



Transformation of Guided Democracy Narratives in History Textbooks from Curriculum 2013 to Merdeka Curriculum: A Wodakian Analysis

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Abstract: This study examines the transformation of Guided Democracy narratives in Indonesian senior high school history textbooks following the shift from the 2013 Curriculum (Revised 2018 Edition) to the Merdeka Curriculum. Employing Ruth Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), the research analyzes how political memory, executive authority, and democratic legitimacy are discursively constructed and recontextualized across curricular frameworks. The data consist of official Grade XII history textbooks published by the Ministry of Education under both curricula. Through qualitative critical discourse analysis, this study identifies shifts in framing strategies, lexical choices, argumentation patterns, and representations of institutional balance. The findings reveal that the 2013 Curriculum predominantly utilizes crisis-based legitimation, portraying parliamentary instability as justification for executive centralization and emphasizing national stability and unity. In contrast, the Merdeka Curriculum presents a more structural and contextual interpretation, highlighting institutional consequences, democratic trade-offs, and the complexity of political power relations. This shift indicates a movement from integrative-legitimative historiography toward a more reflective and dialogic historical representation. The study contributes theoretically by demonstrating that curriculum reform functions as a mechanism of ideological rearticulation within educational discourse. It also highlights the role of textbooks as strategic sites for negotiating national identity and democratic consciousness. Ultimately, the transformation of Guided Democracy narratives illustrates how curricular change reshapes students' historical awareness and civic orientation in contemporary Indonesia.

Keywords: curriculum reform; discourse-historical approach; guided democracy; history textbooks

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji transformasi narasi Demokrasi Terpimpin dalam buku teks sejarah tingkat SMA di Indonesia setelah peralihan dari Kurikulum 2013 (Edisi Revisi 2018) ke Kurikulum Merdeka dengan menggunakan Pendekatan Wacana-Historis (*Discourse-Historical Approach/DHA*) dari Ruth Wodak. Penelitian ini menganalisis bagaimana memori politik, otoritas eksekutif, dan legitimasi demokrasi dikonstruksikan serta direkontekstualisasikan dalam kerangka kurikulum yang berbeda, dengan data berupa buku teks sejarah resmi kelas XII yang diterbitkan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan dalam kedua kurikulum tersebut. Melalui analisis wacana kritis kualitatif, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi pergeseran dalam strategi pembingkai, pilihan leksikal, pola argumentasi, serta representasi keseimbangan institusional. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Kurikulum 2013 cenderung menggunakan legitimasi berbasis krisis dengan menggambarkan ketidakstabilan parlementer sebagai justifikasi bagi sentralisasi kekuasaan eksekutif serta menekankan stabilitas dan persatuan nasional, sedangkan Kurikulum Merdeka menghadirkan interpretasi yang lebih struktural dan kontekstual dengan menyoroti konsekuensi institusional, kompromi dalam praktik demokrasi, serta kompleksitas relasi kekuasaan politik. Pergeseran ini menunjukkan adanya peralihan dari historiografi yang bersifat integratif-legitimatif menuju representasi

sejarah yang lebih reflektif dan dialogis. Secara teoretis, penelitian ini berkontribusi dengan menunjukkan bahwa reformasi kurikulum berfungsi sebagai mekanisme reartikulasi ideologis dalam wacana pendidikan serta menegaskan peran buku teks sebagai ruang strategis dalam negosiasi identitas nasional dan kesadaran demokratis. Pada akhirnya, transformasi narasi Demokrasi Terpimpin memperlihatkan bagaimana perubahan kurikulum membentuk ulang kesadaran historis dan orientasi kewargaan peserta didik di Indonesia kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: buku teks sejarah; Demokrasi Terpimpin; pendekatan wacana-historis; reformasi kurikulum



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Introduction

Curriculum reform in history education is never a neutral pedagogical process. It is deeply intertwined with the politics of knowledge, ideological orientations, and the broader project of shaping collective historical consciousness. History textbooks, as formal curricular products, function not merely as instructional materials but as discursive instruments through which the state constructs, legitimizes, and transmits particular interpretations of the past. Consequently, historical representation in textbooks should be understood not as an objective recounting of events, but as a discursive construction shaped by narrative strategies, linguistic choices, and ideological positioning.

