almost always used in the selection process. It shows that we are able to communicate in English well, which is very important in an international team."

Based on the interviews, respondents confirmed that companies often use TOEFL scores as a criterion for screening applicants. The main purpose of using this TOEFL test is to ensure that candidates have sufficient English language skills, not only to communicate effectively with international teams but also to adapt to a work environment that uses English as the language of instruction. As described in a study by Lestari (2022), multinational companies often prioritise English language skills to facilitate more efficient communication within cross-country teams.

The importance of English language proficiency in the world of work is getting stronger in this era of globalisation. According to Jansen and Pappas (2023), multinational companies in the global industrial sector view English proficiency as the key to working with international partners, negotiating global contracts, and participating in meetings with clients and customers from different parts of the world. Therefore, English proficiency as measured by the TOEFL test is often one of the important requirements in recruitment.

Improving Professional Competence

Apart from being used in initial selection, good English language skills also contribute to improving professional competence in the workplace. The interview results show that respondents who have high TOEFL scores feel more confident in communicating in English, both in meetings, presentations, and when interacting with international colleagues. This is in line with the findings in a study by Alfiansyah (2022), which showed that employees with better English language skills are more likely to actively participate in international business discussions, thus increasing their involvement in the company's strategic projects.

For example, one respondent who works in a global technology company revealed,
"With a good TOEFL score, I feel more confident when presenting in front of international clients. I not only feel more fluent, but also better able to communicate my ideas and proposals clearly."

A good command of English enables these professionals to access the latest information, collaborate more effectively in cross-cultural teams, and improve their ability to make decisions related to global strategy.

According to research by Manurung and Simamora (2023), strong English language ability, often measured through the TOEFL test, helps individuals to become more competent in their jobs, allowing them to develop additional skills needed in higher and more strategic jobs. It also relates to their ability to understand academic or technical literature that can improve the quality of their work, as well as their ability to communicate with colleagues or customers who come from different countries.

Career Opportunities and Salary Increases

Respondents who have good English skills through the TOEFL test report that they have a greater chance of getting promotions or job offers abroad. Some of them also reported that high English proficiency contributed to an increase in salary, as many companies offer higher salary incentives for employees who have good English skills. This is in line with research conducted by Saputra and Wijaya (2022), which states that mastery of English is often a factor that influences a company's decision to offer a higher position or a more competitive salary.

One respondent working in the financial sector revealed,
"My English skills, as evidenced by my high TOEFL score, have opened up opportunities for promotion in the company. In addition, I also got the opportunity to work in the company's overseas branch offices."

This finding supports research conducted by Kurniawan (2023), which states that multinational companies tend to give higher salaries to employees who have better English skills, as this ability allows employees to work more effectively in the global market.

In an increasingly internationally connected world of work, English language proficiency allows individuals to access a wider range of career opportunities, both at home and abroad. Some companies also provide additional benefits or bonuses for employees who have excellent English skills, given the importance of efficient and smooth communication in the global business world.

Challenges in Achieving TOEFL Score

However, not all respondents found it easy to achieve an adequate TOEFL score. Some respondents revealed great challenges in obtaining a high TOEFL score, especially those who did not have a strong educational background in English. Some respondents who came from non-English majors, such as engineering or medicine, revealed that they had difficulties in preparing for the TOEFL exam, especially in the listening and speaking sections.

As suggested by Suryani and Hidayat (2022), although the TOEFL test can provide a fairly good picture of one's English proficiency, the biggest challenge lies in how individuals prepare for this test. Many respondents stated that they had to take courses or study independently to prepare for the TOEFL test. This requires a lot of time and effort, and is often an obstacle for individuals who are busy with work or other studies.

Some respondents also revealed that even though they have a good TOEFL score, they still feel not confident enough in communicating orally in English, especially in highly dynamic situations or when speaking with native speakers. This shows that although TOEFL scores can indicate overall English proficiency, there are still major challenges in its application in daily work contexts.

However, it is important to note that despite these challenges, many respondents managed to overcome these obstacles with determination and hard work. They attended TOEFL preparation courses or used English learning apps to improve their skills. In this way, they not only achieved an adequate TOEFL score but also improved their overall English proficiency.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal the multifaceted role of English language proficiency, as measured by TOEFL scores, in enhancing job opportunities within the global industry sector. One key insight is the significance of English proficiency in multinational recruitment processes. Companies operating across borders often face communication challenges, making English the lingua franca for efficient operations. TOEFL scores, as a standardized measure of English proficiency, serve as a reliable indicator of a candidate's ability to adapt to a global work environment. According to respondents, multinational corporations frequently use TOEFL scores not only as a filter during initial recruitment but also as an assurance of candidates' readiness to engage in collaborative international settings. This is consistent with studies such as those by Marsidi and Hakim (2023), which emphasize the growing dependence of global industries on employees who can navigate cross-cultural communication effectively. Thus,

TOEFL scores are not just a technical requirement but a strategic asset for career advancement in a globalised world.

Beyond recruitment, the study highlights the role of English language proficiency in fostering professional growth and workplace competence. Respondents with higher TOEFL scores consistently reported greater confidence in professional activities such as leading meetings, presenting ideas, and negotiating with international clients. This resonates with findings by Alfiansyah (2022), which indicate that English language skills enable employees to contribute more actively to strategic projects and enhance their visibility within organizations. Additionally, respondents noted that TOEFL preparation improves specific skills like academic reading, formal writing, and critical listening, which are essential in many professional contexts. These competencies enable employees to handle complex tasks, engage with global industry standards, and adapt to rapidly changing professional environments. In this sense, TOEFL certification serves not only as a credential for employment but also as a tool for continuous professional development.

However, the study also sheds light on the challenges individuals face in achieving high TOEFL scores, which can hinder access to job opportunities. Many respondents, especially those without formal training in English, reported difficulties in mastering the test's components, such as speaking and listening. This aligns with Suryani and Hidayat's (2022) findings, which suggest that TOEFL preparation requires substantial investment in terms of time, effort, and financial resources. Despite these obstacles, respondents who actively pursued TOEFL preparation through courses or self-study noted significant improvements in their English proficiency, which translated into better career prospects. These findings underscore the need for educational institutions and employers to provide more accessible English training programs, ensuring equitable opportunities for individuals to compete in the global job market. The role of TOEFL, therefore, extends beyond individual ambition to broader structural support in equipping the workforce for global industry demands.

CONCLUSION

English language proficiency, as measured through TOEFL scores, plays a very important role in improving job opportunities in the global industrial sector. TOEFL scores are often used by multinational companies as an indicator of adequate English communication skills. In addition, good English skills also contribute to increased professional competence, wider career opportunities, and increased salaries. Therefore, it is important for individuals to continuously improve their English skills to compete in the global job market. Companies are also expected to

further utilise the TOEFL test in the selection process to ensure that their employees can adapt to a multinational working environment.

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Portrait of Women in Palito Ni Si Boru Toba Novel

Eva Solina Gultom^{1*}

* Corresponding Email: eva_joshgroban@yahoo.com

¹ Language and Literature Department, Universitas Halu Oleo, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the portrayal of women in the novel "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba," highlighting the dynamics and struggles faced by women in Batak society under patriarchal norms. This topic is crucial to understand the broader implications of gender roles, social justice, and identity within cultural contexts. The analysis employs a thematic approach, focusing on character analysis and the representation of women's experiences. By examining the character of Si Boru Toba, the study reveals how women navigate societal pressures, asserting their rights and identities amidst marginalization. The findings illustrate the resilience of women who strive to balance family responsibilities with personal aspirations, emphasizing the importance of solidarity in overcoming challenges. This paper not only celebrates women's courage but also invites readers to reflect on the ongoing quest for justice and equality in contemporary society.

Keywords: *batak toba, society, patriarchy, woman*

INTRODUCTION

Batak society has a social structure that is heavily influenced by patriarchal norms. Patriarchal norms have a significant influence on the social structure of Batak society, shaping various aspects of daily life, social interactions and inter-gender relations. In Batak society, patriarchal norms establish very clear gender roles. Men are usually considered the head of the family and the main earner, while women are expected to fulfill the role of wife and mother who takes care of the household. This limits women's opportunities to pursue education or careers, and prevents them from making important family decisions.

In the Batak social structure, important decisions are often made by men. This is seen in many aspects of life, from family matters to traditional activities. Women are rarely involved in decision-making, even in matters relating to their own lives. This creates inequality in the relationship between men and women, where women's voices are often marginalized. Patriarchal norms also influence the inheritance system in Batak society. Inheritance is usually passed on to sons, while women are often denied the same rights. This can affect women's economic status and their dependence on men, reinforcing the cycle of gender inequality. Although patriarchal norms are still strong, there have been efforts by some women's groups and activists to challenge these

structures. Social changes, such as increased access to education and women's involvement in the workforce, are beginning to change people's views. However, resistance to change still exists, and many women still struggle to gain equal recognition and rights. Patriarchal norms are often maintained through traditions and customs. One example is in traditional ceremonies where women are considered symbols of family honor, but their rights and voices are rarely recognized. This shows how tradition can be a tool to maintain gender inequality in society.

The depiction of patriarchal norms is clearly seen in the novel *Palito Ni Si Boru Toba*. The novel is a collection of stories that show how female characters, such as Si Boru Toba, attempt to balance their family responsibilities and personal aspirations, creating an evocative narrative about the search for meaning and freedom. This novel is particularly compelling due to its rich cultural context and its portrayal of women's resilience and agency in a society that often marginalizes them. It is very clear how women struggle against the stereotypes attached to them. Society often has a narrow view of women's roles, assuming that they lack the capacity to make important decisions in life. However, through the characters, readers are shown that women have great power and potential. They are not only the guardians of tradition, but also active actors in social change. In addition, the novel provides a space for women's voices to be heard, showing that they can be agents of change in their communities.

