An Analysis of Local Wisdom in the Discourse of Indonesian Folklore "*Batu Menangis*"

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Abstract

This study investigates the local wisdom within the Indonesian folklore *Batu Menangis* using the methods of coherence and cohesion. The narrative, originating from Kalimantan Barat, serves as a medium to explore traditional values such as filial piety, humility, and respect for one's origins. By analyzing its narrative structure, thematic connections, and linguistic features, the research highlights how coherence devices (e.g., repetition, conjunctions) and logical sequencing establish coherence within the text. This folklore is important to be analyzed because it is cultural context that carries local wisdom, moral education and gender values, social norms and intercultural meaning that are highly relevant to education, linguistics, literature and cultural studies today. The findings reveal that the story reflects cultural norms, moral lessons, and societal expectations, which symbolized through the transformation of the disobedient child into a crying stone. The study emphasizes the role of *Batu Menangis* in preserving Indonesia's cultural heritage and promoting educational values. Through a detailed examination of its local wisdom, the research underscores the importance of folklore as a vehicle for cultural transmission and moral education. This research highlights the discourse analysis and the importance of integrating folklore into educational contexts to strengthen character education and cultural literacy. By uncovering the local wisdom embedded in *Batu Menangis*, the study contributes to broader discussions on preserving intangible cultural heritage and utilizing traditional narratives as meaningful pedagogical resources in contemporary education.

Keywords: Discourse, Local Wisdom, Indonesian Folklore Batu Menangis

Introduction

The most intricate and all-encompassing linguistic component is discourse. Essays are constructed using a variety of supporting elements, including phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs. The study of discourse is crucial to language learning since it is a pragmatic component of language. This is consistent with Sumarlam's assertion (2003:23) that coherent discourse requires consideration of the relationships between sentences. Discourse can be separated into two categories of relationships, according to a viewpoint that

views language as a combination of form and meaning: the relationship of form, or cohesion, and the relationship of meaning, or coherence.

According to Mulyana (2005, p. 1), Dardjowidjojo claims that discourse analysis is associated with comprehending human behaviors that involve verbal language as well as nonverbal language. This demonstrates that having linguistic knowledge—not simply broad language—is necessary to comprehend discourse effectively. In the context of communication, which can take place either verbally or in writing, discourse is a thorough linguistic record. Discourse always requires the presence of a sender and a recipient, regardless of its format. The listener is the receiver in oral discourse, and the speaker is the sender. In written communication, the reader is the recipient and the writer is the sender.

Discourse can be analyzed from various aspects, including its existence (reality), communication media, delivery methods, and how it is used. In general, discourse can be divided into verbal and nonverbal, both in oral and written forms. From this explanation, Discourse comes in a variety of forms, including explanatory, procedural, descriptive, narrative, and hortatory. Furthermore, we study the many types of interaction, such as dialogue (two speakers), polylogue (more than two speakers), and monologue (one speaker) (Djajasudarma, 2006, p. 5). It is important to pay attention to the context of discourse, which includes internal elements and external factors that influence it.

According to Sumarlam (2010:109), the context of discourse is divided into two large categories: language context and context outside language, which includes situational and cultural. Understanding situational and cultural contexts requires consideration of various principles of interpretation, such as personal interpretation, location, temporality, and analogy (Sumarlam, 2010, p. 73). The process of interpreting discourse is highly dependent on the situational and cultural context of the individuals involved. Discourse can be studied from various perspectives as an object of study in the field of linguistics. Discourse analysis is divided into two main categories: internal and external components. From the internal side, discourse is analyzed based on its type, structure, and the relationship between the existing elements (Panchenko, N. N., & Volkova, Y. A. 2021).

Meanwhile, from the external side, discourse is evaluated based on its relevance to the speaker, the topic discussed, and the audience involved. In this study, the internal aspect of narrative discourse in Indonesian folklore texts will be the main focus. Narrative texts aim to entertain readers. The author argues that the narrative structure consists of several parts, namely introduction, complication, evaluation, resolution, and coda. In addition, narrative texts have certain linguistic characteristics, such as the presence of various participants who often have specific identities, reliance on action verbs (material processes), a preference for using the past tense, and the application of dialogue. This text can be written in the first person (I, we) or third person (he, she, they). This form of storytelling is mainly used to convey legends, folktales, and myths. Examples of such texts include the stories of *Batu Menangis*, Sampuraga, Sigale-gale, Cinderella, Sangkuriang, the legend of Putri Hijau, and the legend of Prambanan Temple (Zein, Sinar, Nurlela, & Yusuf, 2019, p. 204).