Scholarly works in critical discourse analysis (CDA) have demonstrated that school history textbooks operate as sites where power relations and national identity are negotiated and reproduced. Achugar (2017) argues that discourse analysis of history textbooks enables researchers to uncover how national identities, political conflicts, and historical legitimacy are constructed through specific linguistic and narrative mechanisms. In this regard, textbooks reflect not only historical knowledge but also dominant socio-political frameworks at the time of their production.

The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), developed by Wodak (2015), offers a robust analytical framework for examining how discourse is embedded within historical, political, and institutional contexts. DHA emphasizes the analysis of nomination strategies (how actors are named), predication strategies (how actors are characterized), and argumentation schemes (how legitimacy is constructed or contested). By situating textual analysis within broader socio-historical contexts, DHA allows researchers to trace how shifts in political or educational policy influence the representation of historical events.

Comparative studies across different national contexts have shown that history textbooks frequently reproduce hegemonic narratives aligned with state ideology. Panpothong (2018), for instance, demonstrates how Thai primary school history textbooks construct nationalism through positive predication of state actors and argumentative structures that reinforce national unity. Similarly, Saefudin et al. (2023) reveal that Indonesian history textbooks employ specific argumentative patterns to legitimize particular interpretations of colonial and postcolonial relations. Research on the representation of the G30S event across different curricula further indicates that curriculum changes significantly affect the framing of politically sensitive historical events (Nugara et al., 2024).

In the Indonesian context, studies consistently show that textbook narratives evolve in response to shifts in political power and educational policy. Purwanta (2017) identifies the persistence of militaristic discourse in history textbooks during and after the Soeharto era, illustrating how state ideology shaped historical interpretation. Later research by Purwanta et

al. (2023) indicates that discourses of modernism and national development in textbooks underwent substantial reinterpretation following political reform. Darmawan (2019) also highlights ideological transformations in Indonesian high school history textbooks between 1994 and 2013, closely linked to curriculum restructuring. Furthermore, Kurniawan et al. (2023) and Purwanta and Novianto (2021) emphasize that history education plays a central role in constructing collective memory and reinforcing political narratives within formal schooling.

Despite the growing body of scholarship on discourse and history textbooks, limited attention has been paid to the most recent curriculum reform in Indonesia, particularly the transition from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum. This shift represents more than a technical modification in instructional design. While the 2013 Curriculum emphasizes competency-based learning and character education, the Merdeka Curriculum promotes flexibility, differentiated instruction, and the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile. Such epistemological and pedagogical shifts may influence how historical narratives are framed, simplified, or problematized within textbooks.

The period of Guided Democracy (1959–1965) constitutes one of the most contested and ideologically complex phases in Indonesian historiography. It may be represented as a strategic response to political instability and national fragmentation, yet it can also be framed as a consolidation of executive power that curtailed parliamentary democracy. This dual interpretative possibility makes Guided Democracy a strategic object of discourse analysis, particularly within the context of curriculum transformation.

Previous studies have demonstrated that history textbooks function as discursive arenas in which power, ideology, and national identity are constructed and negotiated. Afiyadi (2018) argues that textbook narratives are inherently shaped by ideological and multicultural considerations, indicating that historical representation is never neutral. In the Indonesian context, Darmawan (2019) shows that the development of history textbook writing is closely linked to political transformations and curriculum changes. Similarly, Kurniawan et al. (2023) highlight how curriculum politics influence the inclusion and marginalization of historical actors, while Saefudin et al. (2023) emphasize the role of argumentation structures in legitimizing particular historical interpretations. Furthermore, Nugara et al. (2024) demonstrate that curriculum change affects the representation of politically sensitive events through shifting discursive strategies. These findings are reinforced by broader critical discourse studies, such as de Cillia et al. (1999), which reveal how national identity is discursively constructed, and Wodak and Reisigl (2015), who underline the close relationship between discourse, power, and ideology. In particular, Ariwinata and Fatimah (2025) have examined the representation of power and nationalism in Guided Democracy materials, showing that historical narratives are ideologically constructed rather than neutral accounts of the past.