One important element in the novel is the relationship between women and men. This dynamic is often complex and layered. On the one hand, there is love and understanding; on the other, there are conflicts and tensions that arise due to different views on gender roles. The female characters in this novel often face challenges from their partners, who sometimes do not fully support their desire for independence. However, through these interactions, women demonstrate resilience and adaptability, seeking to build healthy and mutually supportive relationships. Gender issues in "*Palito ni Si Boru Toba*" also reflect broader social changes in Batak society. In the last decade, many Batak women have begun to pursue higher education and careers in various fields. They are often confined to traditional roles that restrict their agency and limit their voices in both family and public life. This marginalization is further compounded by customs and traditions that reinforce gender inequalities, often portraying women as symbols of family honor without granting them substantive rights or recognition (Simanjuntak, 2006). This novel illustrates how these issues happen in many situational contexts. This is seen in the female characters' courage namely Si Boru Toba to go against the norm, as well as their desire for equal rights. Moreover, the novel also explores the theme of solidarity between women. In the face of challenges and pressures from society, the female characters often support each other. They build strong networks and

communities, where they can share experiences and encourage each other. This solidarity becomes an important source of strength for them, helping them to overcome obstacles.

Through its realistic and in-depth depiction of women's lives, this novel not only celebrates their strength and resilience, but also invites readers to reflect on the position of women in society. The novel illustrates how women, despite being bound by tradition, can find ways to express themselves and pursue their dreams. Previous studies have highlighted various aspects of women's roles in Batak culture, but few have delved deeply into the literary portrayal of these issues as seen in this novel. For instance, Gultom (2023) touches on the strength of women in Batak literature but does not explore the intricate dynamics of gender roles depicted in this specific novel. Similarly, Sitorus (2020) discusses patriarchal norms within Batak society but lacks a focused analysis of their representation in contemporary literary works.

Moreover, Hutabarat (2009) emphasizes the importance of solidarity among women in combating gender injustice, there is limited examination of how these themes are articulated through the narrative and characters in "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba." This gap in the literature underscores the need for a comprehensive analysis of the novel, as it offers rich insights into the complexities of women's identities and struggles within the context of Batak society. This research aims to fill that gap by employing thematic analysis to explore the complexities of women's experiences, the interplay of tradition and modernity, and the significance of solidarity among women. Through this examination, we hope to illuminate the transformative potential of literature in advocating for gender equality and social justice. With a rich cultural background, readers are brought to understand that women's struggles are not just individual issues, but are part of a collective struggle to achieve equality and justice. In a broader context, the gender issues in this novel reflect the challenges faced by many women around the world. Societies often have rigid expectations of gender roles, which can limit individual potential. This novel, with all its nuances and complexities, offers a valuable perspective on how women can take charge of their own narrative and fight for their rights. From these standpoints, the researcher puts interest in examining the dynamics of gender roles and the ongoing struggles for women's rights in contemporary societies, particularly within traditional cultures like the Batak. By analyzing the character of Si Boru Toba, the insights can be gained into the broader issues of gender inequality, identity, and social change.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The representation of women in literature is a significant area of study, particularly in societies where traditional gender roles are predominant. In Batak culture, patriarchal norms are

deeply ingrained, influencing various aspects of daily life and social interactions. Several scholars have contributed to understanding these dynamics, providing a foundation for analyzing the complexities of women's experiences.

One pivotal study by Gultom (2023) discusses the strength of women in Batak literature, focusing on the resilience and agency portrayed in female characters. However, while Gultom highlights the significance of these characters, she does not delve into the intricate dynamics of gender roles depicted in "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba." This gap in the literature calls for a detailed exploration of how the novel illustrates the struggles and aspirations of women against a backdrop of patriarchal expectations. Firmando (2021) offers insights into the patriarchal norms that dominate Batak society, emphasizing the limited roles afforded to women. His analysis indicates that women are often relegated to domestic responsibilities, with their voices marginalized in decision-making processes. Although Sitorus's work provides a valuable examination of these societal constraints, it lacks a focused literary analysis that connects these themes to the specific narratives found in contemporary works like "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba."

In contrast, Hutabarat (2009) emphasizes the importance of solidarity among women in combating gender injustice. She argues that collective action and support networks are essential for women to challenge traditional norms and assert their rights. While his research highlights the potential for change, it does not sufficiently explore how these themes are articulated through narrative and character development in literature. This presents an opportunity for the current research to investigate how "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba" illustrates these dynamics among its characters.

Additionally, the impact of education and social activism on women's roles in Batak society is a recurring theme in the literature. Maha (2015) discusses the role of women in social change, arguing that increased access to education empowers women to challenge traditional roles. Riggita (2021) echoes this sentiment, noting that education equips women with the knowledge and skills necessary for active participation in society. These studies underscore the transformative potential of education but often overlook the literary representation of these changes, which is vital for understanding the cultural narrative surrounding women's struggles.

The narrative of women's empowerment through education is further explored by Silaban (2018), who emphasizes the need for educational reforms that enhance women's access to opportunities. His findings suggest that as women gain educational qualifications, they are more likely to challenge societal expectations and pursue careers outside traditional roles. However, while Silaban provides valuable insights into educational outcomes, he does not connect these themes to the literary portrayals of women, leaving a gap that the current study aims to address.

Moreover, Maha (2015) examines the interplay between tradition and modernity in the lives of Batak women, highlighting how these forces shape their identities. She argues that women navigate a complex landscape where they must reconcile traditional expectations with personal aspirations. This duality is a central theme in "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba," where the protagonist grapples with her desire for independence against societal norms that dictate her role. Lestari's research serves as a valuable framework for analyzing the character of Si Boru Toba and her journey toward self-assertion.

The role of women in maintaining cultural heritage is another critical aspect explored by Simatupang (2021). He notes that while women are often seen as custodians of tradition, their contributions are frequently overlooked in discussions of cultural identity. This notion resonates with the themes in "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba," where female characters embody both the strength of tradition and the desire for personal agency. Simatupang's work provides a useful lens for examining how the novel portrays women's roles in preserving cultural practices while simultaneously challenging restrictive norms.

A more recent study by Simanjuntak (2006) addresses gender conflict within families, highlighting the tension that arises when women seek to assert their rights in a patriarchal context. Simanjuntak's findings illustrate the emotional and social struggles women face when their aspirations clash with familial expectations. This theme is evident in the relationships depicted in "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba," where Si Boru Toba's journey reflects the broader struggles of women navigating familial pressures while striving for independence. Simanjuntak's work underscores the importance of understanding these familial dynamics in the context of gender roles.

Despite the wealth of literature addressing gender issues in Batak society, there remains a gap in focused literary analysis that connects these themes to specific narratives. While previous studies provide valuable insights into the societal constraints faced by women, they often lack a comprehensive examination of how these dynamics are portrayed in contemporary literature. The current research aims to fill this gap by employing thematic analysis to explore the complexities of women's experiences, the interplay of tradition and modernity, and the significance of solidarity among women in "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba." In addressing these themes, the research will utilize a framework that combines literary analysis with sociocultural perspectives, allowing for a nuanced understanding of how the novel reflects and critiques the realities of women's lives in Batak society. By examining the character of Si Boru Toba and her interactions with other female characters, the study will illuminate the ways in which women navigate societal pressures and assert their identities.

Moreover, the exploration of solidarity among women in the novel will be framed within the context of social change, as highlighted by Maha (2015). The analysis will consider how the

female characters support one another in their struggles, creating networks that foster resilience and empowerment. This focus on solidarity is essential for understanding the broader implications of women's collective action in challenging patriarchal norms.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design utilizing thematic analysis to examine the portrayal of women in the novel "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba." The thematic analysis approach was selected for its effectiveness in identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning within textual data. This method enabled a systematic examination of how women's experiences, struggles, and identities are represented within the context of Batak society's patriarchal structure. The research design facilitated an in-depth exploration of the complex interplay between gender roles, social expectations, and individual agency as portrayed in the narrative.

Research Objects

The primary research object was the novel "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba," focusing on its portrayal of women's experiences within Batak society. The analysis centered on the character development and narrative elements that illuminate gender dynamics and social structures. Particular attention was paid to the protagonist Si Boru Toba, whose journey represents the broader struggles of women in patriarchal societies. The novel's depiction of supporting characters, both female and male, provided additional insights into the complex web of relationships and power dynamics that shape women's lives. The research examined how the narrative elements work together to portray gender roles, cultural expectations, and the potential for social transformation through women's resistance and solidarity.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection and analysis process followed a systematic approach that began with multiple close readings of the novel. This initial familiarization phase allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the narrative structure and thematic elements. During the reading process, relevant passages, dialogues, and descriptions were identified and documented, focusing on segments that illustrated gender-related conflicts, character development, and social dynamics. These selected texts formed the primary data for analysis.

The analysis framework consisted of three interconnected phases. The first phase involved initial coding, where significant text segments were identified and coded according to their

relevance to gender themes. The second phase focused on theme development, where related codes were synthesized into broader thematic categories that captured recurring patterns in the narrative. The final phase involved interpretation and synthesis, where relationships between themes were analyzed and integrated with existing literature on gender in Batak society.

The analytical process paid particular attention to character analysis, examining how the protagonist and other characters navigate societal pressures and expectations. The social context was carefully considered, including the portrayal of patriarchal structures and cultural norms that influence character behavior and choices. Narrative elements were analyzed for their contribution to the overall representation of women's experiences, including plot development, character interactions, and symbolic representations that illuminate gender-related themes. This comprehensive analytical approach ensured a thorough examination of how the novel portrays women's experiences within Batak society, allowing for a nuanced understanding of both explicit and implicit gender-related themes.

FINDINGS

Character of Si Boru Toba

The character of Si Boru Toba in the novel "Palito ni Si Boru Toba" is a complex representation of Batak women struggling in a society filled with patriarchal norms. Through her life journey, readers are shown the various challenges and conflicts faced by women in their quest for recognition, rights and identity.