The study of communication message structure or other language functions, such as pragmatics, is known as discourse analysis. People who are concerned in language, communication, and literature are among those who use the term "discourse." The 1970s saw the

emergence of this relatively new field of discourse analysis (Hjelm T. 2021, Jones R.H.2024). Sociolinguistics defines speech by focusing on the structure of social interaction to be discussed, according to Brown and Yule (2014, p. 13). Sociological categories can be applied to their description, which emphasizes the features of the social setting. Brown and Yule (2014, p. 9) list the following as traits of discourse: 2) Discourse conveys something (subject); 3) Presentation is systematic, orderly, coherent, and complete with all supporting situations; 4) Discourse has an integrated mission; 5) Discourse is composed of segmental and non-segmental elements; and 4) Discourse can be a series of spoken and written words or a series of speech acts.

The "how" of the text or communication message is the main subject of discourse analysis. This examination allows us to comprehend the message's communication style. Discourse analysis, according to Syamsuddin (2008, p. 50), has the following features: 1) talking about the rules of language use in society (Rules of use); 2) attempting to understand the meaning of speech in context, text, and situation; 3) comprehending the series of speeches through semantic interpretation; 4) having to do with the comprehension of language in language actions (what is said from what is done); and 5) having to do with the comprehension of language in language actions.Discourse, as a form of general discussion, consists of various elements.

According to Tarigan (in Nadliroh 2010, p. 15, Gee, J. P. 2025), these elements include:

1. Theme: Is the main topic of the essay, both orally and in writing. This theme is developed through sentences that are interconnected to produce a structured discourse. Linguistic elements: Including words, clauses, phrases, and sentences.
2. Discourse context: Formed by various elements such as situation, speaker, listener, time, place, scene, topic, message form, code, and communication channel.
3. Physical context: Describes the location where language use occurs in a community and the objects involved in the communication process.
4. Epithematic context: Refers to the background knowledge possessed by the speaker and listener.
5. Linguistic context: Consists of sentences or utterances that precede a particular statement in a communication event.
6. Social context: Includes social relationships and settings that support the interaction between the speaker and listener.
7. Meaning and intention: Meaning relates to what is expressed in the utterance, while intention involves something outside the utterance, seen from the perspective of the speaker.
8. Coherence and cohesion: Is a harmonious relationship between elements in discourse to create a clear understanding.

This study aims to explore the values of local wisdom contained in the narrative discourse of the *Batu Menangis* folktale originating from West Kalimantan. There are several reasons why this study was chosen. First, folklore as part of a culture that contains life values is still not widely known among the community. One of the contributing factors is the lack of supporting resources. This limited resource hampers the spread of folklore, so that many people lose the opportunity to know and appreciate local stories in their environment. Second, the importance of preserving local wisdom as norms and cultural values passed down from generation to generation is very significant. This process is a form of cultural transformation that allows local wisdom to be recognized and integrated into other regional stories. Local Wisdom, which in English is known as "local wisdom," consists of two words: "wisdom" which means 'wisdom' and "local" which

means 'local'. In general, local wisdom can be understood as ideas and knowledge possessed and applied by wise individuals Hasyem, M. 2022). Sibarani (2014, p. 115) explains that local wisdom refers to authentic cultural values that can be utilized to manage people's lives wisely. Communities with local wisdom are often characterized by mature attitudes and personalities, which enable them to develop their potential and resources to create positive change.

The values of local wisdom remain relevant, even in this modern era, with a focus on promoting peace and prosperity. To achieve prosperity and harmony, it is important to apply wise values and ethical norms in interactions that respect each other between humans, nature, and God. Social interactions between humans become more complex, allowing for rapid exchanges of responses and interpretations. Local wisdom consists of three main components: first, religious values and social ethics that are the basis for managing natural resources; second, customary norms that regulate human relations with the environment; and third, knowledge and skills gained from empirical experience in managing natural resources over the years.