However, despite the growing body of research on discourse and history textbooks, most studies tend to focus on a single curricular context or specific historical events without conducting systematic comparative analyses across different curriculum regimes. Existing research also primarily emphasizes the identification of discursive strategies without explicitly examining how curriculum transformation recontextualizes historical narratives. In particular, there is still a lack of studies that comprehensively analyze how the narrative of Guided Democracy is transformed between the 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum using a consistent analytical framework such as the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA). Therefore, this study offers a novel contribution by providing a cross-curricular comparative analysis that highlights transformations in nomination, predication, and argumentation strategies in representing power. It further demonstrates that curriculum reform functions as a mechanism

of ideological rearticulation, reshaping historical narratives, political legitimacy, and democratic consciousness in history education.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the transformation of Guided Democracy narratives in Grade XII Indonesian history textbooks under the 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum using the Discourse-Historical Approach. Specifically, this research investigates nomination, predication, and argumentation strategies employed in both curricular contexts and explores the ideological implications of any observed shifts. Theoretically, this study contributes to the application of DHA within Indonesian history education research. Empirically, it provides a comparative analysis of contemporary curriculum reform and its impact on historical representation. Accordingly, this article offers a significant contribution to the fields of history education, curriculum politics, and critical discourse studies.

Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative research design using Ruth Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) as the primary analytical framework. DHA was selected because it enables multidimensional discourse analysis by integrating linguistic features with broader historical, political, and institutional contexts in which texts are produced and circulated (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009; Wodak, 2015). The data consist of two nationally authorized Grade XII Indonesian history textbooks: *Sejarah Indonesia SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII Edisi Revisi 2018*, published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia under the 2013 Curriculum, and *Sejarah untuk SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII*, published by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia as part of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation. The analysis focuses specifically on chapters addressing the Guided Democracy period (1959–1965). Text selection was conducted purposively based on two criteria: (1) official government publication and national circulation, and (2) explicit discussion of Guided Democracy. Data were collected through document analysis involving intensive close reading and thematic coding of textual segments representing political actors, institutional structures, policy decisions, and evaluative language. The analytical procedure followed DHA's core categories, namely nomination strategies (how social actors are named and categorized), predication strategies (how actors are attributed with qualities or evaluations), and argumentation strategies (how legitimacy is constructed through specific topoi) (Wodak, 2015). To enhance credibility and analytical rigor, this study applied textual triangulation through systematic comparison between the two curricula, consistency in coding categories, and contextualization within national curriculum reform policies (Darmawan, 2019). The iterative analytical process ensured interpretive coherence, transparency, and methodological accountability in identifying discursive shifts, continuities, and ideological implications embedded in the representation of Guided Democracy across the two curricular regimes.

Research Result

Recontextualization of the Guided Democracy Narrative in Curriculum Reform

The transition from the 2013 Curriculum Revised Edition (2018) to the Merdeka Curriculum reflects a significant transformation in how Guided Democracy is represented in Grade XII Indonesian history textbooks. From the perspective of the Discourse-Historical Approach, texts do not merely reflect past events but actively construct social meaning through strategies of legitimation and identity construction (Wodak, 2009). Curriculum reform, therefore, can be understood as a shift in how the state recontextualizes political memory for younger generations.

In the book *Sejarah Indonesia SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII Edisi Revisi 2018* by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Guided Democracy is portrayed as a solution to the failure of parliamentary democracy. The textbook states: “*Demokrasi Liberal tidak mampu menciptakan stabilitas politik sehingga diperlukan sistem baru yang lebih sesuai dengan kepribadian bangsa Indonesia.*” (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2018).

This formulation establishes a clear causal logic in which instability becomes the justification for systemic change. Consequently, the Presidential Decree of 5 July 1959 is positioned as a constitutional corrective measure aimed at restoring national stability. In line with Purwanta & Novianto (2022), such narratives demonstrate a tendency to reproduce a politics of stability by simplifying political conflict and foregrounding state legitimacy. Furthermore, in its discussion of Nasakom, the 2013 Curriculum textbook explains: “*Konsep Nasakom (Nasionalis, Agama, dan Komunis) digagas sebagai upaya menyatukan kekuatan politik bangsa demi menjaga persatuan nasional.*” (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia, 2022). Lexical choices such as *menyatukan* and *persatuan* emphasize ideological integration and harmony. Nasakom is constructed as an instrument of cohesion rather than as a political strategy with inherent tensions. This integrative orientation reinforces the perception of Guided Democracy as a stabilizing and unifying project.

In contrast, the book of *Sejarah untuk SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII Kurikulum Merdeka* by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia presents a more structurally reflective framing. The textbook states: “*Demokrasi Terpimpin membawa perubahan besar dalam struktur politik Indonesia, termasuk meningkatnya peran presiden dan berkurangnya peran partai politik.*” (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia, 2022).

