

AN EXPLORATION OF CULTURAL ELEMENTS AND VALUES IN KOREAN STORYBOOKS: SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This research explored how cultural elements and values are represented in Korean storybooks for Korean language learners. The objectives of this study are to: 1. Identify Korean and non-Korean cultural elements depicted in Korean language storybooks for Korean language learners; 2. Identify Korean and non-Korean cultural values depicted in Korean language storybooks for Korean language learners. The analysis was conducted using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. Based on the analysis results, 62 cultural elements and 50 cultural values were found for Korean culture. Meanwhile, for non-Korean culture, 35 cultural elements and 51 cultural values were found. The first finding related to Korean culture was its cultural elements, namely 6 cultural categories, including: monuments; groups of buildings; sites; social practices, rituals, and celebrations; knowledge and practices about nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship. Related to cultural values, 5 categories were found, including: time; human relations with nature; human relations with each other; behavioral motives; and human nature. The second findings related to non-Korean culture were cultural elements, namely 5 cultural categories, including: monuments; groups of buildings; sites; knowledge and practices about nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship. Regarding cultural values, five categories were identified as the same category found in Korean culture. Based on these findings, it can be seen that despite the author being a foreigner and not a native Korean speaker, Korean culture is still prominently featured in the book *Short Stories in Korean for Intermediate Learners*. The novelty in this study compared to previous studies are: 1. There is a combination of cultural elements and cultural values that create a more in-depth analysis; 2. The use of semiotic analysis for more specific findings; 3. Storybooks with authors who are not a native

Keywords: Cultural elements, Cultural values, Semiotic, Roland Barthes, Storybooks

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the interest in learning Korean has increased along with the spread of the Korean Wave. Books have become one of the primary sources for

Korean language learning. Samsudin, Anas, and Triarisanti (2021) stated that textbooks are an important part of language learning and are curriculum artifacts that guide the teaching and learning process.

Moreover, storybooks as language learning media has been shown to enhance language learning by providing knowledge and insights related to the introduction of culture and tradition (Cindy & Putry, 2022; Surachman, 2020). Therefore, it is important how culture is constructed and represented in Korean storybooks and whether they reflect Korean culture authentically or are presented in a customized version.

Culture is the entire system of ideas, actions, and human creations in society that humans internalize through learning and a historically inherited system of symbols that contains meanings expressed in symbolic forms and functions as a medium of communication and worldview formation (Koentjaraningrat, 2009, p.180; Geertz 1973 in Hendro, 2020). The representation of culture in Korean storybooks can be seen in the cultural elements and values presented based on UNESCO (1971, 2003) include: Monuments; Groups of buildings; Sites; Traditions and oral expressions; Performing arts; Social practices, rituals, and celebrations; Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; Traditional craftsmanship. Cultural values are also important and are closely related to cultural elements in representing a culture. Cultural values are shared beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors within a group that shape identity, influence social norms and ethics, and guide interactions and decision-making across societies. (Hasriyati et al., 2022; Illangsari, Rahmi & Arisa, 2022). Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961 in Hills, 2002) developed the Value Orientation Theory that had the five dimensions of value orientation: Nature of Human Nature, Humanity of the Natural Environment, Time, Motive for Behaving, and Relating to Other People.

There have been several previous studies related to cultural elements and values in books that are relevant to this

study, then it is classified into two categories. First, study on textbooks shows that culture is classified on product, practice, perspective, people, and religion (Farrahillah, 2023; Rahmawati, 2020). Then, Choi & Lee (2024) find that cultural representation is displayed around ideologies and values such as democracy, nationalism, patriotism, and confucianism. Also about history, economics, politics, and local cultures. The other representation related to source culture, target culture, international culture, cross-cultural universality, cultural interaction, and the outcomes of local culture and community culture (Chen, Geng, & He, 2023; Samsudin, Ansas, & Triarisanti, 2021). Second, study on storybooks/short stories, cultural representation is shown based on elements that are classified into several levels, namely family kinship culture, food and beverage culture, clothing and textile culture, color culture, professional culture, management and legal culture, and daily oral communication culture (Bekis, & Yiğit, 2021). Cultural representation is shown based on values, these are socio-cultural aspects, ethical values, logical values, aesthetic values, and life values. related to customs, traditions, religion, and language, as well as analyses highlighting values within ethical, logical, and aesthetic contexts (Illangsari, Rahmi, & Arisa, 2022; Kalau-serang, 2023; Lawendatu, Ratu, & Palar, 2023; Ntabajyana, Nizeyimana, & Nzabalirwa, 2022).

This study was conducted due to the limited research on cultural representation in Korean storybooks, specifically in terms of cultural elements and values. Moreover, this study uses semiotic analysis, which has not been used in previous studies. The authors of the storybooks that are used as research objects are not native speakers of Korean, which may influence how Korean culture is depicted in their stories. Therefo-

re, this study aims to identify cultural elements and values in Korean storybooks.