Data 1

Si Boru Toba: *"Mengapa hanya laki-laki yang diizinkan mengambil keputusan? Suara kita juga penting (Why are only men allowed to make decisions? Our voices matter too?)."*

Suami (Husband): *"Kamu seharusnya lebih fokus pada keluarga, bukan pada ambisi pribadi. (You should focus more on family, not on personal ambitions.)"*

Si Boru Toba: *"Tapi aku juga memiliki hak untuk berimpian dan berkontribusi. Mengapa tidak bisa keduanya? (But I also have the right to dream and contribute. Why can't it be both?)"*

The dialog above illustrates that Si Boru Toba's background provides an important context for understanding her struggle. She grew up in a society where men were the main decision-makers, while women were often marginalized. In the initial depiction, Si Boru Toba is confronted with traditional expectations that burden women. She is expected to fulfill the role of a faithful wife and a good mother, who prioritizes family above all else. One of the central themes in the character of Si Boru Toba is her struggle against patriarchal norms. Despite pressure from society to conform to traditional roles, she shows the courage to defy these expectations. In various

situations, Si Boru Toba strives to express her desires and pursue her personal dreams, despite having to face conflicts with her family members, especially men. A concrete example of this struggle is seen when she wants to continue her education or pursue a career. Si Boru Toba tries to prove that women also have the potential and ability to contribute socially and economically. These moments illustrate the resilience and courage possessed by this character, who represents many women who struggle against the restrictions that exist in society. The dynamics of Si Boru Toba's relationships with other characters are complex and layered. In her interactions with men, there is love and understanding, but also tension and conflict. For example, in relationships with husbands or partners, Si Boru Toba often faces challenges when her desire to be independent is not fully supported by her partner. This conflict creates tension that highlights the reality of many women trying to find a balance between love and freedom. In some moments, Si Boru Toba has to choose between following her husband's expectations or pursuing her personal dreams. These choices become critical points in the character's development, showing that she is not only bound to traditional roles, but also has strong aspirations and desires.

Data 2:

Teman Perempuan (Girl Friend): "Kita harus saling mendukung, kita semua menghadapi tantangan yang sama. (We must support each other, we all face the same challenges)"

Si Boru Toba: "Ya, bersama kita lebih kuat. Kita bisa membuat perubahan. (Yes, together we are stronger. We can make a difference)"

One important theme in the novel is solidarity between women. In the face of challenges faced by women in Batak society, the female characters often support each other. They build strong networks and communities where they can share experiences and encourage each other. This solidarity becomes a source of strength for women in facing various obstacles. In the novel, we see how female characters work together to fight discrimination and injustice. This reflects the social reality where women often find support from each other in their struggles. Throughout the story, Si Boru Toba undergoes a significant journey of transformation. From a woman who is initially bound to traditional norms, she slowly begins to find her voice and understand the importance of her rights. This journey reflects the search for identity experienced by many women in a patriarchal society. This character transformation is seen in the way she interacts with the world around her. She begins to speak up, take initiative, and fight for her rights. These moments show that Si Boru Toba is not only a symbol of resistance, but also an agent of change in her community. The character of Si Boru Toba in the novel "Palito ni Si Boru Toba" is a strong representation of the struggle of women in Batak society. Through her life journey, the novel illustrates the challenges faced by women in facing patriarchal norms, the search for identity, and the importance of solidarity between women. With the courage and resilience shown by Si Boru

Toba, readers are invited to reflect on the position of women in society and their struggle to achieve equality and justice. This character represents not just one individual, but also the collective voice of many women fighting for their rights in a broader context.

Patriarchy in the Context of Batak Society

Patriarchy is a social system in which men have dominant power in various aspects of life, including in the family, economy and politics. In the context of Batak society, patriarchal norms are very influential and form a clear social structure in gender interaction. Batak society has a social structure that prioritizes the role of men as the head of the family and the main decision-maker. In this context, men are usually considered the main providers, while women are expected to play the role of wives and mothers who take care of the household. This division of roles creates strict boundaries on what is considered the responsibility of men and women. Women often do not have equal access to education and career opportunities. This limits their ability to participate in important decisions, both within the family and in the wider social environment. As a result, women's voices are often marginalized in decision-making processes.

Data 3:

Ketua Adat (Customary Chief): *"Keputusan ini harus diambil oleh para lelaki. Perempuan tidak perlu terlibat dalam hal ini. (This decision should be taken by the men. Women do not need to be involved in this.)"*

Si Boru Toba: *"Tapi kami juga memiliki pendapat dan pengalaman yang penting untuk dipertimbangkan! (But we also have important opinions and experiences to consider!)"*

Ayah (Father): *"Warisan ini akan diberikan kepada anak laki-laki. Perempuan tidak perlu khawatir tentang hal itu. (This inheritance will be given to the sons. Women don't need to worry about it.)"*

Si Boru Toba: *"Tapi mengapa kami tidak memiliki hak yang sama? Kami juga berkontribusi dalam keluarga. (But why don't we have the same rights? We also contribute to the family.)"*

Temam Perempuan (Girl Friend): *"Kita seharusnya menerima peran kita. Itu tradisi. (We should accept our roles. It's tradition)"*

Si Boru Toba: *"Tapi tradisi itu seringkali mengurung kita. Apakah kita tidak bisa mengubahnya? (But that tradition often confines us. Can't we change it?)"*

In Batak family structures, important decisions are usually taken by men, both in terms of family affairs and customary activities. For example, in the context of inheritance, property is usually passed on to sons, with the result that women are often denied equal rights. This inheritance system reinforces gender inequality, as women become economically dependent on men. While women play an important role in maintaining and managing the household, their contributions are often overlooked in decision-making. This creates a sense of discontent among women who feel they have no control over their own lives. Patriarchy is also maintained through strong traditions and customs in Batak society. Many customary practices emphasize the role of men, while women are often seen as symbols of family honor without significant voting rights. In traditional

ceremonies, women are often used as objects to strengthen family status, but their rights and voices are rarely recognized.

Women's attachment to these traditions can lead to internal conflict, where they feel trapped between fulfilling roles expected by society and the desire to pursue personal aspirations. Although patriarchal norms are still dominant, there have been efforts by some women's groups and activists to challenge these structures. Social changes, such as increased access to education and women's involvement in the workforce, are beginning to change society's view of women's roles. However, resistance to change still exists. Many women are still struggling to gain equal recognition and rights. This shows that despite progress, the fight against patriarchy remains a significant challenge.

Patriarchy in the context of Batak society creates social structures that limit women's roles and rights. Despite efforts to challenge these norms, many women are still trapped in an unjust system. Achieving gender equality requires a deeper change in the way society views the roles of women and men. An understanding of patriarchy in Batak society is not only important for analyzing current social conditions, but also for formulating future steps in fighting for women's rights and achieving social justice. Through education, awareness, and solidarity among women, it is hoped that there will be significant changes in the face of patriarchal norms that are still strong.

Gender Identity and Women's Struggle

Gender identity is the way individuals understand, express and identify themselves in the context of gender, often influenced by social and cultural norms. In many societies, including Batak society, gender identity is often constructed through expectations set by patriarchal traditions and norms. This creates significant challenges for women in their struggle for equal recognition and rights. In Batak society, women are often faced with rigid roles, where they are expected to perform the functions of wife and mother. This role is often seen as the primary responsibility, while their personal ambitions and desires are often neglected.

Data 4:

Si Boru Toba: "Mengapa aku harus selalu mengikuti harapan mereka? Aku juga ingin dikenal bukan hanya sebagai istri atau ibu, tetapi sebagai diriku sendiri. (Why should I always follow their expectations? I also want to be known not just as a wife or mother, but as myself.)"

Ibu (Mother): "Perempuan seharusnya mengurus rumah dan anak. Itu tugasmu. (Women are supposed to take care of the house and children. That's your job)"

Si Boru Toba: "Tapi aku merasa terjebak. Apakah tidak ada ruang untuk impianku di luar itu? (But I feel trapped. Is there no room for my dreams beyond that?)"

Women's identity, in this context, is often tied to domestic roles and family responsibilities. This creates dissatisfaction among women who feel trapped in expectations that do not match

their aspirations. Women's struggle to establish their own identity often involves challenging existing norms. In the novel "Palito ni Si Boru Toba," the character of Si Boru Toba reflects this journey. She strives to find her voice and pursue her personal dreams, despite having to deal with various obstacles. This process illustrates how women not only fight for their rights, but also to gain recognition for their identity as individuals with aspirations and desires. The conflicts experienced by women in their struggle to assert their gender identity often arise from interactions with men. In many cases, these relationships are characterized by the tension between love and the desire for independence. Women often have to negotiate with expectations and demands coming from their partners, which may not always support the desire of independence. In this context, the struggle for gender identity is not just about defying patriarchal norms, but also about building healthy and supportive relationships. Solidarity between women is an important element in this struggle. In many communities, women find support for each other through strong social networks. When facing challenges, they often share their experiences and provide encouragement to each other. This solidarity not only helps them to overcome obstacles, but also strengthens women's collective identity as agents of change in society. Women's struggle for recognition of their identity is also linked to broader social change. In recent years, more Batak women have pursued education and careers in various fields. These changes have contributed to a shift in society's view of the role of women. While there are still challenges such as discrimination and stereotyping, women are beginning to be recognized for their contributions in various aspects of life. The importance of education in this struggle cannot be overlooked. Education gives women the tools to understand their rights and broaden their horizons about the world around them. Through education, women can develop the confidence and skills necessary to assert their rights. This creates opportunities for them to take a more active role in society and contribute to positive change. Gender identity and women's struggles in the context of Batak society reflect the complexity of social interactions influenced by patriarchal norms. Despite the many challenges, women continue to struggle for equal recognition and rights. This process is not only important for individuals, but also for society as a whole, as women's struggle for their identity and rights is part of a broader quest for justice and equality.