Unlike the previous textbook, this formulation does not directly legitimize the transformation as a necessary solution. Instead, it highlights the structural implications of power concentration. In its discussion of Nasakom, the Merdeka Curriculum textbook describes the concept as a political strategy that, in practice, generated ideological tensions and political dynamics. Thus, Nasakom is no longer represented solely as a symbol of unity but as a site of political negotiation and contestation.

These differences indicate a shift from normative legitimation toward a more contextual and reflective framing. This finding is consistent with Nugara et al. (2024), who demonstrate that curriculum changes in Indonesia are often accompanied by shifts in how politically sensitive events are framed. Similarly, Afiyadi (2018) argues that history textbooks inherently reflect particular paradigms in constructing ideological and national identity narratives. To clarify this transformation, the following table presents a systematic comparison between the two textbooks.

Table 1. The Recontextualization of Guided Democracy in Indonesian History Textbooks

| Analytical Aspect | 2013 Curriculum (Revised 2018) | Merdeka Curriculum | Discursive Implication |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Liberal Democracy Crisis | Represented as systemic failure demanding a solution | Positioned as a complex context of systemic transformation | Shift from justification to contextualization |
| Presidential Decree (5 July 1959) | Constitutional solution for national stability | Political turning point with implications for power consolidation | From normative legitimation to structural reflection |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|
| Role of the President | Central and legitimate | Central with emphasis on strengthened executive authority | Re-evaluation of political authority |
| Restriction of Opposition | Framed as necessary for national unity | Described as affecting democratic life | Normalization versus problematization |
| Nasakom | Symbol of ideological integration and unity | Political strategy generating ideological tensions | Integrative versus political-contextual framing |
| Nationalism | Homogeneous and stability-oriented | Reflective and contextually grounded | Transformation of identity orientation |

Source: Adapted from the analysis of the book *Sejarah Indonesia SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII Edisi Revisi 2018* by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia and the book of *Sejarah untuk SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII* by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, interpreted through the Discourse-Historical Approach (Wodak, 2015).

The shift illustrated above demonstrates that curriculum reform results in a transformation in how the state frames the relationship between stability and democracy. While the 2013 Curriculum tends to normalize the centralization of power as a historical necessity, the Merdeka Curriculum opens interpretive space for a more critical reflection on its political consequences. From the perspective of historical consciousness, this transformation influences how students understand legitimacy, conflict, and national identity (Rüsen, 2004). In sum, the recontextualization of Guided Democracy across the two curricula reveals that history textbooks function as dynamic arenas of meaning contestation. They do not merely transmit historical facts but actively shape ideological orientation and political consciousness among younger generations.

Personalization of Power and the Centralization of Authority in the Representation of Soekarno

The transformation of the Guided Democracy narrative across the curriculum changes is not only visible in the framing of the political system but also in the construction of President Soekarno as a historical actor. Within the framework of the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), personalization of political actors functions as a discursive strategy that builds legitimacy through the attribution of specific roles, responsibilities, and authority to individuals (Wodak, 2009). Representations of historical figures are never neutral; rather, they reflect power relations and ideological orientations embedded in the production of educational texts.

In the book of *Sejarah Indonesia SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII Edisi Revisi 2018*, Soekarno is constructed as a central figure who decisively shaped the direction of national political transformation. The narrative emphasizes his leadership capacity in overcoming parliamentary instability and legitimizes the Presidential Decree of 5 July 1959 as a constitutional measure. This strong focus on personal leadership produces a figurative construction in which broader structural dynamics—such as the relationship between the presidency, parliament, and political parties—are not critically explored. Within this framework, the centralization of power is represented as a historical necessity to ensure national stability.

Such personalization aligns with Purwanta and Novianto's (2022) findings that Indonesian history textbooks frequently reproduce political legitimacy through conflict simplification and reinforcement of central figures. Similarly, Purwanta, Pelu, and Bramastia (2023) demonstrate a tendency to construct political modernity through leadership-centered narratives. From van Dijk's (2008) perspective, this can be understood as a mechanism of elite discursive control, in which representations of authority are legitimized through the strengthening of individual power while oppositional forces are minimized.

In contrast, the book of *Sejarah untuk SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII Kurikulum Merdeka* presents a more contextualized representation of Soekarno. Although he remains acknowledged as a significant political actor, the narrative places greater emphasis on the structural implications of executive power consolidation and the diminishing role of political parties. Personalization is not entirely eliminated, but it is embedded within a broader framework of power relations. This shift indicates a movement from a figure-centered approach toward a system-centered orientation.