Batu Menangis looks like other folkore but structurally, symbolically and culturally quite different from other folklore. There is social embarrassment, class performance, gender analysis, unique symbol and also it is about everyday realism which often happened in the daily life. As a guideline for daily behavior, local wisdom guides people in living their lives to this day. Folk tales, such as Malin Kundang the Durhaka Child, contain local wisdom values that reflect people's lives. These values are the focus of systematic studies on local wisdom. Welfare, hard work, discipline, education, health, cooperation, gender management, cultural preservation, environmental preservation, peace, politeness, honesty, social solidarity, harmony and conflict resolution, commitment, and positive thinking are some of these values, according to Sibarani (2014).

These types of values are the basis for further analysis purposes.

Thus, this study not only aims to explore and explore the values of local wisdom in the *Batu Menangis* story, but also to educate the public about the importance of preserving and appreciating existing cultural heritage. This is expected to increase awareness of cultural diversity in Indonesia and help the public to better appreciate folklore as part of their cultural identity. The values of local wisdom identified in folklore reflect the way of life of people in the past which is closely related to the wisdom of their ancestors, and contains cultural values.

This is consistent with Susilo's (2017) description of the nation's cultural variety. Literary works are crucial in shedding light on the country's cultural beginnings. Numerous literary works offer deep insights, admirable concepts, worthwhile experiences, contemplations on virtues and vices, remorse for errors, empathy, and admirable human perspectives. Rudy (2010, p. 51) asserts that local wisdom encompasses knowledge, ideas, opinions, and societal impressions of their surroundings. The general public does not fully understand this wisdom, which is frequently disregarded by many professionals (Susanto, Y. K., Rudyanto, A., & Rahayuningsih, D. A. 2022).

On the other hand, Sibarani (2014, p. 20) defines local wisdom as "wisdom that comes from the noble values of cultural traditions" which functions to regulate people's lives wisely. Local wisdom is a value that is inherent in native culture and can be used to manage people's lives wisely. The first definition emphasizes local wisdom as a guide in shaping social life based on high cultural values, while the second definition highlights these values as the basis for creating wisdom in regulating social life.

According to Rasyidin and Batubara (2009), there are five types of local wisdom: (1) wisdom expressed through traditional ceremonies or rituals; (2) wisdom reflected through attitudes, advice, and social practices; (3) wisdom expressed through proverbs, parables, poems, or folk tales; and (4) wisdom expressed through principles, norms, and rules. Therefore, holy values that are created and transmitted within a community from one generation to the next are reflected in local wisdom. It is impossible to discuss local wisdom in folklore without considering ethnic culture. The lives of traditional societies are reflected in folklore. Therefore, it is important to explore and research folklore to absorb and understand the values contained therein. Literature, as a product of human life, contains various moral, ethical, aesthetic, social, cultural, and religious values that are more than just the presentation of new concepts.

All of these values are expressed explicitly or implicitly to maintain diversity in literature. As a form of literary work, folklore plays a role in preserving various aspects of community culture, especially in terms of content and theme. Thus, researchers are interested in conducting a study entitled: "Analysis of Local Wisdom in the Discourse of the *Batu Menangis* Folktale."

Method

The story of Batu Menangis taken from Indonesia Kaya, it is a collection of legend story in Indonesia, it can be found in https://indonesiakaya.com/pustaka-indonesia/cerita-rakyat-kalimantan-barat-legenda-batu-menangis. To assess the importance of local wisdom in narrative discourse, this study focuses on the analysis of local wisdom through lexical and grammatical aspects in the text. The elements of discourse that are the object of research include linguistic content and the overall structure of the text. Linguistic analysis is carried out to ensure that the text conveys a specific and meaningful representation.

In addition, structural analysis includes various important components, such as theme, plot, setting, and characters. The clarity of the text will be assessed by investigating its internal features, especially markers of cohesion and coherence, as well as the existing structural organization. The next stage in this study involves exploring the socio-cultural context of the community concerned. This community shows a dynamic socio-cultural life, which influences the creation of the text, and this dynamic is reflected in the interactions between characters in the narrative.