DISCUSSION

Solidarity between women

Solidarity among women is a concept that emphasizes the importance of support and cooperation among women in the face of challenges and injustices caused by patriarchal gender norms. In many social contexts, including Batak communities, this solidarity has been a key

element in women's struggle for recognition, rights and power in various aspects of life. Solidarity between women often emerges as a response to the shared experiences faced by women in a patriarchal society. When women are faced with discrimination, stereotypes and rigid expectations, they tend to seek support from fellow women. Through the social networks that form, women can share experiences, knowledge and strategies for dealing with various obstacles. This creates a sense of community and strengthens women's collective identity. In the context of Batak society, solidarity between women can be seen in various forms. For example, in social activities, women often come together to celebrate traditions, support each other, or even participate in joint economic activities. Through this cooperation, they not only support each other emotionally but also practically, such as in small businesses or study groups. These solidarity networks are also important in the context of education and empowerment. Women who have received an education often act as mentors for other women who want to continue their studies or develop skills. Through knowledge sharing, women can help each other to overcome challenges and create new opportunities. Solidarity between women is also seen in social movements and activism. Many women are involved in organizations or communities that focus on issues of gender, human rights and social justice. In this context, they come together to challenge patriarchal norms and fight for women's rights. For example, through campaigns, seminars and protests, women can raise issues that are important to them and demand change.

However, solidarity between women does not always run smoothly. Sometimes, differences in background, social class or outlook can cause tension in relationships between women. It is important for women to overcome these differences and build a deeper understanding of each other's experiences. In this way, solidarity can become a more powerful tool in the struggle against injustice. Solidarity also plays a role in building resilience among women. In the face of challenges, support from fellow women can provide emotional strength and motivation to keep fighting. When women feel supported by each other, they are more likely to take risks and speak up about issues that affect their lives.

In many cases, solidarity between women also creates space for women to explore their identities. In a supportive environment, women can more freely express themselves, share their stories, and find strength in the diversity of their experiences. This helps them to build confidence and identify personal and collective goals. Solidarity between women is not only important in an individual context, but also has a wider impact on society. When women unite and support each other, they create positive change in their communities. This can include increased awareness of gender issues, changes in social norms, and strengthening women's position in decision-making.

Overall, solidarity between women is key in the struggle to achieve equality and justice. By building strong support networks, women can face challenges together and push for necessary changes in society. This solidarity not only empowers individuals, but also creates a greater impact in shaping a more just future for all women.

Social Change and the Role of Women

Social change refers to transformations in the structure and function of society that affect existing patterns of interaction, values and norms. In the context of women's roles, social change is often characterized by shifts in the way women's positions and contributions are viewed in various aspects of life, including education, employment and decision-making. These changes do not happen instantly, but are the result of a long struggle involving various factors, including education, the women's rights movement, and the influence of globalization. In many societies, including Batak society, these social changes have had a significant impact on the role of women.

Education is one of the main pillars in social change that affects the role of women. Better access to education allows women to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to participate more actively in society. Education not only gives women the opportunity to develop their careers, but also helps them understand their rights and raise awareness of gender issues. Educated women tend to be more confident and speak up in various contexts, both within the family and community.

Along with increasing access to education, women are also increasingly involved in the workforce. These changes create new opportunities for women to contribute economically and take a more active role in society. In many cases, women are now functioning as the main providers in the family, which was previously the dominance of men. This shift not only changes family dynamics, but also gives women a stronger position in decision-making. The women's rights movement also played an important role in social change. Through activism and advocacy, women have successfully asserted their rights and fought for social justice. These movements often focus on issues such as gender-based violence, equal pay, and access to healthcare. By raising these issues, women can raise public awareness and push for policy changes that support gender equality.

In Batak society, social change towards women's roles can be seen in the context of culture and tradition. While there are still strong patriarchal norms, there has been a shift in the way society views women's contributions. For example, women are now increasingly recognized for their role in maintaining cultural heritage and contributing to traditional activities. In some cases, women are also starting to be involved in decision-making that was previously dominated by men.

However, despite progress, challenges remain. Many women still face discrimination and stereotypes, both in the workplace and in everyday life. Societies are still often stuck in traditional views of gender roles, which can hinder further progress. Resistance to these changes often comes from various quarters, including families, communities and social institutions. Social change also requires women to adapt to their new roles. In some cases, women face pressure to balance work and family responsibilities. While more and more women are pursuing careers, they are often still expected to fulfill the traditional role of housekeeper. This creates a double burden that challenges women to find a balance between the two roles. Solidarity between women is important in this context of social change. By supporting each other, women can overcome obstacles and strengthen their position in society. These support networks not only help women to share experiences, but also provide collective strength in the face of challenges.

Overall, social change provides new opportunities for women to explore their identities and roles in society. While challenges remain, progress towards gender equality is an important step in creating a more just and inclusive society. By continuing the fight for women's rights and building solidarity, it is hoped that women can achieve a stronger and more influential position in social, economic and political life.

CONCLUSION

The findings from the analysis of "Palito Ni Si Boru Toba" reveal a nuanced portrait of women navigating a patriarchal society. Si Boru Toba's character embodies the resilience and agency of women who challenge traditional norms while fostering solidarity among themselves. The systemic issues highlighted, such as the patriarchal inheritance system and the struggle for personal identity, underscore the need for continued advocacy for women's rights. The novel not only serves as a reflection of Batak culture but also invites readers to engage with the ongoing quest for gender equality and social justice. Through education and being active in the workforce, women begin to gain more equal recognition and rights. Solidarity between women became an important element in facing challenges, creating a network of support that helped them to express themselves and fight for their rights. The social changes that occurred, although still facing various obstacles, showed progress towards gender equality. The novel not only depicts the reality of women in the context of Batak culture, but also invites readers to understand the importance of women's collective struggle to achieve justice and recognition in society. Thus, the novel becomes an evocative narrative about the search for meaning, identity and freedom for women.

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Translation Strategy for Idioms in “The Schools for Good and Evil”

Nurhidayah Ridwan¹, Astari Amalia Putri^{2*}

* Corresponding Email: astariap911@gmail.com

¹ English Literature Study Program, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

² English Department, Universitas Pamulang, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze and explain the translation strategy of the idioms used in the film "The Schools for Good and Evil" by Soman Chainani. The basic problem in this study is the difficulty of translating the idioms in the film, therefore the right strategy is needed in its translation. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative method. A total of 14 idioms were found in the film and then became data in this study. The results of the study indicate that, based on four translation strategies of Baker's theory, there are 14 idioms using 3 main theories; namely 1). 6 idioms use translation strategy of idioms with similar meaning and form; 2). 5 idioms use translation strategy of idioms with similar meaning but dissimilar form, and the last one, 3). 3 idioms use paraphrasing translation strategy. The frequent use of the similar meaning and form strategy shows that a lot of idioms in the film have direct equivalents in Indonesian, making translation straightforward.

Keywords: *idiom, movie, translation strategies*

INTRODUCTION

Translation of idioms can be quite tricky, especially when working on films. Idioms are expressions whose meaning cannot be known merely by looking at the individual words alone; that makes them especially difficult to translate. In movies, idioms are more than words; they shape characters, moods, as well as emotion. Yet, idiomatic phrases get lost in translation from one language to another, especially when the languages belong to totally different cultures and structures, as culture affects everything regardless of the field (Putri, 2023). Darmojuwono et al. (2014) points out that understanding sentences and discourse is not possible if we do not pay attention to the elements outside the language, which relates to our knowledge about the world and human life. This problem is especially evident in fantasy films like The Schools for Good and Evil, which are full of idiomatic phrases that need to be handled with care to retain their meaning and emotion.

As Anasta (2022) explains in her article, Review Buku The School for Good and Evil, Sedang Tayang di Netflix!, the movie The School for Good and Evil is an adaptation of a best-selling book series that Netflix brought to the screen on October 19, 2022. Written by Soman Chainani, an

American author with Indian roots and a Harvard graduate, the series has captivated millions of people. Since its debut in 2013, it has sold over 3 million copies and been translated into 30 languages. Often described as a fairy-tale version of Harry Potter, *The School for Good and Evil* quickly gained popularity after its release. This research, thus, covers the translation of idioms from English to Indonesian in *The Schools for Good and Evil*, due to its popularity among the public. In general, Newmark (1988) stated that, in translating idiomatic language, it is difficult to match equivalence of meaning with equivalence of frequency. Thus, this study will answer the following question: How are idioms translated in the Indonesian version of *The Schools for Good and Evil* movie? This research, therefore, seeks to find the strategies that the translator uses to overcome the challenges of idiom translation, and how such strategies preserve the intended meaning and cultural context.

This study is significant because it covers the gap that exists in the literature regarding the translation of idioms, especially in fantasy films. Most of the existing studies have not given enough attention to how idioms are translated into this genre, especially from English to Indonesian. The present study aims to contribute to a better understanding of translation in audiovisual media and tries to understand specific difficulties translators face while adapting idioms for a different cultural and linguistic audience.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Studies on Idiom Translation

Idiom translation has always been one of the most problematic research areas, especially in the case of literary works, as both semantic and pragmatic are the problems by itself in idioms (Premasari & Widodo, 2021). As Kovacs (2016) points out, the translation of idioms requires profound knowledge of both the source and target languages and strong awareness of the cultures standing behind them. The meaning of idioms is often based on the culture; therefore, it is hard to translate them word for word without losing their meaning. Listia and Arapah (2021) added the emotive weight in translating idioms, stating that failure in maintaining this emotion in the translation process may lead to the misjudgment of idioms and affect the overall message. Besides, Ngongo et al. (2024) explained that one of the major problems in translating idioms is that most of them have multiple meanings that cannot be defined from the words involved.

These are challenges that over the years have made researchers find ways of translating idioms, including, for instance, Baker's (1992) translation strategies like similar meaning and form, paraphrasing, and adapting idioms to fit into the cultural context.