This finding is consistent with Nugara et al. (2024), who demonstrate that curriculum reforms in Indonesia are often accompanied by shifts in perspective in framing politically sensitive events. Furthermore, Kurniawan (2023) argues that history textbooks serve as arenas of narrative negotiation, where particular actors may be amplified or marginalized depending on the underlying ideological orientation. Consequently, the changing representation of Soekarno reflects a transformation in strategies of discursive legitimation within educational texts.

From the perspective of historiography and politics of memory, personalization of leadership has significant implications for the formation of historical consciousness. Berger (2011) emphasizes that in post-authoritarian societies, textbooks play a crucial role in shaping collective memory of national figures. McGregor (2007) likewise illustrates that representations of Indonesia's past are continually renegotiated within contemporary political dynamics. Therefore, the transformation of Soekarno's representation across the two curricula is not merely pedagogical; it reflects a broader shift in the state's ideological orientation in framing the relationship between stability and democracy. The systematic comparison between the two textbooks is presented in the following table.

Table 2 Transformation of the Personalization of Soekarno's Power in History Textbooks

| Analytical Aspect | Curriculum 2013 (Revised 2018) | Merdeka Curriculum | Discursive Implication |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Narrative Focus | Soekarno as the primary actor and central agent of change | Soekarno as an actor situated within the political system | Shift from figurative orientation to structural orientation |
| Legitimation Strategy | Emphasized as a savior of national stability | Linked to the strengthening of executive authority | Transformation from normative legitimation to contextual legitimation |
| Relation to Political Parties | Minimal problematization of party restrictions | Emphasis on the declining role of political parties | Reinterpretation of power centralization |
| Complexity of Conflict | Conflicts tend to be simplified | Conflicts are contextualized structurally | Shift from depoliticization toward analysis of power relations |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Ideological Orientation | Symbolic heroification of leadership | Analytical representation of authority dynamics | Change in the paradigm of political legitimization |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|

Source: Adapted from the analysis of the book *Sejarah Indonesia SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII Edisi Revisi 2018* by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia) and the book of *Sejarah untuk SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII* by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, interpreted through the Discourse-Historical Approach (Wodak, 2015).

The table demonstrates that curriculum reform produces a transformation in strategies of representing political authority. While Curriculum 2013 tends to construct legitimacy through personalization and normalization of centralized authority, the Merdeka Curriculum opens interpretive space for analyzing the structural implications of power consolidation. Within the framework of discursive legitimation (Wodak, 2009; van Dijk, 2008), this shift indicates a transformation in how the state frames the relationship between individual leadership, institutional structures, and democratic practice in history education.

Thus, the personalization of Soekarno across the two curricula illustrates that history textbooks are not merely vehicles for transmitting factual information, but arenas of political meaning production. This transformation confirms that the recontextualization of historical narratives is inherently intertwined with ideological dynamics and pedagogical orientations of the state.

Delegitimization of Political Opposition and the Reduction of Pluralism

The transformation of the Guided Democracy narrative across curriculum reform is not only visible in the personalization of leadership but also in how political opposition and pluralism are discursively constructed. Within the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), legitimation and delegitimation operate through strategies of nomination, predication, and argumentation that position actors within hierarchies of political legitimacy (Wodak, 2009). In this sense, textbooks do not merely recount political developments; they define which forms of political participation are considered necessary, disruptive, or historically justified.

In Curriculum 2013 (Revised 2018), the parliamentary period preceding Guided Democracy is predominantly framed through a crisis narrative. Political parties are associated with cabinet instability, ideological fragmentation, and governmental inefficiency. Although opposition forces are not explicitly condemned, they are indirectly linked to disorder. This framing constructs a pragmatic argumentation scheme: instability requires corrective authority. Through this discursive flow, political pluralism appears less as a democratic principle and more as a structural weakness. Centralization, therefore, is implicitly normalized as a rational and stabilizing response. This discursive logic can be visualized as follows:



Figure 1. Crisis-Based Legitimation Model (Curriculum 2013)

Source: Adapted from the author’s analysis of *Sejarah Indonesia SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII Edisi Revisi 2018* (Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia), using the Discourse-Historical Approach (Wodak, 2015).

