

A Study of the Content and Multimodality of Bilingual Children's Books for Early Childhood Education

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INFORMASI ARTIKEL	ABSTRAK
Article History: Received: 01 Mei 2026 Revised: 05 Mei 2026 Accepted: 27 July 2026 Published: 29 July 2026 Kata Kunci: Kajian Isi Multimodal Buku Anak Bilingual	Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis isi dan unsur multimodal dalam buku anak bilingual <i>Aku Bisa Mengendalikan Amarahku (I Can Control My Anger)</i> yang digunakan dalam konteks pendidikan anak usia dini. Latar belakang penelitian didasarkan pada pentingnya media literasi yang tidak hanya mengembangkan kemampuan bahasa anak, tetapi juga menanamkan nilai-nilai moral dan sosial sejak dini, khususnya melalui buku anak bilingual yang memadukan teks dan ilustrasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif dengan metode gabungan antara analisis isi (content analysis) dan analisis multimodal (multimodal discourse). Objek penelitian meliputi seluruh halaman buku, dengan unit analisis berupa teks bilingual Indonesia-Inggris, ilustrasi visual, ekspresi dan gestur tokoh, warna, tata letak halaman, serta relasi antara mode verbal dan visual. Analisis isi difokuskan pada tema, nilai karakter, pesan moral, dan karakterisasi tokoh, sedangkan analisis multimodal menelaah keterpaduan teks dan gambar melalui konsep intersemiotic complementarity. Hasil penelitian ditemukan bahwa pemahaman komprehensif mengenai bagaimana pesan moral dan nilai karakter disampaikan secara efektif melalui sinergi bahasa dan visual dalam buku anak bilingual. Penelitian ini memiliki kontribusi pada pengembangan kajian literasi multimodal dan biliterasi anak usia dini, khususnya dalam konteks pendidikan anak usia dini di Indonesia.
Keywords: Content Review Multimodal Bilingual Children's Books	ABSTRACT This study aims to analyze the content and multimodal elements in the bilingual children's book <i>Aku Bisa Mengendalikan Amarahku (I Can Control My Anger)</i> used in the context of early childhood education. The background of the study is based on the importance of literacy media that not only develop children's language skills but also instill moral and social values from an early age, especially through bilingual children's books that combine text and illustrations. This study uses a qualitative-descriptive approach with a combined method of content analysis and multimodal discourse analysis. The object of the study covers all pages of the book, with the units of analysis being the Indonesian-English bilingual text, visual illustrations, character expressions and gestures, color, page layout, and the relationship between verbal and visual modes. The content analysis focuses on themes, character values, moral messages, and character characterization, while the multimodal analysis examines the integration of text and images through the concept of intersemiotic complementarity. The research findings revealed a comprehensive understanding of how moral messages and character values are effectively conveyed through the synergy of language and visuals in bilingual children's books. This research contributes to the development of multimodal literacy and early childhood biliteracy studies, particularly in the context of early childhood education in Indonesia. This is an open access article under the CC-BY-SA license. 

1. Introduction

The development of early childhood literacy in Indonesia shows the increasing need for children's books that not only support language skills but also instill moral and social values (Ngulwiyah & Hasanah, 2024). Children's books are an important medium for introducing concepts of values, characters, and behaviors expected from an early age (Amril & Pransiska, 2021). Along with the advancement of globalization and the need for foreign-language mastery, bilingual children's books are increasingly receiving attention in the field of early childhood education (PAUD/TK) (Surahmat et al., 2025; Yansyah et al., 2021; Zahra et al., 2024).

However, empirically, the development of early childhood literacy still faces various challenges, especially in the equitable distribution of basic literacy skills. This condition demands learning media that is not only visually appealing but also contextual and aligned with the child's developmental stage. In this context, bilingual picture storybooks are a potential alternative because they can simultaneously support language development and cultivate values. Research shows that the use of bilingual books can increase metalinguistic awareness and help children understand the relationship of meaning between languages from an early age (Oshchepkova et al., 2023; Yansyah et al., 2021).