METHOD

This study used qualitative methods based on Sugiono (2018, p. 9), qualitative research places the researcher as the key instrument, data collection techniques are carried out in combination, and data analysis is inductive. Waruwu (2024) further clarifies that this qualitative method emphasizes natural and in-depth observation and understanding, presented descriptively and interpreted comprehensively. In this context, storybooks serve as a medium for imparting knowledge, enhancing understanding, developing reading skills, and introducing culture to language learners, particularly those interested in studying Korean.

The data to be studied are words, phrases, sentences, illustrations, visual elements, genres, and interactions between text and images that appear in the book *Short Stories in Korean for Intermediate Learners* by Olly Richard as the research data source. This book was published in 2020 by Teach Yourself Books (GB) and has 207 pages. The researcher chose this book because the collection of short stories in this book was written in Korean by an author from the UK, Europe. The book is intended for learners of Korean, with the stories presented using intermediate-level Korean vocabulary. Several stories depict non-Korean culture. The data from the book was collected using document study techniques based on Creswell's (2014) explanation in Ardiansyah, Risnita, & Jailani (2023), which states that documentation studies involve collecting data from documents, archives, or other written materials related to the research phenomenon. The researcher identifies, describes, and classifies the data, which is collected through

observation and note-taking techniques. The steps taken in collecting the data are as follows: First, the researcher read, understood, and noted the written and visual content from the data sources. Then, the researcher identified, described, and classified elements that indicated Korean cultural elements or values, which would then be analyzed further (Fauzah & Hidayati, 2023; Hardiany & Budiati, 2023).

The analysis was conducted using a semiotic approach. Barthes (1957) theory that gives rise to the main concept of semiotics, such as denotation which is the original meaning of a sign. Connotation, on the other hand, has subjectivity in it, where meaning is mixed with ideas, thoughts, feelings, expressions, and emotions. Myth is a connotation that has entered and spread throughout society (Fiona, 2024; Arieka, 2024). Researchers use Barthes' theory as the approach used in the analysis. The data analyzed based on the data analysis techniques according to Miles and Huberman (1994) which are divided into three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, as explained in (Sugiyono, 2018, p. 246).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

For efficiency in writing and analysis, each piece of data will be coded: KCE for Korean cultural elements, NCE for non-Korean cultural elements, KCV for Korean cultural values, and NCV for non-Korean cultural values. Each code will be accompanied by a sequential number based on the order of data; for example, KCE01.

Korean Culture

This section presents findings and discussions about Korean cultural elements and values in the book *Short Stories In Korean For Intermediate Learners*. There are four stories in the book that represent

Korean culture: **미친 비빔밥, 아주 특이한 여행, 나무 상자**, and **투명 인간 지유**.

Cultural Elements

The minimum unit of a cultural system is a cultural element that constitutes a unit of a cultural entity (Qi, Wang, Chen, Liao, & Zhang, 2021). In Korean culture, there are many unique combinations that

are rooted in Confucian values, artistic expressions, and social norms. Based on data identification, out of the 8 categories of cultural elements classification according to UNESCO, 6 categories of Korean cultural elements were successfully identified. The following table presents the data identification from the storybook sources used by the researcher:

Table 1. Findings of Korean cultural elements in the storybook *Short Stories In Korean For Intermediate Learners*.

Cultural Elements	Frequency	Page	%
Monuments	2	2 & 106	3.22%
Group of Buildings	1	2	1.61%
Sites (Country, City, Region, Place)	36	9, 11, 13, 17, 18, 20, 24, 31, 107, 111, 115, 119, 122, 124, 159, & 167.	58.06%
Social practices, rituals and festive events (Culinary)	12	10, 12, 13, 17, 18, 20, & 24.	19.35%
Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe	5	31, 107, 122, & 159.	8.06%
Traditional craftsmanship (Transportation, Arts, Decorative Arts)	6	10, 17, 24, 117, 122, & 123.	6.97%
Total	62		100%

Table 1 shows that the most frequently appearing cultural elements in the stories are site elements (58.06%), which include countries, cities, regions, and places in Korea (KCE04-KCE39). The second is social practices, rituals, and festive events (19.35%) that specifically highlight Korean culinary culture (KCE40-KCE51). The third is traditional craftsmanship (9.67%), including transportation (KCE57-KCE59), art, and Korean decorative art (KCE60-KCE62). The fourth is knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe (8.06%), including knowledge related to Korean nature (KCE52-KCE56). The fifth is monuments (3.22%), including a monument with a curved roof (KCE01-KCE02),

and the last is a group of buildings (1.61%), featuring depictions of building groups in the city (KCE03). Previous studies did not specifically mention dominant cultural elements, but several elements emerged, food and celebrations, which were classified as social practices, rituals, and festive events. Then, there are cities and places that were classified as sites. Traditional clothing, weapons, and houses were classified as traditional craftsmanship. And there is a category that was not found in this study, myths, which were classified as oral traditions and expressions (Bekis & Yiğit, 2021; Chen et al, 2023; Choi & Lee, 2024; Illangsari, 2022; Kalauserang, 2023; Lawendatu et al, 2023; Ntabajyana et al, 2022; Rahmawati, 2020;

Samsudin et al, 2021).