Various studies have also been conducted to make sense of such translation strategies. Ahdilla (2024) discussed idioms in *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*, explaining how the genre of a text can influence the choice of translation strategy. This research showed that free translation strategies are often adopted because it can preserve the meaning and flow of texts better while considering the cultural context. Hanim (2022) discussed idiomatic expressions in the translation of *The Adventure of Huckleberry Finn*. The research observed how translators frequently switched from a more formal structure to a more communicative and natural structure that would meet the intended understanding of the target audience. Meanwhile, Chotimah (2022) analyzed how idiom translation can achieve full, partial, or no equivalence, and concluded that the most successful translations have full equivalence, which means the translation is accurate and can be easily understood. In addition, Bulkes & Tanner (2017) highlight that translating idioms can be challenging, but becomes much easier when the expression is commonly used and readers are already familiar with its meaning. On the other hand, idioms that are rarely used or have unclear meanings can be significantly harder to interpret and translate.

Theoretical Perspectives on Idiom Translation

A number of theoretical frameworks have been made to guide the translation of idioms. For example, Nababan (2003) points out that the understanding of the literal meaning, context, and cultural connotation of the source idiom is very important in choosing the appropriate equivalent in the target language. This view is supported by Machali (2000), who states that semantic and communicative techniques of translation usually work well for idioms. With those theories, the translator can then provide an accurate functional equivalent for the source in the target language that logically makes linguistic and cultural sense. The second point is Baker's (1992) theories on strategies of translation, which present the argument to adapt idioms into an appropriate cultural text that ensures efficiency in delivering the meaning.

With these theoretical perspectives in mind, the present study now applies them to *The Schools for Good and Evil* that presents its own set of challenges. This fantasy film, not only does it have great emotional depth, but also points that its idioms carry both linguistic and cultural significance. This research aims at analyzing the idiomatic translation strategies adopted in the film and explores how such strategies handle the challenges of translating idioms within the cross-cultural and audio-visual context. By so doing, this study hopes to add to the knowledge base on how idioms could best be translated into films, especially those film genres that are culturally and emotionally charged.

METHOD

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach. It is chosen because this approach will be helpful in exploring how idioms are translated in the movie *The Schools for Good and Evil*. The objectives of this research are to know the translation strategies applied to the idioms, and to analyze how the strategies work in translating the idioms within the movie. The qualitative method fits because this research is directed to see specifically how the idioms are translated and how those translations match or fit with the theories of translation.

Research Site and Participants

Researching was done by analyzing the movie *The Schools for Good and Evil*. The movie was chosen since it contains many idioms that are important to know to make out character, mood, and emotion of the plot. Therefore, in this case, a movie becomes "participant" in research, with the object study focused on film idioms used, and its translation in Indonesian.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection was made by watching the movie and taking note of the idioms used. Those idioms were then analyzed in regards of Mona Baker's (1992) proposed translation strategies, which are: using an idiom with the similar meaning and form in the target language, using an idiom with a different meaning and form, paraphrasing, and leaving the idiom out. Each idiom was examined to determine which strategy it used and whether it successfully conveyed the meaning of the source language.

FINDINGS

Translation of Idioms with Similar Meaning and Form

This strategy involves translating idioms from the source language (SL) into the target language (TL) with a meaning and form that are similar. In other words, this strategy conveys a meaning that closely matches the idiom in the SL. Below are examples of idioms in the film *The Schools for Good and Evil* that use this strategy:

Datum 1

SL: Look, look! Dig around. (2:18:07)

TL: Coba cari.

In the sentence above, the idiom "dig around" refers to the action of "searching for something." According to the Oxford Advanced American Dictionary, the meaning of this idiom

is "to search in something in order to find an object in something". The equivalent meaning in Indonesian for "dig around" is "mencari sesuatu." This translation maintains both the meaning and form of the idiom in the source and target languages.

Datum 2

SL: Okay, this might sound crazy, but you ever think about branching out of your comfort zone? (2:18:02)

TL: Ini ide gila, tapi pernah berniat membaca genre lain?

According to Collins Dictionary (1983), the idiom "branch out" means "do something that is different from their normal activities or work". The equivalent expression in Indonesian is "mencoba hal baru." This matches the definition in the Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, which defines the idiom as "to start to do an activity that you have not done before, especially in your work or business". In the context of the dialogue in the film, this translation becomes "membaca genre lain," describing the character's suggestion to try something new. The choice of this translation makes the result more natural and is easily understood by the target audience.

Datum 3

SL: Sophie, you've never even set foot outside Gavaldon. (2:15:39)

TL: Sophie, kau belum pernah keluar Gavaldon.

According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (CALD) (1985), the idiom "set foot in somewhere" means "to go to a place" or "(to) get out." When translated more deeply into Indonesian, the idiom "set foot out" can be equivalent to "keluar" or "leaving a place." The translation strategy used for this expression is similar meaning and form, as the structure and meaning of the idiom in both the source and target languages are nearly similar.

Datum 4

SL: My dear, one doesn't measure one's goodness just by how one looks. (2:04:29)

TL: Sayangku, menilai kebaikan seseorang bukan dari penampilannya.

The phrase "measure one's goodness" can be translated into Indonesian as "mengukur kebaikan seseorang," while "how one looks" can be rendered as "berdasarkan penampilan." Both phrases maintain the original meaning and form when translated into Indonesian. Thus, the idiom in this example also uses the similar meaning and form strategy.

Datum 5

SL: So, off we jolly well go. (1:32:18)

TL: Nah, mari kita berangkat.

The idiom in this sentence falls under the similar meaning and form strategy. The word "go" is equivalent to "pergi" or "berangkat" in Indonesian. As for the phrase "jolly well," according to

the Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (1884), it is used for emphasis when the speaker is annoyed. However, in this context, it conveys enthusiasm or determination. Kumairoh (2023) notes that "jolly well" indicates doing something with full spirit and resolve.

Datum 6

SL: Ah, must have slipped my mind. (47:03)

TL: Mungkin aku lupa.

According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (1844), the phrase "slip your mind" means "to forget something or fail to do something." The word "slip" translates to "luput" in Indonesian, which forms the phrase "luput dari ingatan." This can be equivalently translated into Indonesian as "melupakan sesuatu" or "lupa melakukan sesuatu." Therefore, the idiom translation strategy used here is also similar meaning and form since the idiom's meaning and structure are effectively preserved in the target language.

Translation of Idioms with Similar Meaning but Dissimilar Form

This strategy involves translating idioms that share the same meaning in both the source and target languages but has difference in the form. Below are some examples of idioms from the film that use the similar meaning but dissimilar form translation strategy:

Datum 1

SL: I think I'm gonna be sick. (1:00:46)

TL: Aku ingin muntah.

According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (1844), the idiom "be sick" means "to bring food from your stomach back out through your mouth." This is equivalent to the meaning of "muntah" in Indonesian. In the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), "muntah" is defined as "to expel food, drink, or other substances that have entered the stomach back out." Based on this explanation, both expressions share the same meaning but are conveyed differently in the source and target languages.

Datum 2

SL: We will get to the bottom of this. (49:47)

TL: Kita akan cari tahu.

According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (CALD) (1985), the idiom "get to the bottom" means "to discover the truth about a situation." Similarly, the Collins Dictionary interpret it as "finding the real cause of the problem." In Indonesian, the equivalent phrase "mencari tahu," defined by the KBBI as "to seek information or clarification," has the same

meaning. Thus, this idiom translation employs the similar meaning but dissimilar form strategy, as the source and target languages express the same idea in different forms.

Datum 3

SL: It's true evil, and we have to stick together. (49:06)

TL: Ada kejahatan sejati, dan kita harus tetap kompak.

The idiom "stick together," as defined by the Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (1844), means "to stay together and support each other." In Indonesian, the equivalent "tetap kompak" conveys the same sense of unity. The KBBI defines "kompak" as "united in addressing or dealing with a matter." Therefore, this idiom uses the similar meaning but dissimilar form strategy, with both expressions preserving the same meaning but different in form.

Datum 4

SL: You're both such dolls to ask. (43:42)

TL: Manis sekali pertanyaannya.

In the context of this dialogue, the idiom "such dolls" refers to the phrase "manis sekali" (very sweet) in Indonesian. According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (1844), "doll" can describe a "pretty or attractive woman" but is often considered outdated or offensive. In contrast, the KBBI defines "manis" as "pleasantly charming (regarding face, smile, words, etc.) or very polite and gentle." The translation adapts the meaning appropriately for the target audience, following the similar meaning but dissimilar form strategy.

Datum 5

SL: You know, I think I'm really getting the hang of this. (40:17)

TL: Aku mulai menguasai ini.

The idiom "get the hang of something," according to the CALD (1985), means "to learn how to do something, especially when it is not simple or obvious." The equivalent in Indonesian, "mulai menguasai," has the same meaning. In KBBI, "menguasai" has several definitions, including "to take control," "to manage," or "to master." In this context, "menguasai" refers to mastering a skill or ability, making it a suitable translation. Thus, this idiom also follows the similar meaning but dissimilar form strategy, preserving the meaning while adapting the form to fit the target language.

Translation of Idioms with Paraphrase

One translation strategy that translators can choose when there is no equivalent expression in the target language to transfer the meaning of the source language (SL) is the paraphrase strategy.

Below are some examples of idioms from the film *The Schools for Good and Evil* that use the paraphrase strategy:

Datum 1

SL: You two think you're better than us, but really you're just a prig and a pig. (2:20:37)

TL: Kalian sok hebat, padahal kalian busuk dan buluk.

In the context of the sentence above, the idiom "a prig and a pig" is translated as "busuk dan buluk" in the target language (TL). This expression was chosen because there is no direct equivalent for the idiom in the TL. The translator chose "busuk dan buluk" as a creative interpretation to transfer the intended meaning. The strategy applied here is paraphrasing.

