



Students' Ability to Analyze Cultural Values in the Folktale Si Miskin

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe students' ability to analyze cultural values contained in the folktale Si Miskin, as cited from the Encyclopedia of Classical Language and Literature. The research employed a quantitative approach using a descriptive method. The participants of the study were tenth-grade students selected as the research sample. Data were collected through a cultural value analysis test focusing on the dimension of human relationships with God as a key aspect of cultural values. The results indicate that students' ability to analyze cultural values ranged from moderate to good levels. Data analysis revealed that one group of students achieved the highest percentage score of 41%, while two other groups each obtained 29%. These findings suggest that most students were able to identify and analyze religious cultural values embedded in the folktale, although the depth of analysis varied among individuals. The study demonstrates that folktales serve as effective literary learning resources for fostering students' understanding of cultural values. Therefore, literature instruction based on folktales should be continuously developed to enhance students' analytical skills and appreciation of local cultural values.

KATA KUNCI

analisis nilai
budaya, cerita
rakyat, si miskin,
pembelajaran
sastra, siswa sma

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan kemampuan siswa dalam menganalisis nilai budaya yang terkandung dalam cerita rakyat Si Miskin yang dikutip dari Ensiklopedi Bahasa dan Sastra Klasik. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Subjek penelitian adalah siswa kelas X yang dipilih sebagai sampel penelitian. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes analisis nilai budaya yang berfokus pada aspek hubungan manusia dengan Tuhan sebagai salah satu dimensi nilai budaya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan siswa dalam menganalisis nilai budaya berada pada kategori cukup hingga baik. Berdasarkan hasil pengolahan data, terdapat kelompok siswa yang memperoleh persentase capaian tertinggi sebesar 41%, sementara dua kelompok lainnya masing-masing memperoleh persentase sebesar 29%. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar siswa telah mampu mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis nilai-nilai budaya religius yang terkandung dalam cerita rakyat, meskipun tingkat kedalaman analisis masih bervariasi antarindividu. Hasil penelitian ini mengindikasikan bahwa cerita rakyat dapat dimanfaatkan sebagai sumber pembelajaran sastra yang efektif untuk menumbuhkan pemahaman nilai budaya siswa. Oleh karena itu, pembelajaran sastra berbasis cerita rakyat perlu terus dikembangkan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan analisis serta apresiasi siswa terhadap nilai budaya lokal.

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Introduction

Indonesia is widely recognized as a multicultural nation characterized by rich ethnic diversity, religious beliefs, traditions, and local wisdom that have been inherited across generations. This cultural plurality is reflected not only in social practices but also in literary works, particularly in folklore, which functions as a cultural archive preserving collective values, beliefs, and worldviews of society. Folklore occupies a strategic position in Indonesian literary tradition because it represents oral narratives passed down from generation to generation and serves as a medium for transmitting moral teachings, cultural norms, and philosophical reflections. As a form of literary expression, folklore embodies the thoughts, emotions, and ideologies of its creators, often reflecting ancestral values and social realities of the past (Widiantari et al., 2022). Scholars have emphasized that literary works, including folklore, are not merely artistic creations but also educational tools that contain moral, pedagogical, and cultural dimensions (Sulastri & Alimin, 2017). Through narrative structures and character actions, folklore conveys ethical principles and cultural values that guide readers in understanding acceptable social behavior, respect for traditions, and spiritual beliefs. Therefore, folklore remains relevant in contemporary education, especially in fostering students' cultural awareness and moral reasoning.