Monuments



Figure 1.1 Monuments, p. 106.

Denotation:

An image of a curved roof with upward-curving edges, characteristic of traditional Korean architecture.

Figure 1.1 refers to the monument (code KCE01) based on UNESCO (1972). The connotation shows a Korean-style pavilion with a curved roof. Many of the different types of pavilions have no walls and doors. This structure creates an open space that minimizes formality and allows emotional freedom. In figure 1.1, the pavilion is located right in the city park. Surrounded by nature and open, symbolically, this building represents the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature. This building is a space for enjoying beautiful landscapes, reading a book, drinking tea and sometimes playing games. The myth shows that the pavilion also reflects the unity of subject and object, which aligns with the Taoist concept of selflessness and harmony with nature. This type of pavilion plays an important role in realizing Buddhist and Taoist aesthetics that reject individual truth. Korean culture encourages taking things slowly and savoring every moment of daily life.

Group of buildings



Figure 1.2 Group of buildings, p. 02

Denotation:

A row of modern buildings with square windows, signboards, and flat roofs characteristic of Korean urban architecture with the traditional Korean architecture between them.

Figure 1.2 refers to a group of buildings (coded KCE03) based on UNESCO (1972). The connotation meaning shows this contrast serves as a dynamic reminder that tradition remains alive despite the passage of time. Many of the buildings constructed in the same organised field make common use of materials, construction methods, building codes, and design concepts. This also applies to urban areas. Street networks, cityscapes, and even city borders vary depending on the time periods during which they were designed. This reproduces the myth, that Korean people's way of life is firmly anchored in the continuities created by the long-standing interactions between humans and their built environment. Korean architects' methods are closely linked to places of their origins; through exploring these places, they have expressed and discovered a contemporary identity that they can call their own. This reflects Korea's national narrative that modernity and tradition can coexist harmoniously also with the people.

Sites (Text 1.1, p. 107)

성태는 북서울 꿈의 숲에 도착했어요. 그 곳은 서울에 있는 큰 공원이었어요.

Denotation:

Sungtae arrived at Dream Forest in North Seoul. It was a large park in Seoul.

Text 1.1 is a finding related to sites (code KCE21) based on UNESCO (1972). The connotation meaning shows Dream Forest as Seoul's fourth largest park, located in Gangbuk-gu. It features seasonal forest landscapes, cherry blossom and maple trails, Wolyeongji Pond, a waterfall, and an observatory. The park also offers family-friendly facilities like a botanic garden, children's library, deer garden, concert hall, etc. The existence of this park emphasizes the importance of balance between humans, nature, and urban life in modern Korean culture. The myth shows Dream Forest embodies the narrative that Korean modernity does not separate itself from nature but integrates it into urban life. It is aligned with the concept that Korean Confucianism emphasizes self-cultivation as a holistic process involving also on nature, heaven, and earth. This deep ecological vision values emotional and aesthetic sensitivity, where elements like mountains, rivers, and trees play a meaningful role in shaping personal growth and self-understanding.

Social practices, rituals and festive events (Text 1.2, p. 10)

미친 비빔밥 식당에서 맛있는 비빔밥을 팔아.

Denotation:

At Michin Bibimbap restaurant, they sell delicious bibimbap.

Text 1.2 is an example of social

practices, rituals and festive events with the code (KCE40) based on UNESCO (2003). Bibimbap is a typical Korean dish consisting of a bowl of rice topped with side dishes such as meat, fried eggs, vegetables, and sauce that will be mixed before we eat. The connotation meaning shows the five cardinal colors which represent the five elements of the universe called Obangsaek. These colors are red (fire, south, spicy), green or blue (water, north, savory), yellow (earth, center, bitter), white (wood, east, sweet), and black (metal, west, salty). The diversity of the natural ingredients offer both nutritional benefits and symbolic meaning for the human body and health. The myths show bibimbap reflects the philosophy of harmony between body and soul, where its five colors symbolize the balance between humans and nature. These colors are believed to embody universal energy, which is channeled through the act of eating. Thus, traditional dish bibimbap, a meal and a symbol of diversity united in harmony.

Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe (Text 1.3, p. 31)

유월과 칠월에 한라산의 날씨는 따뜻하지만 너무 덥지 않아요.

Denotation:

In June and July, the weather on Hallasan Mountain is warm but not too hot.

Text 1.3 is a sample of knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe (code KCE53) based on UNESCO (2003). The connotation meaning shows Hallasan, the tallest mountain in South Korea located on Jeju Island, features diverse vegetation that changes with elevation, including subtropical to alpine plants 10% of which are endangered. The myths show that Hallasan Mountain also known

as Yeongjusan, "mountain high enough to pull the galaxy," (it is high enough to draw the aura of the whole universe). This mountain is considered sacred in folklore, requiring not just strength but humility and respect to climb. Legends say those who honor its spirit may be blessed with health and longevity, especially if they reach the summit and express heartfelt gratitude. This implies that in Korean society, Hallasan is regarded not only as a physical location but also as a holy and emotionally significant natural phenomena.