Datum 2

SL: This is what you've always wanted? To simply have it all at your feet? (31:43)

TL: Ini yang kau impikan? Semua tunduk padamu?

In this context, the idiom "all at your feet" is translated as "semua tunduk padamu." This choice was made because no suitable equivalent exists in the TL to express the same idea. Thus, the translator used "semua tunduk padamu" to rephrase the idiom's meaning. The translation strategy employed here is paraphrase.

Datum 3

SL: Both girls were met with open arms and open minded. (13:06)

TL: Kedua gadis itu disambut hangat dan terbuka.

In the dialogue above, the idiomatic expression "with open arms and open minds" is translated as "hangat dan terbuka." According to the Cambridge Dictionary, "with open arms" means "in a very friendly way," while "open-minded" means "willing to consider ideas and opinions that are new or different from your own." In the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), "hangat" has multiple meanings, but in this context, it implies "gembira" (cheerful). Similarly, "terbuka" here refers to "bersikap terbuka" (being open-minded). The translator chose "hangat dan terbuka" because it better fits the TL while maintaining the essence of the SL. This translation also uses the paraphrase strategy due to the lack of a direct idiomatic equivalent in the TL.

The result indicates that paraphrasing as a translation strategy is employed when no equivalent idiom can be found in the target language. According to Ariyani et al. (2021), the paraphrase strategy is used when the meaning of the source language differs too much from the target language, resulting a need to express it in different form. Some challenges in translating English idioms into Indonesian including identifying and understanding idiomatic or fixed expressions in the source text and effectively transgerring the meaning of idioms and fixed expressions into the target language.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to answer the question: "How are idioms in the film *The Schools for Good and Evil* translated into Indonesian?" It focused on identifying the strategies used and understanding their effectiveness in preserving meaning and cultural relevance. The analysis revealed three main strategies: similar meaning and form (6 idioms), similar meaning but dissimilar form (5 idioms), and paraphrasing (3 idioms). The distribution of these strategies is shown below:

Table 1. Translation strategy of the movie idiom "The Schools for Good and Evil"

| No. | Translation strategy | Sum |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Similar meaning and form | 6 |
| 2. | Similar meaning but dissimilar form | 5 |
| 3. | Paraphrase | 3 |
| Total | | 14 |

The data demonstrate that idioms in the film were mostly translated using the strategy of similar meaning and form that was applied to 6 idioms. For instance, the idiom "dig around" (SL) was translated as "coba cari" (TL), preserving both the meaning and structure of the original expression. This indicates that, when direct equivalents exist in the target language, translators preferred this strategy to ensure clarity and accuracy.

The second most frequently used strategy, similar meaning but dissimilar form, was applied to 5 idioms. An example is "get to the bottom of this" (SL), which was translated as "kita akan cari tahu" (TL). While the meaning remains consistent, the form experiences an adjustment to better suit the cultural and linguistic context of the target language. This strategy is important for maintaining the intended impact of idioms that have no direct structural match in Indonesian.

Lastly, the paraphrasing strategy was used for 3 idioms. For example, "a prig and a pig" (SL) was translated as "busuk dan buluk" (TL). This approach was used when no equivalent idiom or similar expression exists in the target language. By focusing on transferring the core meaning paraphrasing ensures that the idiom's meaning is still similar, even if its original form is lost.

The frequent use of the similar meaning and form strategy shows that many idioms in the film have direct equivalents in Indonesian, making translation straightforward. This supports Baker's (1992) theory that idioms with similar meaning and form are easier to translate accurately. The use of the similar meaning but different form strategy reflects the translator's ability to adapt

idioms to fit cultural and linguistic differences. Paraphrasing, while used less often, was important when no equivalent idiom existed in Indonesian, ensuring that the meaning was preserved.

These findings match with earlier studies (e.g., Kovacs, 2016; Ariyani et al., 2021) that highlight the importance of cultural and contextual understanding in idiom translation. They also show how Baker's strategies work effectively in film translation, where preserving emotional and cultural nuances is essential.

This research has practical implications for translators, especially those working on subtitling films. Understanding which strategies to use can help translators produce subtitles that are accurate, natural, and relatable for the target audience. However, this study has some limitations. It focused on a single fantasy film, which might not represent idiom translation strategies in other genres. Future research could examine idiom translation across different genres or use larger datasets to identify broader data. Expanding the scope of analysis would provide a deeper understanding of how idioms are translated in various contexts.

CONCLUSION

Based on the idioms analysis found in the film *The Schools for Good and Evil*, it was concluded that there were three translation strategies regarding idioms in the film. In the analysis, 14 idioms were found in the film; among them, the strategy "similar meaning and form" was the most frequent strategy, with 6 idioms out of the total number. This strategy is more comprehensible because the form and meaning are similar in both languages; therefore, it will be easier for audience to understand the idioms in the film. It will also be easier for translators to choose the right strategies.

Because, according to the study, it only involved idioms from a single film, it is also hoped that future idiomatic researchers would broaden their research into studying idioms in different film genres for better comprehension of idioms. It is, therefore, very important to have the film industry and professional translators collaborate in ensuring that the translation is well received in the target language and culture. The present research looks not only at the translation strategies, but also at how well the target audience understands and relates with the translation. A good translation maintains both the meaning and the cultural aspects of the original content, making the film more relatable and loyal to its original form.

This research indicated the need for translators to know not only the language but also the culture. Further studies could be done on how technology, for example machine translation and AI, influences idiom translation into film subtitles or dubbing. The ultimate goal is to come up with a translation relevant to the audience and faithful to the original message.

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A Critical Discourse Analysis of Sara Mills on Popular Memes in Indonesia

Muhammad Abduh Almanar^{1*}

* Corresponding Email: abduh.almanar@uag.ac.id

¹ English Department, Universitas Ary Ginanjar, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the elements within memes and critique the hidden messages that appeared on the internet and social media. Employing a critical discourse analysis method from Sara Mills' approach, the researcher examined two selected memes to be analyzed and reviewed. Key aspects of this analysis included power dynamics, identity, linguistic structure, intertextuality, and ideology of the memes. The result of the study revealed that the first meme highlighted a critique of technological advancements in the learning process. The first meme revealed that the students' misuse of AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools like ChatGPT led to increasing dependency on technology for the study. Academic integrity builds essential skills such as creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving that AI cannot replace. The need for balanced and proper technology use toward technology in education has become a social critique and stakeholder's concern for technology integration in education. On the other side, academic pressure also fostered students to an over-reliance on technology. Furthermore, the researcher found that technological innovation significantly challenged academic integrity in learning. Besides, the following meme issues illustrated two different orientation practices for new students. Inappropriate academic practice during orientation day showed ideological gaps and psychological impacts on students, such as trauma, fear, and low self-esteem. Employing humor with an element of sarcasm and satire, a clear message aiming stakeholders in higher academics to stop inappropriate practices over the years

Keywords: *Critical Discourse Analysis, Linguistic Style, Academic Integrity, Memes*

INTRODUCTION

Memes are a cultural unit widely utilized by social media users. It is typically formed through images, videos, or text; memes spread rapidly via the internet and often contain various elements (Murfiandi, 2020), such as humor, satire, and irony. Richard Dawkins introduced the meme concept in his 1976 book "The Selfish Gene." Today, memes are used in a broad range of contexts (Davis, 2017). In some communities, memes are also used for advertising and brand introduction in marketing (Malodia et al., 2022). In everyday communication, memes are also sometimes used to react or respond to what is on social media, such as photos, statements, and documents (Grundlingh, 2018). Therefore, youth frequently engage with memes in digital content due to their ease of sharing and adaptability.

Memes represent information transferred from one individual to another, primarily through the digital realm. The Selfish Gene (Davis, 2017) conceptualized memes as analogous to genes, explaining how ideas, culture, and information spread within society. He defined memes as the minor units of idea transmission and their impact on psychology, sociology, media studies, and internet culture. Dynamic and more diverse people's ways of communication created a new spectrum of how messages are delivered to the public. An indirect way of communication leads to various understandings and is more subjective. Information was often spread by the individual (influencer), content, platforms, trusted sources, and preferences and beliefs of individuals (Quinn et al., 2016).

The use of memes has become a highly effective way of communication. For instance, memes function as a rhetoric visualization to enable people to engage with cultural issues (Herbert, 2019). Moreover, memes also create an emotional engagement by combining visual and textual elements to activate individuals to memorize and engage with the contents (Jenkins et al., 2013). In other words, the use of memes is beyond communication tools. It conveyed emotions, reactions to events, or political critique from the creator of a meme and its objective. Memes can also be factual information towards sensitive information (Ireland, 2018). On social media, memes have a significant influence due to their extensive reach to the audience. Their usage has expanded beyond personal interactions; companies and institutions increasingly adopt memes for marketing and branding purposes. Organizations use memes as strategic tools to target broader and more specific audiences. By leveraging humor and popular culture, memes are believed to foster closer and more meaningful connections with audiences (Fitrianto et al., 2022).

In contemporary digital culture, memes have become integral. They serve as an alternative form of communication, reflecting the modern era's dynamic and widespread social and cultural trends (Allifiansyah, 2016). This paper aims to analyze the elements embedded in memes and critique the hidden messages behind their humor and satire, often delivered through concise visual and textual formats. The critical discourse analysis in this article is based on Sara Mills' framework, focusing on power, identity, and ideology. This study will examine memes circulating in the digital sphere from a distinct analytical perspective.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Critical Discourse Analysis

In critical discourse analysis, texts or images, such as memes, can be examined from multiple perspectives, including subject, object, gender, and concepts of intersectionality within the text. Additionally, ideology, sociocultural factors, and cultural norms are often embedded and identified

in various discourses, texts, or images. Critical discourse analysis allows researchers to explore how texts or images serve as tools or media for diverse purposes (Carpenter & Singh, 2023).