The bilingual book *I Can Control My Anger* from the *A Series of Kids Manners* series was chosen as the object of study because it represents the characteristics of bilingual children's books that combine simple texts in two languages (Indonesian and English) with expressive visual illustrations. This book is relevant to early childhood education because it addresses emotional regulation, which is closely tied to children's daily experiences, especially when they encounter frustration or conflict with expectations. In addition, books on self-control are among the materials commonly used in character education in early childhood education, and are therefore related to classroom learning practices (Amril & Pransiska, 2021).

In this way, this book reflects the multimodal literacy form widely used in contemporary children's books, where meaning is constructed through the interaction between text and illustration. The selection of this book is also based on its suitability for the developmental stage of children aged 4-6 years, which is characterized by simple sentences, a linear narrative structure, and dominant visual support to aid comprehension. Thus, this book is not only thematically relevant but also a representative object of study for analyzing the integration of content and multimodality in bilingual children's books.

Although the theme raised concerns about anger control, this study does not examine the regulatory aspect of emotions from a psychological perspective; rather, it situates it within a narrative context to examine how moral messages and character values are constructed through the interaction between text and illustration.

The multimodality theory developed by Kress and Van Leeuwen asserts that meaning in a text is constructed not only through verbal language but also through other semiotic modes, such as images, colors, layouts, and gestures, which interact to form a message (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001). In this framework, visual meaning is analyzed through three main dimensions, namely representational meaning (how reality is represented), interactive meaning (how the relationship between text and reader is constructed), and compositional meaning (how visual elements are arranged into a unity of meaning).

In the context of children's books, especially bilingual books, the integration between verbal mode (Indonesian-English text) and visual mode (illustration) plays an important role in building children's understanding of stories. The interaction of the two modes is not simply complementary but forms a complex system of meaning, in which illustrations can clarify, expand, and even add meanings not explicitly stated in the text. Thus, bilingual children's books not only function as a medium of language recognition, but also as a means of conveying moral values and character through the orchestration of various semiotic modes.

In line with that, Moya Guijarro's (2014) research shows that children's picture books construct meaning through the functional relationship between verbal and visual language within specific social and cultural contexts. These findings confirm that the analysis of children's books needs to consider inter-modal integration as a unified system of meaning rather than a stand-alone element.

Multimodality in the context of early childhood literacy was also further developed by Unsworth, who emphasized the importance of analyzing the relationship between text and illustration in children's books as part of multiliteracy practices (Unsworth, 2013). Unsworth contributes at the analytical level by providing a framework for examining how meaning is constructed through inter-modal interactions, and at the pedagogic level by showing how multimodal books can be used in learning to improve children's literacy understanding.

Analytically, Unsworth highlights that illustrations in children's books not only serve as a complement to the text, but have a semiotic role in expanding, clarifying, or even transforming the meaning conveyed verbally. Meanwhile, at the pedagogical level, he emphasized that integrating text and images can help children develop more comprehensive interpretive skills through simultaneous visual and linguistic engagement.

In the context of bilingual children's books, the interaction between two languages (Indonesian and English) and visual elements provides opportunities for children to interpret stories more holistically. Children not only understand the story's content through text but also through illustrations that help convey meaning across languages and deepen their understanding of the moral message.

Character education, as Lickona states, emphasizes the importance of developing moral values through concrete, contextual experiences in a child's life (Lickona, 1992). In practice, character education is concerned not only with understanding the concept of values but also with how these values are internalized through meaningful behaviors and situations for children.

However, the implementation of character education in children's books is often still normative and instructive, with moral values conveyed explicitly through direct statements without adequate narrative or visual context. Such an approach has the potential to limit a child's understanding, as values are framed as rules to be followed rather than as experiences that can be understood through representations of everyday life.

In this context, bilingual children's books that integrate text and illustration have the potential to present more contextual and meaningful character education. Moral values are conveyed not only through verbal language but also through visual representations, storylines, and interactions between characters that reflect children's real experiences.

Therefore, this research seeks to examine how character values are not merely presented declaratively but constructed through the integration of text and illustration within a multimodal framework. Thus, this research contributes to the study of character education, particularly by examining how moral values are represented and interpreted in bilingual children's books as an integrated semiotic system.