Among the various values embedded in folklore, cultural values play a crucial role in shaping learners' perspectives on identity, social relations, and belief systems. Cultural values may include religious devotion, respect for elders, communal harmony, perseverance, and moral responsibility, all of which are essential in character education. According to Sutardi (2020), cultural diversity encompasses a complex system of ideas, behaviors, and social practices developed through continuous interaction within society and transmitted through education. In the context of literary learning, analyzing cultural values in folklore enables students to interpret texts critically and connect literary content with real-life experiences. However, empirical observations indicate that students often encounter difficulties when analyzing cultural values in literary texts, particularly folklore. Many learners struggle to identify implicit cultural meanings, misinterpret symbolic elements, or lack sufficient conceptual understanding of cultural value frameworks. This challenge suggests a gap between the instructional objectives of literature learning and students' actual analytical abilities. Consequently, systematic research is needed to examine students' ability to analyze cultural values in folklore texts, especially those derived from classical literary sources. By investigating how students interpret and analyze cultural values in the folktale *Si Miskin*, this study seeks to contribute to the development of literature-based learning that enhances cultural literacy, critical thinking, and appreciation of local wisdom. Such research is expected to provide empirical insights that support the integration of folklore as an effective instructional resource in language and literature education.

Method

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a descriptive design to examine students' ability to analyze cultural values in the folktale *Si Miskin*, sourced from the *Encyclopedia of Classical Language and Literature*. Qualitative research was selected because it allows researchers to explore phenomena in depth and to interpret

meanings based on participants' perspectives and textual evidence. According to Sugiyono (2021), qualitative research emphasizes naturalistic inquiry and focuses on understanding social or educational phenomena as they occur in real contexts. In line with this perspective, the present study sought to capture students' analytical responses and interpretations of cultural values embedded in folklore rather than to quantify learning outcomes statistically. The primary focus of the analysis was on how students identified, interpreted, and articulated cultural values such as religious beliefs, moral norms, and social relationships as represented in the narrative. This approach enabled the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of students' analytical abilities and challenges when engaging with culturally rich literary texts.

The research was conducted in a senior secondary education context during the odd semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The population of the study consisted of all tenth-grade students enrolled at the research site, totaling 44 learners distributed across two classes. From this population, one class comprising 24 students was purposively selected as the research sample. Purposive sampling was employed because it allows researchers to deliberately select participants who are most relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2018). The selected class was identified based on preliminary observations indicating that students experienced difficulties in analyzing cultural values in folklore texts. By focusing on this group, the study aimed to obtain rich and meaningful data regarding students' analytical performance and reasoning processes. The sample was considered representative of the population in terms of academic level and curriculum exposure, thereby ensuring that the findings could meaningfully reflect students' abilities within a similar educational context.

Data collection techniques in this study included literature study and document analysis. The literature study was conducted to establish a theoretical foundation related to folklore, cultural values, and literary analysis, drawing on scholarly books, journal articles, and relevant educational documents. Document analysis served as the primary method for collecting empirical data and involved examining students' written responses to tasks requiring them to analyze cultural values in the folktale *Si Miskin*. The data collection procedure followed several systematic steps. First, students were introduced to the concept of cultural values and their manifestations in folklore. Second, students were instructed to read the folktale carefully and identify passages or dialogues that reflected cultural values. Third, students selected and cited relevant textual excerpts that they believed represented specific cultural values. Fourth, each excerpt was coded based on predefined cultural value categories to facilitate data organization. Fifth, data reduction was conducted by grouping similar codes and eliminating irrelevant information. Finally, the researcher interpreted and synthesized the data to draw conclusions regarding students' analytical abilities. To ensure data trustworthiness, credibility was enhanced through consultation and discussion with academic supervisors, who reviewed the analytical process and interpretations. This triangulation of perspectives helped ensure that the findings accurately represented students' analytical performance and reduced the potential for researcher bias.

Results

This section presents the results of the study concerning students' ability to analyze cultural values in the folktale *Si Miskin*, adapted from the *Encyclopedia of*

Classical Language and Literature. The analysis focused specifically on cultural values related to the relationship between humans and God. Data were obtained from students' written analytical tasks and were examined qualitatively to identify patterns of understanding, accuracy of interpretation, and levels of analytical depth demonstrated by tenth-grade students.

