

Social Identity in Indonesian Children's Literature: Materials of Self-Literacy for Elementary Students

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Abstract. This paper aims to describe the children's social identity of Indonesian children's literature. Based on the low understanding of social identity that has the potential to cause social interaction problems thus, it needs to be introduced from an early age to children. The children's story is a good teaching material as well as the right media to introduce the concept. This research applied content analysis method. The data collection technique was continuous reading and recording. Data analysis techniques were categorized into tabulating and inferencing. The results of this study were: (1) The social identity of children in Indonesian children's literature in the family environment was children, grandchildren, and nephews; in school was as a student, a friend, a seatmate, and a classmate; in the community was as citizens, friends, playmates, neighbors, sellers, and buyers. (2) The social identity of children in Indonesian children's literature was presented through narrative and dialogue. (3) The social identity of children in Indonesian children's literature is relatively complex but it was united as one unity of story. Thus, the existence and diversity of social identity in the story can be utilized as teaching materials in the elementary school so that students have adequate self and social literacy.

Key words: social identity, children's literature, self-literacy.

INTRODUCTION

Humans are social beings, so in order to be able to well socialize in various environments, social identity needs to be understood early. One of the alternatives is educating the elementary school children because the primary education is a crucial site of this practice. At this phase, children start to form their first relationship with school and formal environment [1]. Therefore, the content of teaching materials related to self-literacy becomes a very important requirement to be taught in this educational level.

Social identity is attached on each individual. Definitively, the concept of social identity is the individual's knowledge that he/she belongs to a particular social group with the various emotional meanings and values of the group's membership [2]. This social identity connects individuals to specific social groups [3]. In other words, one's social identity is the result of the

social construction of the environment where it belongs, where the individual becomes part of a particular social group. Social identity is part of a group in which the group describes "who we are" or our identity [4]. In a group, the individual's social identity can be illustrated, Hoggs & Brams [5] stated on the theory of social identity that "human beings define and evaluate themselves as a part of the group".

Children who do not understand social identity are vulnerable to antisocial cases that make them difficult to communicate, interact and tend to close themselves to the outside world. Therefore, there should be appropriate strategies and media to attract and encourage students to study social identity in a way that suits their characteristics. One of the fun activities for elementary school children is reading a story book (children's literature).

In various literatures, it is stated that children's literature has specific characteristics. Pragmatically, Hunt et al. [6] suggest children's literature as a book that deliberately provided to children for reading. Based on the content, children's literature is limited to life images that reflect the feelings and experiences of children, which can be seen and understood through the eyes of children based on their level of experience and maturity [6]. The picture of the children's lives certainly includes aspects of social identity. Individuals who have a high social identity with their group will have a positive affection towards the group, whereas those with a low social identity will have a negative affection with the group. [7].

This is the basis for the analysis of aspects of social identity in children's literature. The description of the social identity became the standard for the stuff to be used as a teaching material for elementary students to know more himself/herself (self-literacy), especially knowledge and social identity understanding.

METHOD

The focus of this study is the social identity of children in Indonesian children's literature, including the identity in the family, at school, and in the community. According to the purpose of the study, descriptive

qualitative approach were applied with content analysis method. The data collection techniques were continuous reading techniques and recording according to research focus. Data analysis techniques were categorized into tabulating and inferencing. The source of data that became the object of this research was 10 children stories collected in the book *Naskah Terbaik Lomba Menulis Cerita Anak- NT LMCA* (Best Script Writing Competition Children's Stories) published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia.

RESULT

Based on the results of data analysis, in the NT LMCA, it was found that the social identities of Indonesian children were generally spread in the family environment, school environment, and the environment of the community where they lived. Although it did not differ significantly, the social identity of children in the school environment is relatively more than others (16), then followed by social identity in the family environment (14), and social identity in the community (12). The identity distribution is different in each story. There were children who described as having identities in these three environments as in the MUP story. As a student of the school, the quote that appears was "... after school, will you come with me to the lake near the forest there?" I asked, (p. 4); as a child of the family environment, the quote that appears was "Dad ... is the tip of the rainbow right there?" I asked. (p. 3); and as a citizen who was portrayed as environmental care "Not the permission of the Government, sir, but from us as citizens here" (pp. 8).

There was a story that accentuates identity in one aspect. For example the story of HSK, it was dominant with the children identity at school environment, ie as seatmate, students in a particular class, and classmates, as shown in the quote "Niken reluctantly rebuked her seatmate Shasha..." (p.20); Wulan, Niken, Dini, and students from grade 5A (p.26); and quotes "You should be chosen to represent our class, Din," (p.22).

Then there was also a dominant story with the social identity of children in the family environment. For example, in the MBKE story, there was an identity of the child as grandchildren: "Grandmother, Grandmother ...!" I shouted with joy, as I watched from the end of the alley, Eyang's motorcycle stopped nicely in front of my house" (p. 107); as a child: "But remember, eating a lot of juwet fruit will make you diarrhea!!!" teased Papa (p. 11); and as a nephew: "Maybe you forgot to lock the fence last night!" Aunt's voice was heard beside the house. (p. 118).