Although the cultivation of moral values through children's books has been recognized as an important part of character education (Masruroh & Ramati, 2022), studies that specifically examine how these values are constructed through the interaction between text and illustration are still limited. Most research focuses on identifying moral values in story content, without examining the role of visual elements in constructing and reinforcing those meanings. In fact, in children's books, illustrations play a significant role in helping children understand the context of emotions, actions, and social consequences that are not always explicitly conveyed in the text. Therefore, an approach that integrates content and multimodal analysis is needed to better understand how moral values are represented in children's books.

Analysis of bilingual children's books needs to consider two interrelated dimensions, namely content analysis and multimodal discourse/semiosis analysis. This approach allows researchers to understand how messages, values, and characters are conveyed through the interaction between text and images. In the context of multimodal literacy, images serve not only as support for the text but also as a stand-alone carrier of meaning, sometimes even adding to or altering the reader's interpretation of the text (Cheng et al., 2025).

Multimodal analysis views children's books as a complex system of signs, in which visual modes (colors, facial expressions, character gestures, page composition) and verbal modes (text, sentence

structure, word choice) work synergistically to create unified meanings (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001). (Royce, 1998) calls this relationship intersemiotic complementarity, which is the integration between modes of communication that reinforce each other's moral messages and the meaning to be conveyed.

In addition, research on bilingual children's literacy shows that using bilingual language in children's books can support the development of biliteracy and increase children's metalinguistic awareness of language structures (Oshchepkova et al., 2023). In this context, the placement of Indonesian-English texts side by side in the book *I Can Control My Anger* provides an opportunity for children to recognize meaning equivalence between languages and to expand their literacy skills.

Previous research on bilingual and multimodal children's books shows that two approaches remain separate: content analysis and multimodal analysis. For example, some studies focus solely on content analysis to identify themes, moral values, and characters in children's books, while others employ multimodal analysis to understand how visual and verbal elements interact to shape meaning. However, research that comprehensively integrates these two approaches remains limited (Anjani et al., 2024; Nurmahanani, 2023; Kembaren et al., 2025; Lotherington et al., 2019).

One example of relevant research is Guijarro's (2014) work, which uses a systemic functional approach to analyze children's picture books. This research reveals how texts and images in children's books work together to convey meaning in specific cultural contexts. Moya Guijarro emphasizes the importance of integrating verbal and visual elements to create richer, more complex messages.

Another study by Gu & Catalano (2022) examined the representation of immigrant children's transitional experiences in children's literature, focusing on multimodal critical discourse analysis. In this study, images and text are used to construct complex social representations that allow for a deeper understanding of immigrant children's experiences through picture books.

In addition, the research (Unsworth, 2013) focuses on multimodal analysis in early childhood education, particularly in the classroom. Unsworth explains how multimodal analysis can examine the relationship between text and illustration in children's books and how the two can reinforce each other's intended meanings.

Research by Zhou et al. (2025) focuses on children's multimodal and multilingual learning through co-reading of wordless picture books to improve their literacy skills. This research shows how picture books can help children develop reading skills through the interaction between visual and verbal elements.

Research by Moses (2015) also examines the role of images in multimodal literacy among bilingual children. This research reveals how pictures in books can help children better understand texts, especially for children learning two languages.

Therefore, previous research tends to focus on language literacy or moral values in general, while studies that integrate content and multimodal analysis into bilingual children's books remain rare. Therefore, this research has novelty in the:

- a. the object of study is in the form of bilingual children's books with moral and social themes that are close to early childhood;
- b. the integration of two analytical approaches—content and multimodality—in a single methodological framework; and
- c. its relevance to the development of early childhood literacy in the Indonesian context.

Thus, the purpose of this research is to analyze the content and multimodal elements in the book *I Can Control My Anger* to understand how moral messages and character values are conveyed through the interaction between text and illustration in the context of bilingual children's literacy.

- a. In addition, in this study, the researcher asked three research questions, namely:
- b. How does the content of the bilingual children's book *I Can Control My Anger* represent themes, character values, and moral messages that are relevant to early childhood?

- c. How does the integration of verbal elements (bilingual Indonesian-English texts) and visual elements (illustrations, colors, expressions, and layout) build meaning and emotion in the book?
- d. How are moral messages and character values conveyed through multimodal interaction between text and illustration in the context of bilingual child literacy?

2. Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative-descriptive approach, combining content analysis and multimodal analysis (multimodal discourse/semiosis analysis). This approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of how meaning, moral messages, and character values are shaped through the interaction between verbal and visual elements in bilingual children's books.