Critical discourse analysis involves several stages to understand how language, norms, or word choices function as metaphors that convey specific meanings and perspectives in the context of ideology and culture. Social texts can reflect domination by particular groups, ethnicities, or societal layers. Consequently, intersectionality is often presented in the texts or objects analyzed. Aspects such as race, gender, and social class contribute to creating complex meanings (Ferreira & Vasconcelos, 2019). By following these steps, critical discourse analysis reveals how language and discourse play a significant role in shaping our understanding of texts and the world around us.

Critical Discourse Analysis by Sara Mills

Sara Mills (2001) is renowned for her contributions to linguistics and discourse analysis, particularly in exploring how power and identity are shaped through language. Her book “Discourse, the New Critical Idiom” examined how language, power dynamics, and identity are constructed. This study applies her framework to analyze memes through the following stages: 1) Subject and Object Identification, which analyses memes by identifying the subject (the actor) and the object (the target of the action). The relationship between the subject and object becomes evident through this analysis. 2) Narrative Structure Analysis: This step examines how the narrative is constructed, including the storyline, setting, and characterization of the analyzed object. It also uncovers ideological patterns embedded within the text. 3) Intersectionality Concept: This analysis considers additional factors like race and social class to understand the complexities of identity and power represented in the text. 4) Discourse Deconstruction: This involves deconstructing the existing discourse by critiquing the underlying assumptions that shape the representation in the text. The goal is to expose biases and hidden ideologies within the narratives crafted by the meme creators. 5) Social and Cultural Context: Analyzing the social and cultural context helps to understand external influences on the representation in the text or image within the meme. By applying Sara Mills' theory to meme analysis, this study demonstrated how ideology, social context, and culture are constructed through language and visualized as memes.

METHOD

This study was conducted to uncover and analyze hidden messages of viral memes on the internet. Using critical discourse analysis from Sara Mills' Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach.

Research Design

The research employed a critical discourse analysis from (Sara Mills, 2001) as a primary research design. Depth exploration of how language, visual elements, and ideologies contents of the memes analyzed were the reasons the researcher chose this research methodology. Critical discourse analysis analyzes sociocultural context to uncover hidden messages and information from the memes. Therefore, elements of analysis included the structure of a text, ideology input, tone, message, cultural background, and ideology. Those elements reveal the meaning and correlate it with the issue. A content analysis is also used as a supplementary method to support and code (Krippendorff, 2022). The components are analyzed using textual, visual, audio, themes, and trends within the meme.

Research Objects

The researcher selected two themes of the memes. The first theme addressed issues related to using artificial intelligence (AI) in education. Their memes were described for the first theme, particularly between students and technology. It was obtained from a website, borepanda.com (MaarsComics, n.d.), a sharing viral memes webpage. The second theme of the meme addressed an issue from academic orientation held in some countries. The researcher analyzed two memes. The researcher intended to see a contrast between memes from textual use and other visual elements to uncover a message behind it using CDA-based analysis.

Data Collection and Analysis

Critical discourse analysis methodology will explore how the language is framed through textual interpretation, element visualization, tone, ideology, and cultural background. Some other elements were also analyzed to see how they could engage and influence the audience. Moreover, content analysis is also implemented to code thematic components to understand the memes better. Employing critical discourse analysis from (Sara Mills, 2001) techniques, the researcher would try to reveal how texts or visuals can bring a message to the public. Additionally, the study considers the social and cultural context of the texts to provide a deeper understanding of how critical discourse analysis influences and persuades the public.

FINDINGS

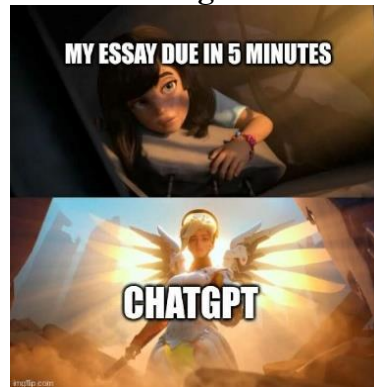
Meme series Teacher vs. artificial intelligence

The three memes below analyzed the fact that the first meme features a movie clip with different facial expressions presented. A subject revealed “true identity” from the student using ChatGPT on her assignment.

**Figure 1: Meme series
Teacher Vs Artificial
Intelligence**



**Figure 2: Meme series
Teacher Vs Artificial
Intelligence**



**Figure 3: Meme series
Teacher Vs Artificial
Intelligence**



A narrative story began with a response from ChatGpt, as illustrated by a man nodding in response to task completion. Facial expressions from both images presented another expression from the teacher, who was shocked by the student’s work. This visualization constructed a story, whereas “cheating” is prohibited in an academic setting. In other memes, it is presented in meme 2, whereas ChatGpt has become the most powerful tool to complete the task. A humorous story was created about the reliance on AI (ChatGPT) to complete a task. The subject is performed by a student who felt desperate and confused. The object revealed ChatGPT as an angle or savior to solve any problem or issues the subject dealt with. A narrative story was constructed as ChatGPT is a “solution” to her problem. A cultural context reflected modern students’ dependency on using artificial technology tools like ChatGpt as academic support. Based on Sara Mills’ critical discourse analysis framework, an analysis is done through the roles of subjects and social and cultural context. The subject is identified as a figure of a student. The teacher’s role uncovered the true identity of a student, as the AI logo is illustrated in the picture as ChatGPT. The object presented a masked figure, revealing that ChatGPT is included in the learning environment nowadays. The intertextuality of “Let me see who you are” and “I knew it” appeared as humor to engage the audience. The teacher has a dominant role in academic integrity during a learning process, and students performed by an AI underscored academic dishonesty facilitated by technology. This meme criticizes the presence of AI in education and its influence on education norms.

Students’ School Orientation

The meme below presents two contrasting situations for newcomer students during the same campus orientation day. The campus orientation program was known as OSPEK (an orientation to introduce campus life). This program aims to introduce new students to the campus

environment, academic systems, and the culture and ethics of higher education. The meme critiques these two different scenarios.

Figure 4: School Orientation Day



Figure 5: School Orientation Day



The language style carries significant meaning, with phrases like "This is OSPEK" and "This is ...?" in the second image. Readers are encouraged to analyze the two phenomena in the pictures through these phrases. "This is ...?" invites readers to critically reflect on the two situations. From a cultural perspective, the images highlight practices from two activities, aiming to introduce students to campus life. However, the second image portrays a group of students undergoing punishment, unlike the first image, which shows students engaged in a presentation. These critiques emphasize a disparity in how the same goal is achieved in different practices in education culture. Figure 4 on top describes an ideal academic environment activity in which students share their ideas within a group of 4 people in a presentation session. Unlike the previous image, the second image showed non-academic activity, more like cosplay, with the students covering their ears and wearing costumes. In a social context, this meme reflects the effectiveness of OSPEK and critiques stakeholders to take action and stop this kind of practice.

DISCUSSION

Critique of inappropriate use from the advancement of technology known as Artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT was analyzed. The researcher found that students' over-reliance on technology is the first theme of academic issues. A humorous tone was portrayed, yet the users (students) needed to use technology wisely. Overdependence on technology by students weakens academic integrity, such as creativity and other personal pedagogical abilities in learning (Hakim et al., 2024). Therefore, AI should be utilized wisely in education. Responsibility for the ethical use of technology such as ChatGPT is important. Academic integrity builds essential skills

such as creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving that AI cannot replace. From the visualization of the meme, textual analysis shows “My essay is due in 5 minutes,” and gratitude toward the presence of Ai “ChatGPT” emphasized “ChatGPT” as a savior to the academic pressure. The social and cultural context of the meme reflected trends in the use of AI in academic activities and professional settings. As a result of its trends, the need for a balanced and proper technology use toward technology integration is implicitly included in the meme. Addressing the ethical use of AI to hold academic integrity is everyone’s obligation. AI tools like ChatGPT can potentially enable people to specifically set plans and strategies for successful learning (Halaweh, 2023). As an active use of AI (illustrated from the meme), the students are very dependent on the use of AI. ChatGPT become a shortcut tool to academic pressure. Subject positioning portrayed as a student resulted in an over-reliance generation on technology during a study.

On the other hand, the second theme of the meme highlighted inappropriate practices during the orientation program for the new students. The memes portrayed satire and sarcasm toward the activities performed in the meme. A cultural tradition of a non-academic purpose from the first meme has been repeated. A critique is also subjected to stakeholders to reform the orientation program for new students. A sarcasm within the text “this is...?” showed critique to aim stakeholders to the chaotic and inappropriate activities performed in students’ orientation program. By contrasting two different orientation programs, the researcher underscored the ideological gap between institutional goals for academic preparation for students and cultural practice over the years. The orientation program is initiated to introduce a new student to the educational environment and goals to finish the study. Non-academic orientation programs resulted in unexpected academic goals, as illustrated in Figure 5. Moreover, inappropriate practice of orientation programs potentially impacts students’ psychology, such as trauma, fear, and low self-esteem (Putri et al., 2024). Hazing within student organizations has become a phenomenon over the years, and the need for an anti-hazing culture is also a crucial step to preventing a sustainable culture of violence in educational settings. Orientation programs can promote student character development in time management, responsibility, and teamwork (Restri et al., 2023). The Academic orientation program must include specific skills such as resiliency, well-being, and readiness for the academic environment (Hill et al., 2018).

CONCLUSION

The memes described through Sara Mills' approach combine several elements in critical discourse analysis from various perspectives, with the reader as the subject. The first meme collections demonstrated how a text and visualization of a meme showed critique of the

advancements of technology in learning. Students had misused a critique of the use of AI (ChatGPT). As a result, it made students dependent on technology. Moreover, academic pressure resulted in over-reliance on students' learning activities through technology. In conclusion, advancements in technology innovation have challenged academic integrity in the learning process. The intertextuality in the second meme is strongly emphasized in contrast activities. A humoristic language style contained sarcasm and satire. The element of sarcasm in the second meme indirectly conveys a clear tone regarding the ongoing activity of non-academic activity. It encouraged stakeholders to act immediately against inappropriate activity during campus orientation day.