The last aspect of this discourse analysis is to investigate how the socio-cultural context contributes to the development of communal wisdom. Values related to local wisdom will be examined through the perspective of Sibarani (2014) to provide a deeper understanding. Therefore, the insights generated from this study will articulate findings related to the linguistic characteristics and structural elements of the text, the socio-cultural context depicted through the relationships between characters, and indicators that show how this text contributes to the development of community wisdom. Through this analysis, it is hoped that a more comprehensive understanding can be obtained regarding the interaction between the text, local wisdom, and the socio-cultural context that surrounds it.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 Lexical Aspects (Vocabulary & semantic fields)

Lexical feature	Examples found	Count*
Evaluative adjectives	beautiful, arrogant, poor, ashamed, old	12
Verbs of attitude/behavior	denied, pretended, refused, walked, prayed	15
Repeated key nouns	girl, mother, woman, market, stone	18
Lexical contrasts (beauty ↔ poverty)	beautiful ↔ poor, arrogant ↔ humble	6 pairs
Emotion words	ashamed, heartbroken, regret	7
Total lexical items identified		58

Table 2. Grammatical Aspects (Sentence & clause patterns)

Grammatical feature	Examples	Count*
Simple past tense clauses	lived, went, walked, said	32 clauses
Complex sentences (subordinate clauses)	when, whenever, because	11
Material processes	walked, went, turned	14
Mental processes	felt, knew, realized	6
Verbal processes	said, asked, prayed	7
Total grammatical instances:		70

Table 3. Cohesion Devices (Surface links between sentences)

Cohesive device	Examples	Count*
Personal reference	she, her, they	28
Demonstrative reference	this, that	6
Repetition of nouns	girl, mother, woman	22
Synonyms	mother → old woman, girl → daughter	8
Ellipsis/substitution	implied subjects	5
Total cohesive ties		69

Table 4. Coherence (Logical meaning flow)

Coherence pattern	Evidence	Count*
Cause → effect relations	ashamed → denied	7 sequences

Emotional logic	denial → sorrow → prayer	4 sequences
Chronological order	village → road → market → stone	1 full chain
Moral progression	pride → regret	3 steps
Total coherence patterns		15

Table 5. Conjunctions & Logical Relations

Conjunction type	Words	Count*
Cause	because, so	6
Contrast	but, although	5
Time/sequence	when, whenever, finally	9
Result	so that	3
Total Conjunction		23

Table 6. Pronoun System & Participant Tracking

Feature	Examples	Count*
She (daughter)	she, her	24
Mother references	mother, old woman, woman	19
Plural reference	They	6
Clear participant shifts	girl ↔ mother	12 shifts
Total Tracking references		61

Table 7. Summary of the Discourse Analysis

Aspect	Total Found*
Lexical aspects	58
Grammatical aspects	70
Cohesion devices	69
Coherence patterns	15
Conjunctions & logical relations	23
Pronoun & participant tracking	61

The discourse analysis of the *Batu Menangis* text (350 words) identified 58 lexical items reflecting evaluative and contrastive vocabulary, 70 grammatical constructions dominated by past tense and complex clauses, 69 cohesive ties, 23 conjunction markers of logical relations, 61

pronoun-based participant references, and 15 major coherence flows forming a clear cause–effect moral narrative.

Table 8. The aspects of discourse analysis and the examples

No	Aspect of Discourse Analysis	Examples
1	Lexical Aspects	1. *The girl was very beautiful but extremely arrogant.* 2. *Her mother was old, poor, and dressed in torn clothes.* 3. *Ashamed of her mother, the girl walked ahead quickly.* 4. *She pretended not to know the old woman behind her*
2	Grammatical Aspects	1. They lived in the small hut at the edge of the village 2. Whenever they went to the market, the girl refused to walk beside her mother 3. When people asked about the old woman, the girl said she did not know her 4. The mother prayed to God to punish her daughter
3	Cohesion (how sentences stick together)	The girl and her mother went to the market. She walked in front of her. The old woman followed her slowly. This made the girl feel embarrassed.
4	Coherence (logical flows of meaning)	Ashamed of her poor mother, the girl denied her in public. Her mother felt heartbroken and prayed. Suddenly, the girl's body slowly turned into stone.
5	Conjunction and logical relation	1. Although her mother loved her very much, the girl treated her badly. 2. Because she was ashamed, she walked far ahead. 3. Finally, she realized her mistake, but it was too late.
6	Pronoun system and participating tracking	*She did not want people to know that the old woman was her mother.* *She* = daughter (consistent tracking) *the old woman* replaces *mother* → lexical variation Avoids repetition but maintains clarity