Epistemologically, the use of a combination of these two methods is based on the assumption that meaning in multimodal texts cannot be reduced to a single source, but rather is constructed through the interaction of various semiotic modes. Therefore, content analysis alone is insufficient to capture the visual dimension, while multimodal analysis without content analysis risks overlooking the explicit structure of textual meaning. Thus, an integrative approach is needed to better understand the construction of meaning.

Content analysis is used to identify and interpret textual meanings related to themes, moral messages, and character values in the narrative. Meanwhile, multimodal analysis examines the relationship between text and images as a complementary semiotic system, including how illustrations reinforce, expand, or transform the meaning conveyed verbally.

Compared with using a single method, combining these two approaches yields a more holistic analysis by integrating the linguistic and visual dimensions into a single interpretive framework. Thus, this study not only identifies the content of the message but also explains how it is constructed and interpreted through the integration of various modes of communication.

Objects and Units of Analysis

The object of this research is the book *I Can Control My Anger*. The unit of analysis in this study includes all pages of the book (spreads) containing text and illustrations, which are analyzed equally without exception. Each page is treated as a single unit of meaning that represents the interaction between verbal and visual elements.

Operationally, the analysis units in this study include:

- Book pages (spreads) that contain text and illustrations;
- Dialogue and narrative in two languages (Indonesian–English);
- Scenes featuring character interaction;
- Visual elements such as colors, expressions, gestures, and layouts;
- A relationship between text and images.

The selection of this unit of analysis is based on the consideration that the meaning in children's books is built through the integration of these various elements in a single narrative and visual structure.

Categories Analysis

The analysis categories in this study consist of content analysis and multimodal analysis that are operationally arranged to identify and interpret the meaning in bilingual children's books.

a. Content Analysis

Content analysis is used to identify the main themes, moral messages, character characters, and character values contained in the text. The analysis process is carried out through the open coding stage by reading the entire text repeatedly to find relevant units of meaning. Furthermore, these

units of meaning are categorized into themes and character values based on the framework of content analysis (Krippendorff, 2018; Neuendorf, 2017). The initial categorization includes emotional themes, the type of character values (e.g., patience, empathy, responsibility), and the form of conflict and its resolution.

b. Multimodal Analysis

Multimodal analysis is used to examine the integration of verbal and visual elements in the construction of meaning. This analysis draws on the multimodal framework (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001) and the concept of intersemiotic complementarity (Royce, 1998). The analysis process involved identifying verbal elements (sentence structure and Indonesian-English equivalents) and visual elements (colors, expressions, gestures, and composition), and then examining the inter-fashion relationships within each page unit. The initial categorization in this analysis includes representational, interactive, and compositional functions, as well as types of verbal-visual relationships (complementary, reinforced, or expanding meaning).

Data Validation

Coding validation is carried out through checking the consistency between categories and matching the analysis results with the theoretical framework used. In addition, the method was triangulated by comparing the results of content analysis and multimodal analysis to ensure that the resulting interpretation was consistent and mutually supportive.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were obtained by systematically documenting the contents of the book. The steps include:

- a. Scanning or photographing the entire page of the book (spread);
- b. Complete transcription of bilingual texts;
- c. Recording visual descriptions (dominant colors, facial expressions, text positions, and illustrations).

Data Analysis Techniques

The analysis procedure is carried out through two main stages:

a. Content Analysis:

Following the approaches of Krippendorff (2018) and Neuendorf (2017), content analysis includes open coding, the identification of moral themes, and narrative descriptions of the characters and messages presented in the text. This analysis aims to uncover the values of character education contained in the book.

b. Multimodal Analysis:

Multimodal analysis uses frameworks (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001) to read visual meanings, such as composition, color, position of figures, and expressions, as well as the intersemiotic complementarity theory of Royce (1998) to analyze the relationship between text and images. Research (Damayanti & Febrianti, 2020) emphasizes the importance of visual-verbal integration in shaping children's understanding of picture book content.

The results of the two analyses were then integrated to obtain a comprehensive interpretation of how meaning was constructed in the book *I Can Control My Anger*.