Traditional craftsmanship (Text 1.4, p. 117)

정미가 미소를 지었어요. ‘아니요. 오래된 집이 아니에요. 그렇지만 오래된 디자인의 집이에요. 저는 전통적인 것들을 좋아했어요.’

Denotation:

Jungmi smiled. “No, it’s not an old house. But it’s a house with an old design. I like traditional things.”

Text 1.4 is an example of traditional craftsmanship (KCE60) based on UNESCO (2003). The connotation shows that Jungmi likes traditional things, which are also reflected in the design of her house. Hanok were distinguished by its wood-

frame construction, which includes girders, beams, rafter, columns, and several other smaller parts. Hanok is unique in terms of space since it has a maru hardwood floor space for summer and an ondol floor heated room for winter. The myths show that hanok design is primarily shaped by its natural surroundings. Emphasizing harmony with the environment, aspects such as location, structure, materials, and outdoor layout reflect a deep respect for nature. Guided by the yin-yang principle, site selection and spatial planning aim to minimize environmental impact and align with the natural landscape.

Cultural Values

Cultural values are values related to the thoughts of individuals in a society and exist only in the mind, so these cultural values are abstract (Dilla & Afnita, 2023). Korean culture is rooted in Confucian values, artistic expressions, and social norms that have developed and become ingrained in its society. Based on data identification, all categories of cultural values in Korea were identified according to the 5 categories classification system by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck. The following table presents the data identification from the storybook used by the researcher:

Table 2. Findings of Korean cultural values in the storybook
Short Stories In Korean For Intermediate Learners.

Cultural Values	Frequency	Page	%
Time (Past-oriented, Present)	6	12, 106, 107, 117, & 122.	12%
Humanity and Natural Environment (Harmonious, Submissive)	8	2, 30, 31, 106, 107, 122, 158, & 159	16%
Relating to Other People (Hierarchical, Collateral)	16	2, 9, 11, 19, 107, 110, 116, 122, 159, 160, 162, & 179.	32%
Motive for Behaving (Being-in-becoming, Doing)	10	31, 49, 52, 107, 117, 158, 159, 170, & 179.	20%
Nature of Human Nature (Good)	10	2, 9, 10, 11, 12, 18, 24, 24, 41, 42, & 107.	20%
Total	50		100%

Table 2 shows that the Korean cultural values that appeared most frequently in the stories were relating to other people (32%), which included hierarchical (KCV15-KCV22) and collateral (KCV23-KCV30). The second is motive for behaving (20%), which include being-in-becoming (KCV31-KCV39) and doing (KCV40), the third is nature of human nature (20%), which includes the good (KCV41-KCV50). Next is humanity and natural environment (16%), which includes harmonious (KCV07-KCV13) and submissive (KCV14). Last, there is time (12%), which includes past-oriented (KCV01-KCV05) and present (KCV06). This study differs from previous research. The dominant aspects found in the study by Ntabajyana et al. (2022) are respect, discipline, and obedience, which in this study were classified as relating to other people. Meanwhile, other studies do not specifically mention dominant cultural values, but there are several values that emerge, most of which were classified as relating to other people; these are social hierarchy, respect, politeness, mutual cooperation, empathy, kinship, and social concern. Then there are responsibility, nationalism, honesty, and discipline, which were classified as motive for behaving. There is also religiosity, which was classified as Humanity and Natural Environment (Bekis, 2021; Chen et al, 2023; Choi & Lee, 2024; Illangsari et al, 2022; Kalauserang, 2023; Lawendatu et al, 2023; Rahmawati, 2020; Samsudin et al, 2021)

Time (Text 2.1, p. 122)

‘...저는 전통적인 예술이 더 좋아요.’

‘저도 전통적인 예술이 더 좋아요.
저는 항상 전통적인 것들을 좋아했어요.’

Denotation:

“...I prefer traditional art.”

“I also prefer traditional art. I have always liked traditional things.”

Text 2.1 presents a result related to time (code KCV05), classified as past, based on Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961). The connotation shows that the aspect of time primarily focuses on the past. Korean traditional art reflects a deep connection to the past, with classicism and naturalness as core elements. The myth shows that "natural" refers to the natural creation of beauty and harmony with nature. It is aligned with the Korean Confucianism concept, self-cultivation (holistic process involving nature, heaven, and earth). Key aesthetic values like naturalness, humor, and simplicity give Korean art a raw yet profound beauty, where even naïve expressions evoke emotional depth.

Human Relationship with Nature

(Text 2.2, p. 31)

제주도에 날씨는 좋아요. 날씨가 좋아서 여행자들이 한라산에서 등산을 많이 해요. 수아도 한라산을 좋아요. 수아는 자연과 등산을 좋아해요.