Student Coding and Data Organization

To maintain research ethics and confidentiality, students' real names were converted into coded initials. This coding system facilitated systematic data analysis while protecting participants' identities. Table 1 presents the student coding used in this study.

Table 1
Student Coding for Data Analysis

No.	Student Name	Code
1	Aradi Sahputra	AS
2	Ahmad Farizi	AF
3	Assyadil Ilmah	AL
4	Agam Zar Kaish	AK
5	Aliza Rahma	AR
6	Balqi Aci Imad	BCI
7	Doni Mansyah	DM
8	Dimas Sutriadi	DS
9	Fahri Ramadhan	FR
10	Faozi	F
11	Hasanudin	H
12	Laila	L
13	Melati	M
14	Mawaddah	MH
15	Pani	P
16	Rizki Sahputra	RS
17	Safrizal	S
18	Saleha Salim	SS
19	Rioga Sahputra	RS
20	Sakinah Fitri	SF
21	Sinta Dela	SD
22	Siska Handayani	SH
23	Sarmita Ratu Lantisa	SRL
24	Yoga Andika	YA

Students Who Identified Three Cultural Values

The first group consisted of students who successfully identified **three cultural values** related to the relationship between humans and God. These values were categorized as:

- (1) belief in divine destiny,
- (2) gratitude for divine provision, and

- (3) submission or surrender to God's will.

Table 2
Students Identifying Three Cultural Values

Code	Cultural Value Evidence (Excerpt Summary)
AS	Divine destiny and God's blessing through unexpected fortune
AF	Prayer and belief in God's power to transform fate
AL	Gratitude and acknowledgment of God's will
DM	Faith in divine intervention
DS	Submission to God's decree
P	Trust in God's provision
RS	Recognition of God's omnipotence
S	Dependence on divine guidance
SS	Religious devotion and surrender
YA	Gratitude and acceptance of destiny

A total of **10 students (41%)** demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of cultural values in this category. Their responses showed the ability to connect narrative events with abstract religious concepts, such as divine providence and spiritual submission. These students were able to support their interpretations with accurate textual evidence, indicating strong analytical competence.

Students Who Identified Two Cultural Values

The second group included students who identified **two cultural values** related to the human–God relationship, generally focusing on prayer and surrender but failing to recognize gratitude as a distinct value.

Table 3
Students Identifying Two Cultural Values

Code	Identified Cultural Values
RS	Prayer and submission
SF	Divine intervention and faith
SD	Belief in destiny
FR	Submission to God
F	Religious devotion
M	Faith and trust
MH	Prayer and belief

This group comprised **7 students (29%)**. Although these students demonstrated partial understanding, their analyses lacked completeness. Most responses showed difficulty in distinguishing closely related cultural values or articulating them explicitly. The findings suggest that these students possessed emerging analytical skills but required further guidance in deep textual interpretation.

Students Who Identified One Cultural Value

The third group consisted of students who identified only **one cultural value**, typically focusing solely on prayer or belief in God.

Table 4
Students Identifying One Cultural Value

Code	Identified Cultural Value
AK	Prayer
AR	Belief in God
BCI	Religious devotion
H	Faith
L	Submission
SH	Prayer
SRL	Belief in divine power

This group also accounted for **7 students (29%)**. Their analyses tended to be descriptive rather than analytical. Most students in this category quoted relevant text passages but did not elaborate on the deeper cultural meaning or connect the narrative to broader religious values. These results indicate limited analytical depth and conceptual understanding.

Overall Distribution of Analytical Ability

The overall distribution of students' analytical ability is summarized as follows:

- **41%** of students demonstrated high analytical ability (three values identified)
- **29%** demonstrated moderate analytical ability (two values identified)
- **29%** demonstrated low analytical ability (one value identified)

This distribution reveals that while a substantial portion of students showed strong analytical skills, a significant number still struggled to fully interpret cultural values embedded in literary texts.