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Language Policy in Indonesian Elementary Schools: Balancing National, Local, And Foreign Languages

Marles Yohannis Matatula ^{1*}, Pricilia Tupalessy ²

*Corresponding Email: matatulamarles@gmail.com

^{1,2}English Education Postgraduate Study Program, Pattimura University, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

With its linguistic diversity, Indonesia faces unique challenges in implementing an effective language policy in basic education. With more than 700 regional languages and a commitment to national unity, cultural preservation, and global competitiveness, the country's language policy seeks to balance the roles of Bahasa Indonesia, regional languages, and foreign languages, mainly English. A qualitative literature review approach was used to analyze existing scholarly works, policy documents, and government reports. This method identifies patterns in language policy implementation and common challenges schools face. It also examines the successes and failures of language policies in promoting national unity, cultural preservation, and global competitiveness. A comprehensive multilingual approach is recommended, integrating local languages in early childhood education, using Bahasa Indonesia as the primary language of instruction, and gradually introducing foreign languages. The study advocates for curricula tailored to local needs, better teacher training, and equitable distribution of resources to address gaps. This approach is critical to ensuring the sustainability of Indonesia's linguistic diversity, preserving cultural heritage, strengthening national identity, and improving students' global readiness.

Keywords: *language policy, elementary school, national, local, foreign.*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the most linguistically diverse nations in the world, with over 300 ethnic groups and more than 700 native languages (Humanika, 2017). This rich linguistic diversity is a cultural asset but presents significant challenges in formulating effective educational language policies. In elementary education, language policies aim to balance three key objectives: fostering national unity through Bahasa Indonesia, preserving cultural heritage through local languages, and preparing students for globalization through foreign language proficiency.

Promoting Bahasa Indonesia as the national language has been pivotal in uniting the country's diverse ethnic groups. Officially adopted in 1945, it serves as a unifying medium, ensuring mutual intelligibility and creating a shared national identity (Fischer, 1952). In elementary schools, Bahasa Indonesia is the primary medium of instruction, providing a standardized foundation for learners. However, in regions where Bahasa Indonesia is not the first language,

students often face slower academic progression and limited engagement in early education (Radjaban, 2013).

Local languages preserve Indonesia's cultural heritage and foster regional identity. The 2013 Curriculum supports their inclusion in early education to ease the transition to Bahasa Indonesia while maintaining students' connections to their cultural roots (Humanika, 2017). Despite these efforts, the use of local languages has declined due to urbanization, migration, and the growing dominance of Bahasa Indonesia in public and educational spheres. Regional disparities in resources and policy implementation further hinder the preservation of local languages.

Foreign language education, mainly English, is another significant component of Indonesia's language policy. English is introduced in elementary schools to enhance students' global competitiveness and future employability (Hamid & Ali, 2022). Early exposure to English has been shown to improve language acquisition, yet its prioritization raises concerns about neglecting local languages, threatening Indonesia's linguistic diversity (Humanika, 2017).

Balancing national, local, and foreign languages in education presents challenges and successes. Initiatives such as bilingual programs and multilingual pedagogy training for teachers have shown promise in addressing these demands. However, a lack of an integrated policy framework and unequal resource distribution across regions remain significant barriers to achieving an effective balance (Hamied, 2012).

This review explores the implementation of Indonesia's language policies in elementary schools, focusing on managing national, local, and foreign languages. Examining the successes and challenges of these policies highlights the importance of a balanced approach in fostering national cohesion, preserving cultural heritage, and equipping students for a globalized future.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative literature review approach, focusing on analyzing existing scholarly works to synthesize insights and identify patterns in the implementation of language policy in Indonesian elementary schools. The literature review method systematically examines various types of secondary data, including Academic Articles, Peer-reviewed journal articles discussing theoretical frameworks, case studies, and empirical research on language education in Indonesia. Studies exploring the roles of Bahasa Indonesia, local languages, and foreign languages in the educational system. Policy Documents on Government regulations and frameworks, such as the 2013 Curriculum (Kurikulum, 2013), which emphasizes the role of Bahasa Indonesia as the primary language of instruction while supporting the inclusion of local and foreign languages, and Government Reports, Reports from institutions like the Ministry of Education and Culture

(Kemendikbud), which provide data on the implementation and outcomes of language policies. To ensure the reliability and relevance of the sources, the study adhered to criteria such as Topical Relevance, Publication Period, Credibility of Sources, and Diversity of Perspective. The selected sources were analyzed through thematic coding to identify Patterns in how language policies are implemented across different regions, Common challenges and barriers to balancing national, local, and foreign languages, Evidence of success or failure in achieving the policy goals of unity, cultural preservation, and global readiness. This approach provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of language policy in Indonesian elementary schools. It highlights gaps in research and practice, serving as a foundation for future studies.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Bahasa Indonesia: The National Language

Bahasa Indonesia is the primary medium of instruction in elementary schools, underscoring its critical role as the national language. This policy ensures that students across Indonesia, regardless of their regional background, learn a common language that promotes unity and effective communication. Bahasa Indonesia is taught as a subject to deepen students' linguistic proficiency and to align with its status as the language of governance, education, and national identity.

Research, such as Lauder's (2008), highlights the policy's success in fostering communication and integration across Indonesia's diverse regions. As the primary instructional language, Bahasa Indonesia has enabled students from different ethnic groups to interact and learn in a shared linguistic framework, strengthening the nation's unity. The widespread use of Bahasa Indonesia in schools has also contributed to literacy improvements and facilitated mobility among citizens within the archipelago.

Despite its benefits, the implementation of Bahasa Indonesia faces challenges, particularly in remote and rural areas. Many children in these regions grow up speaking local languages at home and have limited exposure to Bahasa Indonesia before entering school. Sugiharto (2015) notes that this lack of familiarity can hinder their ability to adapt to the school environment, affecting their academic performance and confidence in language use. Such disparities highlight the need for targeted support in regions where Bahasa Indonesia is not widely spoken.

Local Languages: Cultural Preservation

The inclusion of local languages in the elementary curriculum is made possible by regional autonomy policies. Local governments can design curricula incorporating regional languages,

especially in early grades, to support cultural preservation and ease the transition to Bahasa Indonesia. This approach recognizes the importance of maintaining linguistic diversity as part of Indonesia's cultural heritage.

Programs in culturally rich provinces such as Java and Bali demonstrate the potential of local language instruction to preserve regional identity. Muslim (2017) reports that integrating local languages into the curriculum helps foster a sense of pride and belonging among students, ensuring that these languages remain relevant in their communities. Schools can also provide a more comfortable learning environment by teaching students in their mother tongue during the early years.

However, the sustainability of local language instruction faces significant challenges. Declining intergenerational transmission of local languages due to urbanization and shifts in family language practices has decreased the number of native speakers. Furthermore, Rahayu (2018) highlights the shortage of qualified teachers and educational materials, which limits the effective teaching of local languages. This gap often forces schools to deprioritize local languages in favor of Bahasa Indonesia and foreign languages.

Foreign Languages: Global Competence

Introducing foreign languages, mainly English, reflects Indonesia's aspiration to prepare its students for a globalized world. English is commonly taught in elementary schools, with greater emphasis in private and international schools. The growing demand for English proficiency has led some institutions to integrate English as an additional medium of instruction.

Including English in the curriculum has successfully equipped students with essential skills for international communication. Lie (2007) emphasizes the role of English instruction in enhancing Indonesia's global competitiveness, enabling students to access global knowledge and opportunities. This policy has been particularly effective in urban schools with better resources and trained English teachers.

Despite its successes, foreign language education in Indonesia is marked by significant inequalities. Rural schools often lack the resources and trained personnel to deliver effective English instruction, creating a gap between urban and rural students. Additionally, in some regions, an overemphasis on English may come at the expense of local language preservation and even the development of proficiency in Bahasa Indonesia. Balancing these priorities remains a persistent challenge for policymakers.

Balancing the Three Languages

One of the most complex aspects of Indonesia's language policy is balancing the promotion of Bahasa Indonesia, preserving local languages, and teaching foreign languages. Many schools, particularly in urban areas, prioritize Bahasa Indonesia and English due to their perceived practicality and global relevance. This often results in the marginalization of local languages, even in regions with strong cultural traditions.

The literature underscores the importance of adopting multilingual education policies that value all three language categories. Sugiono (2020) advocates for an integrated approach, where local languages are used in early grades, Bahasa Indonesia becomes the primary medium of instruction, and foreign languages are gradually introduced. Such an approach could ensure that students benefit from multilingualism's cultural, national, and global advantages. However, successful implementation requires equitable resource distribution, teacher training, and public awareness campaigns to highlight the value of linguistic diversity.

While significant strides have been made in promoting Bahasa Indonesia and foreign languages, preserving local languages remains a critical concern. Addressing these challenges requires careful planning and consistent efforts to achieve a balanced multilingual education system.

CONCLUSION

Indonesia's language policy in elementary schools seeks to balance the roles of Bahasa Indonesia, local languages, and foreign languages to achieve national unity, cultural preservation, and global competitiveness. Bahasa Indonesia has successfully fostered communication and integration, though children in remote areas often face challenges due to limited exposure. Efforts to preserve local languages are promising in some regions, yet the decline in their use at home and a shortage of qualified teachers pose significant threats to their sustainability. While English and other foreign languages enhance global readiness, unequal access and overemphasizing foreign language instruction risk overshadowing local and national languages. A comprehensive multilingual approach, supported by equitable resources, teacher training, and inclusive curricula, is essential to address these challenges. By valuing all three language types, Indonesia can create an education system that preserves its cultural heritage, strengthens national identity, and prepares students for global opportunities.

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