Data Triangulation and Validation

Data validation in this study was carried out through methodological, theoretical, and data

triangulation. The triangulation method was carried out by comparing the results of content and multimodal analyses to assess the consistency of the findings in identifying moral messages and character values. Theoretical triangulation is carried out by associating the results of the analysis with various theoretical frameworks, such as multimodality theory (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001) and character education (Lickona, 1992), to strengthen interpretation.

Meanwhile, data triangulation was conducted by comparing verbal data (bilingual text) with visual data (illustrations) for each unit of analysis. For example, when text shows a character's expression of anger, the analysis is confirmed through visual elements such as facial expressions, gestures, and color to ensure the suitability of meaning across modes. Through this process, the resulting interpretation becomes more valid because it is supported by various sources and analytical approaches.

Research Limitations

This study is descriptive and does not directly measure the impact of books on children's behavior. The research focuses on the interpretation of texts and illustrations as multimodal works, guided by the theoretical framework used. Therefore, one of the limitations of this study is the potential for subjectivity in the analysis and interpretation, although this has been mitigated through the use of theoretical frameworks and data triangulation.

In addition, this study used only one book as the object of study, so the results obtained could not be generalized to all bilingual children's books. The research findings are more contextual and limited to the characteristics of the books analyzed.

Nevertheless, this research still contributes to understanding how the meaning and value of characters are constructed through the integration of texts and illustrations in bilingual children's books, especially in the context of early childhood multimodal literacy.

3. Results and Discussion

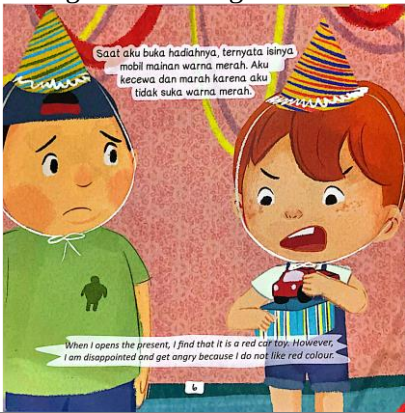
Based on observations and analyses using multimodal instruments in a bilingual children's book titled *I Can Control My Anger*, this study found a consistent pattern of integration between verbal (text) and visual (illustrations) elements in constructing moral meaning. The main pattern identified is the use of illustrations as both a reinforcement and an interpreter of emotions that are not fully expressed through text, so that the meaning of anger and the process of controlling it become more concrete for early childhood readers.

In addition, it was found that a simple and commensurate bilingual narrative structure serves as the basic framework for message delivery, while visual elements, especially the main character's expression (Bian), gestures, and use of color, help deepen the story's emotional dimension. Thus, meaning is not only conveyed linearly through text, but constructed through the dynamic interaction between text and illustrations that complement each other. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of moral message delivery in books depends not only on narrative content but also on multimodal integration patterns that allow children to understand emotions and social consequences more contextually and visually. The following are the details of the findings based on each component of the observation instrument:

3.1. Content Analysis

Objective: Identify the theme, character value, and structure of the bilingual text.

NO	Observed Aspects	Observation Indicators	Description of Analysis / Notes of Findings
1	Story Theme	☑ Emotional Themes (Self-Control)	The main focus is anger management in children when facing situations that are not according to their wishes. In perspective (Lickona, 1992) this

			is included in the development of moral knowing (awareness of emotions) and moral action (the ability to control behavior). This theme is also in line with children's narrative theory, where stories help children understand emotional experiences through a flow that is concrete and close to everyday life.
2	Character Value	☒ Patience ☒ Empathy ☒ Manners	The main character learns to calm down (patience) and apologize (manners/empathy). According to Lickona, this value reflects the integration of three character components: moral knowing (knowing that anger needs to be controlled), moral feeling (the emergence of empathy), and moral action (apologizing). In children's narrative theory, these values are transmitted through the experiences of the characters so that children can more easily internalize prosocial behavior.
3	Characterization	☒ Learner figures	The character "Aku" undergoes a transformation from a negative emotional state to a reflective one. In Lickona's theory, it shows the process of character formation through direct moral experience. Meanwhile, in narrative theory, dynamic characters help children understand that behavior can change through learning and self-reflection.
			