Summary of Findings

The results indicate that students generally possessed the ability to analyze cultural values in the folktale *Si Miskin*, particularly values related to the relationship between humans and God. However, the depth and accuracy of analysis varied considerably. Students with higher analytical ability were able to integrate textual evidence with abstract religious concepts, while students with lower ability tended to focus on surface-level interpretations. These findings confirm that students' cultural value analysis skills exist but require systematic instructional support to achieve more consistent and comprehensive outcomes.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that tenth-grade students demonstrate varying levels of ability in analyzing cultural values embedded in the folktale *Si Miskin*, particularly those related to the relationship between humans and God. The distribution of students' analytical performance—ranging from high, moderate, to low—suggests that cultural value analysis is a cognitively demanding skill that

requires not only comprehension of narrative content but also the ability to interpret abstract moral and religious meanings. Students who successfully identified three cultural values exhibited strong interpretative competence, as they were able to connect textual events with broader religious concepts such as divine destiny, gratitude for God's blessings, and submission to God's will. This finding supports the view that literary texts, especially folktales, function as effective media for transmitting cultural and spiritual values when students are equipped with adequate analytical frameworks. In line with previous studies, the integration of religious and cultural elements in folklore allows students to reflect on moral principles while simultaneously enhancing literary appreciation. Thus, the results confirm that folktales serve not only as narrative entertainment but also as pedagogical tools for cultivating cultural literacy and religious awareness.

However, the results also reveal that a considerable proportion of students were only able to identify one or two cultural values, indicating partial or surface-level understanding. Students in the moderate category generally recognized explicit religious expressions, such as prayer or divine intervention, but struggled to articulate implicit values like gratitude or submission as distinct analytical categories. This limitation suggests that students may rely heavily on overt textual cues rather than engaging in deeper interpretive processes. From an instructional perspective, this finding highlights the importance of guided literary analysis in classroom practice. Without structured scaffolding, students tend to focus on literal meanings and overlook symbolic or thematic dimensions of the text. According to constructivist learning theory, students develop higher-order thinking skills through active engagement and guided reflection. Therefore, the lack of comprehensive analysis among some students may stem from insufficient exposure to systematic analytical strategies, rather than from a complete absence of analytical ability. This underscores the necessity for teachers to explicitly model how cultural values can be identified, categorized, and justified using textual evidence.

Furthermore, the presence of students with low analytical performance emphasizes the need for differentiated instruction in literary learning. Students who identified only one cultural value generally demonstrated descriptive responses without critical elaboration, suggesting limited conceptual understanding of cultural analysis. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that students often experience difficulty in distinguishing between moral messages and cultural values, particularly when dealing with abstract concepts such as spirituality and belief systems. In this context, the use of folklore analysis in language education must be accompanied by clear conceptual explanations and practice opportunities that bridge textual interpretation with cultural theory. Despite these challenges, the overall findings of this study affirm that students possess foundational abilities to analyze cultural values, which can be further developed through appropriate pedagogical interventions. By integrating explicit instruction, discussion-based learning, and reflective activities, educators can enhance students' capacity to interpret cultural values embedded in literary texts. Consequently, the study reinforces the role of literature-based instruction as a strategic approach to fostering cultural understanding, critical thinking, and moral awareness among secondary school students.

Conclusions

This study demonstrates that tenth-grade students possess the ability to analyze cultural values embedded in the folktale Si Miskin, particularly values related to the relationship between humans and God. The findings indicate varying levels of analytical competence, with a proportion of students successfully identifying multiple cultural values, while others demonstrated partial understanding. Overall, the results suggest that students are capable of recognizing religious and cultural dimensions in folklore when provided with appropriate textual context. The use of Si Miskin as a learning resource proves effective in facilitating students' cultural literacy and moral awareness. These findings affirm the pedagogical value of folktales in Indonesian language and literature instruction and highlight the importance of structured guidance to enhance students' analytical depth. Future research is encouraged to explore instructional strategies that further support students' cultural value analysis across diverse literary texts.

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