In addition, there was also a dominant story describing the identity of children in the community as seen in the SdS story as citizens who cared for children with special needs "This is where the place is, child. Of course, the hut is still there." I opened the warehouse door. Everyone was stunned. (p. 79). Some of these children's social identity images made them part of a particular social group [8], explained who they are and

affirmed their social identity, such as to whose children they are, where they study, or where they live.

Social identity in the family was an identity that can be found in every story; it was as a child, as a grandchild and as a nephew. There were even two stories that mention social identity in the family environment more than one, it was as children, grandchildren, and nephew of the story of MBKE and KPUN story. This proved that the social identity of children was attached to the family, especially the identity as a child. Family is the root of child's first identity. It is a part of the initial identity in which the child can identify his/herself.

The social identity in this family was represented by **conversation**, such as in the story of MUP "Dad ... is the tip of the rainbow right there?" I asked. (p. 3); in Mul's story "Where is Mom?" muttered Ira. Then Ira looked for the other room. Then, Ira found his mother doing tahajud prayer. (p. 41). Social identity was also represented through **narration**. For example, in the story of HSK: Wulan is suspicious that Niken is reluctant to rebuke her friend, because she feels indebted to the Sasha's family... (p. 20); also in the SdS story: In the living room, I walked to the Dad and Mom then sitting on the batik rug. (p. 74).

The social identity at school was as classmates, seatmates, friends, and as a student. Just like a social identity in the family, social identity at school was presented through conversation and narration. One example of the passages can be observed in the HSK story: "You should have been chosen to represent our class, Din," Wulan said quietly. (p. 22). While the examples of direct narrative passage was in the story of PSdK: Anyway, Dhea is my true friend right now. (pp. 88).

The other social identity were as classmates and friends. This shows that the social aspect of friendship and friendship among elementary school children was one of the important pillars of children's identity. The identity as "a friend of A" or "a friend of B" showed who they are. The identity within the friendship's scope is a symbol of their social status in the school environment. This is in line with what Ellemers, Kortekaas and Ouwerkerk [5] argued that individuals with high social identity will gain positive affection for their group, whereas individuals with low social identity will have a negative affinity with their group.

The social identity of children in the community is not as much as their identity in the family environment and in the school environment. The social identities were found in the form of their identity as citizens, buyers, sellers, neighbors, young employers/ladies, and playmates in the neighborhood. This social identity was conveyed through conversation and narration. For example on the SdS story: Once, I tried to find out about some neighbors. The curiosity still bothered me. I tried to find out from Mr. Yitno, the headman's cattle shepherd (page 72) and the story of SidWK "Oh My God, how is it ...," Shila muttered out to ask for help. The man who borrowed Mother's money yesterday, suddenly come to the shop, (p. 61).

The data description result found that the social identity of these children connected them as individuals

with particular social groups as proposed by Tajfel (in Picowye, 2000). In this case, the social groups mentioned are family, school, and community. Family as the first environment for children also became the first social institution that attached to his identity. Schools where children are educated become another social institution for them that is also a part of their identity. Along with the growth of the child's age, his/her identity as a citizen will also be increasingly attached although the level of the identity varies in the communities.

Table 1. Social Identity in Children's Literature

No.	Title	Family	School	Community
1.	MUP	1	2	2
2.	HSK	1	9	-
3.	MuI	1	-	1
4.	SidWK	1	-	2
5.	SdS	1	-	4
6.	PSdSK	1	5	2
7.	MBKE	3	-	-
8.	MyM	1	-	-
9.	BdCJ	1	-	-
10.	KpuN	3	-	1
Total		14	16	12

Note :

MUP	: <i>Mencari Ujung Pelangi</i> (Looking for Rainbow Edge)
HsK	: <i>Harga Sebuah Kejujuran</i> (Price of An Honesty)
MuI	: <i>Mukena untuk Ibu</i> (Mukena for Mom)
SidWK	: <i>Seorang Ibu dari Warung Kecil</i> (A Lady from a Small Shop)
SdS	: <i>Sahabat dari Senja</i> (A Friend from Dusk)
PSdSK	: <i>Putri Salju dan Satu Kurcaci</i> (Snow White and One Dwarf)
MBKE	: <i>Motor Butut Kesayangan Eyang</i> (Grandpa's Favorite Old Motorcycle)
MyM	: <i>Moni yang Malang</i> (Poor Moni)
BdCJ	: <i>Belajar di Candi Jago</i> (Studying at Jago Temple)
KpuN	: <i>Kue Pukis untuk Nenek</i> (Pie Cake for Grandma)

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of this study, it can be concluded that 1) the social identity of children in Indonesian children's literature were: (a) in the family was as children, grandchildren, and nephews; (b) in the school was as students, classmates, companions, and friends; (c) in the community was as citizens, friends, playmates; neighbors, sellers, and buyers; 2) the social identity of children in Indonesian children's literature was represented through dialogue and narrative; and 2) the social identity of children in Indonesian children's literature was relatively complex, the implication of existence and diversity of social identity can be utilized as teaching material in elementary. So that students have adequate self and social literacy since early ages.

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