Denotation:

The weather is nice on Jeju Island. Because the weather is nice, many tourists go hiking on Hallasan Mountain. Sua also likes Hallasan Mountain. Sua likes nature and hiking.

Text 2.2 is an example of the relationship between humans and nature (code KCV08), classified as harmonious, based on Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961). The connotation shows that hiking is a means of direct connection with nature, appreciation of its beauty, absorption of its peace, a hobby, and a sport. As a symbolic natural landscape, Hallasan Mountain has become a key tourist destination,

where visitors' motivations influence their emotional connection, sense of place, and environmentally conscious behavior. Sua reflects the emotional closeness and spiritual connection between people and nature since she enjoys it. The myth shows that like in Korean Confucianism and Buddhism, Hallasan Mountain is a location and also a metaphor for the interaction between people and the order of the cosmos. Love of nature reflects moral and aesthetic principles and a kind of emotionally and spiritually harmonious living.

Relating to Other People (Text 2.3, p. 19)

할아버지는 상자 사이에 숨어 있었어요.

‘실례합니다.’ 제가 말했어요. ‘그런데 누구세요?’

Denotation:

An old man is hiding among the cardboard boxes. “Excuse me,” I said. “But who are you?”

Text 2.3 is an example of relating to other people (code KCV17), classified as hierarchical, based on Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961). The connotation shows polite interaction to elderly men, with the use of honorific language as practice of filial piety. Filial piety is a fundamental Korean value that is respected by people of all religions. It also includes the moral duty to show elders and superiors respect and good manners. In pre-modern Korea, neo-Confucian scholars developed this doctrine on a philosophical and social level. The myth shows that in Korean society, human relationships are rooted in Confucian ethics and are considered reciprocal, forming the foundation of moral order and social harmony. These relationships extend from

the self to the family, society, government, and nation, reflecting a holistic value system. For most Koreans, maintaining respectful and reciprocal human ties remains a vital and enduring value.

Motive for Behaving (Text 2.4, p. 159)

주말에는 친구들과, 그리고 가족들과 시간을 보내는 것을 좋아했어요.

Denotation:

On weekends, (Jiyu) enjoyed spending time with her friends and family.

Text 2.4 is an example of a finding related to motive for behaving (code KCV37), classified as being-in-becoming, based on Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961). The connotation shows happiness when spending the weekend with friends or family as practice of interpersonal relationships and part of personal and emotional growth. There is a belief in Confucian ethics that emphasizes the proper human way of life and culture, called Five Relationships: parent-child, husband-wife, sibling-sibling, friend-friend, and ruler-subject relationships. The myth shows that these relationships are also found on moral and philosophical principles. The values that emerge are pleasure, togetherness, attention to relationships, and the formation of social harmony within the family and community. It also shows that life is meaningful through the process of social and emotional self-development. In this case, family and friends play a central role in identity development.

Nature of Human Nature (Text 2.5, p. 9)

정우가 저를 안아 줬어요. ‘두 사람이 와서 정말 기뻐!’

Denotation:

Jeongu hugged me. 'I am very happy

that you two came (here).’

Text 2.5 is an example of findings related to human nature (code KCV42), classified as good, based on Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961). The connotation shows positivity in sincere emotional expression by showing warmth by a hug and appreciating the presence of others with the expression “**정말 기뻐!**”. The joy of welcoming best friends from far away is included as practice of five human relationships in confucian social ethics, friend-friend/friendships. This myth shows sincere welcome, friendliness, and

emotional openness. It reinforces the belief that humans are fundamentally good and that relationships between people are built on trust and empathy, not just social obligations.

Non-Korean Culture

This section presents findings and discussions about non-Korean cultural elements and values in the book *Short Stories In Korean For Intermediate Learners*. There are four stories in the book that represent non-Korean culture, namely: **기사, 시계, 새로운 땅**, and **캡슐**.

Table 3. Findings of non-Korean cultural elements in the story-book *Short Stories In Korean For Intermediate Learners*.

Cultural elements	Frequency	Page	%
Monuments	9	56, 58, 68, 69, 74, 75, & 135.	25.71%
Group of buildings	1	82	2.85%
Sites (Country, City, Areas)	13	3, 20, 57, 82, 83, 93, 99, 133, 153, & 183.	37.14%
Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe	3	99, 135, & 143.	8.57%
Traditional craftsmanship (Clothes, Transportation, Decorative Arts)	9	56, 59, 61, 82, 91, 99, 132, & 135.	25.71%
Total	35		100%

Cultural Elements

The emergence of non-Korean culture in the storybook is influenced by the background of the authors. Based on data identification, 5 categories of non-Korean cultural elements were successfully identified out of the 8 categories of cultural elements classified by UNESCO. The following table presents the data identification from the storybook sources used by the researcher:

Table 3 shows that the stories’ most frequently appearing non-Korean cultural elements are site elements (37.14%),

which include continents, countries, cities, regions, places, and non-Korean areas (NCE11-NCE23). The second is monuments (25.71%), which feature medieval western architecture (NCE01-NCE09), the third is traditional craftsmanship (25.71%), which specifically highlight clothing culture, transportation, and decorative arts (NCE27-NCE35). Next is knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe (8.57%), centred around knowledge of figures associated with natural conditions (NCE24-NCE26), and last, the group of buildings (2.85%) showcasing the row of Penzance city buildings (NCE10). This

study differs from previous research, as the dominant aspects found in Farrahillah's (2023) study were traditional clothing and houses, which in this study were classified as Traditional Craftsmanship. The other study did not specifically mention dominant cultural elements, but several elements emerged, these are traditional clothing, houses, and musical instruments, which in this study were classified as Traditional Craftsmanship. And then, there are local foods, festivals, and traditional greetings, which in this study were classified as Social practices, rituals, and festive events. (Chen et al, 2023; Choi & Lee, 2024; Rahmawati, 2020; dan Samsudin et al, 2021).

Monuments



Figure 3.1 Monuments, p. 156

Denotation:

Image of a stone bridge in the middle of a forest.

Figure 3.1 is an example of a finding related to monuments (code NCE01) based on UNESCO (1972). The connotation shows that stone bridges are a reflection of civilization's achievements in controlling the natural environment and human dominance over it. Their presence serves not just as a means of connecting geographical areas but also as a strategic representation of power and architectural technological achievements. In European history, bridges frequently stand for territorial expansion, social connectivity, and infrastructure transformation. The myth shows that bridges are linked to the spiritual realm, serving as connections between

the realms of the living and the dead, much like the River Styx in myth. In Roman culture, bridges transformed into representations of imperial grandeur, showcasing authority and remembered through engravings, thus embodying notions of eternity and cultural legacy.

Group of Buildings



Figure 3.3 Group of Buildings, p. 82
Denotation:

Image of the town of Penzance and the nearby Eastern Green beach.

Figure 3.3 is an example of findings related to building groups (code EBN25), based on UNESCO (1972). The connotation shows buildings in Penzance, a town in west Cornwall, that are viewed from Easter Green Beach. It has architecture that reflects the city's bohemian and creative modern vibe. Collection of buildings in Penzance not only serves as physical landmarks but also as repositories of its cultural, social, and economic history. It is a history itself perhaps best told by Penzance's evolution from modest port to cultural hub. The myth shows that historical structures in Penzance depict the town's evolution in relation to societal preferences, ambitions, and broader global perspectives. Preservation endeavors unveil a narrative highlighting the resilience of the community, cultural identity, and the enduring essence of Cornish heritage. These architectural strata transcend mere aesthetic depictions by idealizing Penzance as a locale where history is dynamically experienced in its thoroughfares and edifices, rather than passively remembered.

Site (Text 3.1, p. 83)

칼은 영국의 남서부, 펜잔스의 조용한 거리에서 혼자 살았어요.

Denotation:

Carl lived alone on a quiet street in Penzance, southwest England.

Text 3.1 is an example of a site (code NCE16), based on UNESCO (1972). The connotation shows Penzance, a town that is located in West Cornwall, Eastern Green Beach nearby. It serves as the focal point of residential and commercial activities within the Lands End peninsula, encompassed by various smaller towns and villages. The myth shows the origin of the name "Penzance" as "pen sans" (holy headland) has fashioned a historical account imbuing the town with an aura of sanctity rather than merely being a geographical designation. The establishment of a chapel in antiquity which is currently developing into the St Mary Church area, subsequently evolving into the principal church of the town, further bolstered the perception of Penzance as a place sanctified in spirit.

Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe (Text 3.2, p. 135)

토릭의 가족은 농부였어요. 땅이 조금 있었어요. 그 땅에서 농사를 지었어요. 동물도 키웠어요.

Denotation:

Torik's family were farmers. They had a little land. They farmed that land. They also raised animals.

Text 3.2 exemplifies findings of knowledge and practices about nature and the universe (code NCE25) based on UNESCO (2003). The connotation shows the harmony between humans living side by side and learning from nature. Local

knowledge born out of the limitations of that time and the need for survival. The myth shows that farmers like the Torik family learned from nature until they were able to adapt to its cycles. This includes ecological and spiritual practices in managing the land, as seen in traditional European agriculture such as crop rotation, open field systems, etc. This is aligned with the world of traditional European agriculture, which continued to expand and innovate, and lasted until the end of the 13th century then stopped in recession..

Traditional Craftsmanship (p. 132)



Figure 3.2 Traditional Craftsmanship, p. 132

Denotation:

An image of a Viking ship sailing towards North America.

Figure 3.2 is an example of a finding related to traditional craftsmanship (code NCE34) based on UNESCO (2003). The connotation shows the successful voyage of the ship is proof of the resilience, teamwork, and traditional knowledge of the Vikings. Viking ships (Longships) became a force of exploration and expansion for the Vikings in their quest to find new lands in order to continue their survival. The myth shows that humans, with their ancestral knowledge, can create something powerful enough to change the course of history, as shown by the Vikings in the image heading towards North America. The Viking ship symbolizes the extension of the body and

spirit of their ancestors as they sailed across the world. This demonstrates that traditional skills are not merely technical heritage but also spiritual and symbolic heritage.