Table 9. The Aspects of the Discourse, the evidence in sentences and the function in Story

Aspect	Evidence in Sentences	Function in Story
Lexical	arrogant, ashamed, poor, pretended	Encodes moral contrast
Grammatical	past tense, clauses, processes	Builds narrative flow
Cohesion	pronouns, repetition, reference	Links sentences smoothly
Coherence	cause–effect logic	Makes moral message understandable
Conjunctions	because, although, finally	Signals logical relations
Participant tracking	she, her, old woman	Maintains clarity of actors

The discourse analysis of *Batu Menangis* reveals that the story's moral force is not carried by the plot alone, but is systematically constructed through language. The lexical, grammatical, cohesive, and coherent features work together to guide readers toward a clear ethical interpretation: shame of one's origins leads to irreversible regret.\

At the lexical level, the findings show a strong pattern of evaluative vocabulary. Words such as *beautiful, arrogant, poor, ashamed, old,* and *heartbroken* are not neutral descriptors; they encode judgment and position the reader to sympathize with the mother and disapprove of the daughter. Repetition of key nouns (*girl, mother, woman, market, stone*) builds a tight semantic network, while lexical contrasts (beauty vs. poverty, pride vs. humility) establish the moral tension early in the narrative. The vocabulary itself functions as a moral guide, signaling values before the climax occurs.

Grammatically, the dominance of the simple past tense and the frequent use of complex sentences with temporal and causal clauses (*when, whenever, because*) organize the story into a clear sequence of events. Material processes (*walked, went, turned*), mental processes (*felt, realized*), and verbal processes (*said, prayed*) reflect the progression from action to emotion to consequence. These grammatical patterns do more than tell what happened; they construct a logical chain in which each action leads naturally to the next outcome, reinforcing the inevitability of the ending.

The study also identified a high number of cohesive ties. Pronouns (*she, her, they*), demonstratives (*this, that*), and repeated references to participants ensure that the reader can easily follow who is involved in each event. Lexical repetition and synonym use (*mother → old woman; girl → daughter*) avoid monotony while maintaining clarity. These cohesive devices bind the sentences together, creating a smooth narrative surface that is easy to follow and pedagogically effective for discourse study.

Beyond surface cohesion, the narrative demonstrates strong coherence through its cause–effect and emotional logic. The sequence—shame, denial, sorrow, prayer, transformation—forms a meaningful progression that readers interpret as morally justified. The coherence does not rely only on grammar, but on shared cultural understanding about filial piety and respect for parents.

This makes the transformation into stone feel like a logical moral consequence rather than an arbitrary magical event.

The role of conjunctions and logical relations further strengthens this structure. Connectors such as *because, but, although, when,* and *finally* explicitly signal contrast, cause, and sequence. These markers guide readers through the narrative reasoning, helping them understand why events unfold as they do.

Finally, the pronoun system and participant tracking play a crucial role in maintaining focus on the central relationship between the daughter and the mother. Frequent use of *she* for the daughter and varied references to the mother (*mother, old woman, woman*) keep both participants active in the reader's mind. The clarity of participant tracking reinforces that the story is fundamentally about this relationship and its breakdown.

Overall, the findings show that *Batu Menangis* is a tightly constructed narrative where lexical choice conveys values, grammar organizes causality, cohesion ensures readability, and coherence delivers moral meaning. This explains why the story remains powerful across generations and why it is highly suitable for discourse analysis and educational use, particularly in contexts that aim to integrate language learning with cultural and moral understanding.