In Wodak’s (2009) framework, this represents legitimization through rationalization, where political restriction is justified as a necessary solution to dysfunction. Such a pattern resonates with broader democratic theory debates on democratic erosion, where reductions in opposition are often framed as essential for national unity or political efficiency. When pluralism is constructed as disorder, dissent risks being perceived as incompatible with cohesion.

Westheimer (2019) argues that in periods marked by the rise of populist nationalism, civic education frequently shifts toward emphasizing unity and loyalty over critical deliberation. In such contexts, the boundaries of legitimate political disagreement become narrower. Applied to the textbook representation of Guided Democracy, the prioritization of stability over contestation may subtly reorient civic imagination from participatory pluralism toward conformity-based citizenship. Students encounter democracy not primarily as structured disagreement but as managed stability.

By contrast, the Merdeka Curriculum demonstrates a more contextualized orientation. While instability during the parliamentary era remains acknowledged, the narrative situates the restriction of political parties within a broader structural transformation of state power. Rather than presenting opposition primarily as dysfunctional, it links political limitation to institutional reconfiguration and shifts in executive authority. This does not fully problematize consolidation, yet it introduces analytical space for examining consequences rather than merely accepting necessity. This alternative discursive orientation may be represented as follows:



Figure 2. Structural-Contextual Model (Merdeka Curriculum)

Source: Adapted from the author’s analysis of *Sejarah untuk SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII* (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia), using the Discourse-Historical Approach (Wodak, 2015).

The difference between these two models lies not only in narrative emphasis but in democratic imagination. In the first model, pluralism is discursively reduced to instability; in the second, pluralism becomes part of institutional negotiation. This transformation signals a movement from implicit delegitimization toward contextual recognition of political contestation. The comparative shift can be synthesized in the following analytical matrix:

Table 3. Discursive Transformation of Political Opposition and Pluralism

| Dimension | Curriculum 2013 (Revised 2018) | Merdeka Curriculum | Democratic-Theoretical Implication |
|----------------------|--|--|---|
| Crisis Framing | Instability foregrounded | Structural change foregrounded | From emergency logic to contextual logic |
| Role of Opposition | Indirectly associated with dysfunction | Situated within institutional transformation | From delegitimized actor to contextualized actor |
| Concept of Pluralism | Source of fragmentation | Arena of negotiation | From unity-based to deliberative orientation |
| Civic Orientation | Stability-centered citizenship | Reflective citizenship | Shift toward critical civic engagement (Westheimer) |
| Legitimation Mode | Pragmatic rationalization (Wodak) | Contextual explanation | Transformation in discursive legitimation strategy |

Source: Adapted from the author's analysis of *Sejarah Indonesia SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII Edisi Revisi 2018* (Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia) and *Sejarah untuk SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XII* (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia), interpreted through the Discourse-Historical Approach (Wodak, 2015) and informed by democratic theory (Westheimer, 2019).

From a democratic-theoretical standpoint, this shift reflects differing understandings of political legitimacy. A unity-centered model emphasizes cohesion and efficiency, often at the expense of dissent. A deliberative model, by contrast, recognizes structured disagreement as inherent to democratic development. The curriculum transformation suggests a gradual reorientation from the former toward the latter, even if not fully articulated. Thus, the reduction or contextualization of opposition in textbooks is not a neutral pedagogical adjustment. It shapes how students conceptualize legitimate political disagreement and the boundaries of democratic practice. History education, therefore, functions as a discursive arena in which democratic norms are either narrowed through crisis-based rationalization or expanded through contextual reflection. The recontextualization of Guided Democracy in Indonesian textbooks ultimately demonstrates that curriculum reform reshapes not only historical content but also the ideological parameters within which democracy itself is imagined.

Ideological Implications and the Transformation of Historical Consciousness in History Education

The transformation of the representation of Guided Democracy from the 2013 Curriculum (Revised 2018 Edition) to the Merdeka Curriculum reflects more than a textual adjustment; it signifies a shift in ideological orientation within Indonesian history education. From the perspective of the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), educational texts operate within dynamic relations between language, power, and socio-political context (Wodak, 2009). Consequently, curricular change must be understood as a process of political memory recontextualization that directly influences the formation of civic identity among students.

In the 2013 Curriculum, the narrative of Guided Democracy is structured through a crisis-based legitimization strategy. Parliamentary instability and party fragmentation are framed as threats to national unity, thereby positioning executive centralization as a historical necessity. This discursive strategy aligns with what Berger (2011) identifies as stability-oriented memory construction in post-authoritarian contexts, where textbooks tend to preserve narratives that safeguard national cohesion. Within this framework, the restriction of opposition is not represented as a democratic dilemma but rather as a rational consequence required to maintain unity.