Cultural Values

Non-Korean culture values that are reflected in the story are influenced by the

authors’ background. Based on data identification, all categories of Korean cultural values classified by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck were successfully identified. The following table presents the data identification from the storybook sources used by the researcher:

Table 4. Findings of non-Korean cultural values in the storybook *Short Stories In Korean For Intermediate Learners*.

Cultural Values	Frequency	Page	%
Time (Past-oriented, Future)	4	56, 66, 135,	7.84%
Humanity and Natural Environment (Mastery, Harmonious, Submissive)	12	82, 83, 99, 133, 134, 135, 141, & 143.	23.52%
Relating to Other People (Hierarchical, Collateral)	25	58, 59, 60, 68, 76, 83, 93, 99, 134, 144, 148, 150, 152, 183, 184, 185, 201, & 204.	49.01%
Motive for Behaving (Being-in-becoming, Doing)	7	68, 78, 95, 134, 141, 152, & 201.	13.72%
Nature of Human Nature (Evil, Neutral)	3	152, 183-184, & 201.	5.88%
Total	51		100%

Table 4 shows that the most frequently appearing non-Korean cultural value in the stories is relating to other people (49.01%), which includes hierarchical (NCV13-NCV39) and collateral (NCV40-NCV41). The next most frequently appearing values are humanity and natural environment (23.52%), which include mastery (NCV05-NCV07), harmonious (NCV08-NCV12), and submissive (NCV13-NCV16). Next is motive for behaving (13.72%), which include being-in-becoming (NCV42) and doing (NCV46-NCV48). Then there is time (7.84%), which includes past-oriented (NCV01-NCV03) and future (NCV04). Lastly, there are human nature (5.88%), which includes evil (NCV49-NCV50) and neutral (NCV51). Previous research did not specifically mention dominant cultural elements, but several elements emerged, these are tolerance, respect for elders, collectiv-

ty, cultural discipline, mutual cooperation, politeness, courtesy, and global citizenship, which in this study were classified as relating to other people. There are also nationalism and hard work, which in this study were classified as motive for behaving (Chen et al, 2023; Choi & Lee, 2024; Rahmawati, 2020; dan Samsudin et al, 2021).

Time (Text 4.4, p. 66)
왕과 아더렌 왕의 싸움을요. 정말 큰 싸움이었어요. 그 싸움 전에 이 숲의 이름은 ‘동물의 숲’이었어요. 그렇지만 그 싸움 후에 ‘침묵의 숲’이 됐어요.

Denotation:
 King (Andor) and King Adheren once fought a war. It was a really big battle. Before the battle, this forest was called “Animal Forest.” But after the battle, the name of the forest became “Silent Forest.”

Text 4.4 is an example of a finding related to time (code NCV03), classified as past, based on Kluckhohn & Strodbeck (1961). The connotation shows that the name '동물 숲' gives an impression of life, activity, nature, sounds and movements, symbols of life and the balance of nature. The name '침묵의 숲' gives an impression of silence, death, stillness, and heaviness, which are symbols of trauma, loss, and the profound impact of conflict. The name change is a symbol of past events that left emotional traces and a new identity on the space. The conflict between kings in the past created a new identity for space in the present. The myth shows, history is remembered and immortalized in space and symbols, including place names. This text indicates that places have a collective memory and that the tragic, has long-term psychological and social effects. The forest transforms into a natural monument that symbolizes historical tragedy, influencing people's impressions and emotions about the area.

Humanity and Natural Environment (Text 4.2, p. 133)

바이킹들이 사는 곳은 추웠어요. 그리고 산이 많았어요. 그래서 농사를 지을 수 없어서 음식이 많이 없었어요. 그래서 바이킹들은 항상 새 땅을 찾고 있었어요.

Denotation:

The Vikings' homeland (is a place that is) cold and there are many mountains. Therefore, it cannot be used for farming, so there is not much food. For this reason, the Vikings are always looking for new land.

Text 4.2 is an example of a finding related to humanity and natural environment (code NCV05), classified as mastery, based on Kluckhohn & Strodbeck (1961). The

connotation shows that the harsh natural environment and limited resources did not prevent the Vikings from continuing their way of life. The Vikings continued to seek solutions and create opportunities from the natural conditions they faced. The myth shows that the Vikings' exploration seems to be a natural characteristic of them. They are heroes who conquered nature, yet this is actually the result of their natural environment. This is a manifestation of courage and strength, as well as a symbol of the resilience of a culture shaped by nature.

Relating to other people (Text 4.1, p. 59)

곧 왕이 방에 들어왔어요. 왕의 이름은 앤더르였어요. 왕은 보라색 옷을 입고 있었어요. 보라색은 왕의 색깔이었어요. 목과 팔 주변은 금색이었어요.