Local Wisdom Found in the Story of *Batu Menangis*

The story of *Batu Crying* contains a lot of local wisdom that is full of meaning, especially about the importance of respecting parents. In this story, it is taught that disobedience to parents, especially mothers, is an act that has bad consequences. Respect for parents is a key value that must be upheld, as they have sacrificed a lot to raise their children. The story also emphasizes the importance of filial piety to parents, where every child is required to be respectful and grateful. Pride and shame towards family background are great lessons in this story, teaching that simplicity and humility are virtues that every individual should have.

In addition, *the Crying Stone* teaches about the infinite power of motherly love. Despite being treated badly, the mother still has sincere affection for her child, illustrating how deep a mother's love is. This story also shows that every action has consequences. The transformation of a child into a stone becomes a symbol that the mistakes and crimes committed will have an irreparable impact. Another local wisdom is the importance of respecting one's origin and not feeling ashamed of one's family or background, because it is part of one's identity.

The story also reflects social and community values where family honor and adherence to social norms are highly valued. The role of society in maintaining these values can be seen from how this story is passed on as a reminder of the importance of morality and ethics. Another wisdom is a warning against materialism and judgments based on appearance. In this story, the child's desire to hide his impoverished mother in order to gain a higher social status shows how dangerous materialistic attitudes can be.

Local wisdom is also reflected in the belief in the power of nature and the relationship between humans and nature. The transformation of children into stone shows that nature has a role in maintaining moral balance and being a witness to human actions. The story also teaches the importance of maintaining intergenerational relationships, where children are reminded to always respect and listen to their parents' advice. These fairy tales also serve as an effective

educational tool, where moral and cultural values are instilled through engaging and meaningful stories (Rohman, A. 2024)

In addition, this story shows the importance of moral integrity, where one must always adhere to the values of goodness and not be tempted by material or social gain. The symbolism of the stone in this story reflects the constancy and permanence of the moral lessons taught. Another wisdom is the value of empathy and forgiveness, where even though the child has done wrong, the mother still prays for goodness for him. It illustrates that forgiveness and compassion are essential parts of a harmonious life. (Tiwari, G. K., Singh, A., Choudhary, A., Shukla, A., Macorya, A. K., Pandey, A., & Singh, A. K., 2025).

Finally, *the Crying Stone* is a reminder of the importance of maintaining good relationships with our families and respecting our origins. This story teaches that true happiness cannot be achieved at the expense of moral values and family relationships. The story also emphasizes the importance of simplicity and gratitude, where one is taught to appreciate what one has and not get caught up in arrogance and materialism. Thus, the story of *Batu Menangis* is not only entertainment, but also a source of learning that is rich in local wisdom and moral values that are relevant throughout time.

Batu Menangis is powerful for discourse study because the moral meaning is already embedded in the lexical choices, the grammar organizes the tragedy, cohesion keeps the story readable, and coherence makes the punishment feel logically inevitable. This folklore works beautifully for discourse analysis, SFL analysis, and ELT text analysis.

Conclusion

This study of *Batu Menangis* shows that the story is more than just a typical children's tale; it is a rich cultural discourse that, within a straightforward narrative framework, incorporates social values, moral philosophy, local wisdom, and identity development. Through lexical choices that contrast beauty and poverty, grammatical patterns that organize cause–effect relations, and cohesive devices that maintain participant tracking, the story constructs a coherent moral logic in which shame of one's origins leads to irreversible regret. The wailing stone transcends punishment and becomes a permanent representation of conscience.

Batu Menangis is different from many other Indonesian folktales, according to the study, since its main struggle is social image and public denial, its culprit is a daughter rather than a son, and the mother's reaction is prayerful sadness rather than rage. The story is particularly rich for gender analysis, societal interpretation, and ethical reflection because of these components. The story highlights issues that are still very relevant in today's world, such as identity, filial piety, and class performance.

From a linguistic and educational perspective, *Batu Menangis* proves to be an effective text for discourse analysis and for English Language Teaching. Its clear narrative structure, moral depth, and cultural familiarity enable learners to engage with English through their own cultural heritage while developing intercultural competence. Ultimately, preserving and researching Batu Menangis contributes to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage while revealing how folklore functions as a medium for transmitting values, shaping identity, and supporting meaningful learning across generations.

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