By contrast, the Merdeka Curriculum demonstrates a more reflective and structurally contextualized approach. Guided Democracy is not presented solely as a normative solution but as a historical process with institutional consequences for the balance of power within the state. The narrative shifts from moral justification toward analytical explanation, allowing readers to consider the structural implications of executive consolidation. This transformation indicates a movement from crisis-based legitimation to structural contextualization, thereby altering the interpretative framework available to students.

This finding resonates with Nugara et al. (2024), who demonstrate that curricular shifts in Indonesia are often accompanied by changes in perspective regarding political representation in textbooks. Similarly, Purwanta and Novianto (2022) argue that the politics of history in Indonesia continuously oscillate between national integration and critical reflection on power.

Thus, the transformation of Guided Democracy narratives is not an isolated textual phenomenon but part of a broader epistemological shift in educational policy.

Within international scholarship, this transition reflects an enduring tension in history education between heritage-oriented narratives and critical historical inquiry (Grever & Adriaansen, 2017). Heritage approaches emphasize continuity, unity, and national pride, whereas critical historical thinking encourages examination of conflict, contradiction, and power dynamics. The 2013 Curriculum appears closer to an integrative-stability orientation, while the Merdeka Curriculum signals a gradual move toward dialogic and analytical engagement with political history.

The ideological implications of this shift are particularly significant for the development of historical consciousness. According to Rösen (2004), historical consciousness emerges from the interplay between interpretations of the past, orientations in the present, and expectations for the future. Normative and stability-centered narratives tend to produce affirmative orientations toward authority, whereas reflective narratives create space for critical evaluation of democratic processes. In this regard, the Merdeka Curriculum potentially fosters a more analytical form of historical awareness.

The civic dimension of this transformation is equally crucial. Westheimer (2019) emphasizes that democratic education should not merely cultivate loyalty to the nation but must also develop students' capacity to critically assess political authority and public decision-making. In a similar vein, Goldberg (2020) argues that democratic history education must engage with political ambiguities and contradictions rather than reproducing simplified legitimizing narratives. Viewed through this lens, the narrative reconfiguration within the Merdeka Curriculum aligns more closely with models of reflective citizenship.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the advancement of textbook discourse analysis in Indonesia by demonstrating that curricular reform functions as a mechanism of ideological rearticulation. Previous research has often focused on the representation of specific historical events; however, this study highlights how structural policy change itself reshapes political memory through framing strategies, lexical selection, and argumentative structures. Curriculum reform, therefore, should be understood as discursive transformation rather than administrative adjustment.

Ultimately, the recontextualization of Guided Democracy reveals that history textbooks function as arenas of ideological negotiation. They do not merely transmit historical facts but actively construct interpretative horizons regarding democracy, authority, and national identity. The shift from legitimated to reflective framing suggests that Indonesian history education is gradually moving toward a more contextual and critical engagement with political history, while still operating within the framework of national cohesion.

This transformation has profound implications for the formation of democratic consciousness among students. By altering the discursive representation of executive power, opposition, and institutional balance, curricular change reshapes how future citizens understand the relationship between stability and democracy. In this sense, the politics of curriculum reform becomes inseparable from the politics of memory and civic identity formation.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the transformation of Guided Democracy narratives from the 2013 Curriculum (Revised 2018) to the Merdeka Curriculum reflects a broader ideological and epistemological shift within Indonesian history education. Through the Discourse-Historical Approach, the findings reveal that the 2013 Curriculum predominantly employed crisis-based legitimization strategies that framed executive centralization as a necessary response

to parliamentary instability, thereby reinforcing a stability-oriented national narrative. In contrast, the Merdeka Curriculum recontextualizes Guided Democracy within a more structural and reflective framework, emphasizing institutional consequences and democratic trade-offs rather than normative justification. This shift signifies a movement from integrative-legitimative historiography toward a more dialogic and contextual model of historical representation. The transformation has significant implications for the formation of historical consciousness and civic identity, as it reshapes how students interpret the relationship between authority, democracy, and national cohesion. Ultimately, curriculum reform emerges not merely as an administrative adjustment but as a discursive rearticulation of political memory that actively contributes to the construction of democratic awareness among future citizens.

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