Denotation:

Shortly thereafter, the king entered the room. The king's name was Andor. The king was wearing purple clothing. Purple is the color of kings. Gold encircled his neck and arms.

Text 4.1 is an example of findings related to Relating to other people (code NCV21), classified as hierarchical, based on Kluckhohn & Strodbeck (1961). The connotation shows that in the context of medieval culture, purple was associated with power, luxury, and high authority that could only be used by nobles or kings. This was because purple was made from a rare dye called Tyrian purple, which came from sea snails. In addition, gold symbolized wealth, honor, and grandeur. Therefore, kings were depicted as powerful, wealthy, and highly dignified figures. The myth shows that purple clothing worn by kings was an ideological discourse that legitimized their power and showed that strength and glory

were evident in the colors and materials of their accessories, in this case gold. This shows that the relationship between the people and the king was hierarchical and sacred.

Motive for Behaving (Text 4.3, p. 78)

‘네, 거짓말을 했어요. 그렇지만 평화를 지키려고 거짓말을 했어요.’ 라르스가 말했어요. ‘또 싸우고 싶지 않아요.’

Denotation:

‘Yes, (I) lied. But (I) lied to keep the peace,’ said Lars. ‘(I) don't want any more fighting.’

Text 4.3 is an example of a finding related to motive for behaving (code NCV42), classified as being-in-becoming, based on Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961). The connotation shows the action lying to keep the peace was the form of effort to reduce conflict. This lie is not for personal gain but an ethical decision so that there is no more suffering. A white lie is a small or trivial lie intended to avoid hurting someone's feelings. The white lie in this text is intended to maintain peace. This shows personal sacrifice for the sake of social harmony. Lars' white lie is a gentle, empathetic act for the common good. Even lying for the sake of others is associated with pro-social traits. The myth shows that truth is not the highest value. What Lars does shows that peace is more important than absolute honesty.

Nature of Human Nature (Text 4.5, p. 201)

그렇지만 이제 알딘은 황제가 정말 싫어졌어요. 발리오르는 아이를 이용해서 원하는 것을 얻어려고 하고 있어요.

Denotation:

But now Aldin dislikes the emperor. Valior tries to use the boy to achieve his desire.

Text 4.5 is an example of findings related to Nature of Human Nature (code NCV50), classified as evil, based on Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961). The connotation shows that what Emperor Valior did implies a tendency to manipulate others, which is evil, for personal gain. His actions reflect selfishness, where he uses his power to impose his will even at the expense of others, especially in this case a small child. This shows a negative connotation of power and its misuse. Valior's actions show that humans can act very selfishly and cruelly, even in inhumane ways. The myth shows that Valior's actions legitimize hidden power, where he controls without violence but through manipulation. This shows that the evil nature of humanity is something that is normal and exists. This also reinforces the narrative that not all leaders are trustworthy, and respect can become hatred if ethical values are betrayed.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis, 62 cultural elements and 50 cultural values were found in Korean culture. This is due to the many elements with the same cultural values. Meanwhile, 35 cultural elements and 51 cultural values were found in non-Korean culture. This is because there are elements that encompass several cultural values. Based on these findings, even though the book's author is a foreigner, not a Korean native or someone who lives in Korea, Korean cultural elements are still the most frequently mentioned elements in the story. Although the number of non-Korean cultural values is presented more, the difference is slight. The total of Korean culture is still presented more in the

book Short Stories In Korean For Intermediate Learners.

The first findings related to Korean culture include cultural elements based on six of the eight UNESCO categories, namely: cultural sites (Seoul, Jeju Island, and Samcheong-dong), social practices and rituals (bibimbap and fish dishes), traditional skills (contemporary art and home traditional decoration), natural and cosmic knowledge (the best time to climb mountains, ect.), monuments (distinctive curved roof architecture), and groups of buildings (modern and temples). Korean cultural values encompass five categories from Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, including: relating to other people (hierarchical and collateral), motive for behavior (being-in-becoming and doing), nature of human nature (good, in line with Confucian principles), harmonious relationships with nature, and a time orientation (past and the present). Meanwhile, findings related to non-Korean culture include five categories: sites (European, American, and Caribbean regions), monuments (medieval European and Viking architecture), traditional craftsmanship (Viking and 17th-century ships and clothing), natural knowledge (gardening, farming, sailing), and groups of buildings (modern architecture in Penzance and the Eastern Green coastline). Non-Korean cultural values also encompass the five categories: relating to other people (hierarchical and collateral), humanity with nature (domination, harmony, and submission), motive for behavior (being-in-becoming and doing), time orientation (past and future), and nature of human nature (evil and neutral).

This study sets itself apart from previous research in several key aspects. First, The combination of cultural elements and cultural values creates a more in-depth analysis, such as how a cultural element has a certain value as the background for

its formation. Second, the use of semiotic analysis. Third, that storybooks written by authors who are not native speakers of the target language shows that Korean culture can be internalized in learning media by outsiders.

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