4	Conflict & Solution	☒ Self-reflection	Internal conflicts (anger due to unfulfilled desires) are resolved through communication with the mother. According to Lickona, the role of the environment (parents) is important in guiding children's moral reasoning. In children's narrative theory, conflict and resolution function as a means of concrete moral learning, where children learn social and emotional

problem-solving

strategies.



5 Language & Bilingual ☒ Matching text

Indonesian and English texts have a good synergy of meaning. From the perspective of children's narrative theory, consistent use of language helps children understand the story in its entirety. In addition, in the context of Lickona-style character education, clear and contextual language supports a more effective understanding of moral values because children can relate messages to real experiences.



3.2. Multimodal Discourse

Objective: Analyze the synergy of text (verbal) and illustration (visual)

No	Multimodal Aspects	Observation Indicators	Observation Description	Semiotic Analysis
1	Verbal-Visual Meaning	☒ Highly supportive	An image when the main character visually reinforces the text about feelings of anger, by slamming a red car to the floor accompanied by a face that looks unhappy.	Representational: Slamming represents the process of action (anger). Interactive: Proximity builds an emotional closeness to the reader. Compositional: The action is placed in the center so that it becomes the main focus.

				
2	Expression of Emotions	☒ Consistently aligned	Eye brows swooping down and mouth wide open accurately describe the "angry" emotions written in the text.	Representational: Facial expressions as a conventional symbol of anger. Interactive: There is no direct eye contact → the reader as an observer. Compositional: The face becomes the most prominent element (high salience).
3	Bilingual Integration	☒ Helps understanding	Explicit illustrations help children understand English vocabulary through clear visual context.	Representational: Pictures represent the meaning of words in concrete terms. Interactive: The text-image relationship is complementary. Compositional: Side-by-side placement makes it easy to understand.
				
4	Layout	☒ Clear reading flow	The placement of the text does not cover the facial expressions of the characters, so the child's focus remains on the emotions conveyed.	Representational: Structure supports storyline. Interactive: Visuals remain dominant → keep the child's attention. Compositional: Clear information hierarchy (images → text).
5	Color & Atmosphere	☒ Very consistent	The use of red/warm when angry and the transition to blue/cool when the character starts to calm down shows the emotional dynamics.	Representational: The color symbolizes emotions (red=angry, blue=calm). Interactive: Color contrast affects the reader's emotions. Compositional: Color transitions make the mood change clearer.

3.3. Integrated Coding Scheme (Synthesis)

Based on the data above, here are the patterns of integration found:

1. ISI-1 & MM-1: The theme of self-control (Emotional) is conveyed not only through the word "calm", but also the visualization of the character taking a deep breath.
2. ISI-5 & MM-3: The short language structure on each page makes it easy to synchronize with

large illustrations, so that moral messages are quickly captured by children of early childhood age.

3. MM-2 (Relationship): Complementary; Text gives emotional (verbal) labels, while images provide depth of sense and context (visual).

3.4. General Rating per Page (Scores 1–5)

Book Title: I Can Control My Anger		
Aspect	Value	Supporting Notes
Clarity of Themes and Values	5/5	The theme of self-control is very explicit and relevant to early childhood.
Bilingual Language Consistency	4/5	The Indonesian and English texts have a very consistent synergy on each page.
Effectiveness of Illustrations	5/5	Visual illustrations are very helpful in explaining abstract emotions (anger) into tangible forms.
Text–Image Integration	4/5	There is a synergy of intersemiotic complementarity in which images reinforce the moral message in the text.
Relevance to Early Childhood	5/5	The use of short sentences and expressive images is very much in line with the characteristics of PAUD readers.

Discussion

The results of this study show that the book “*Aku Bisa Mengendalikan Amarahku*” (*I Can Control My Anger*) is portrayed as an ideal figure who is able to manage emotions from the start, but rather as a “learning figure” who experiences outbursts of anger, reflects on his actions, and then finds more adaptive ways to respond to situations. This transformational pattern shows that moral messages are not conveyed normatively or instructively, but are constructed through narrative experiences that are close to the child's daily reality. From the perspective of character education, this approach aligns with Lickona's (1992) idea that the internalization of moral values is more effective when children are presented with concrete, contextual models of behavior.

Compared with previous research, these findings show a strengthening of the integration between narrative and character formation. For example, research (Amril & Pransiska, 2021) emphasizes the identification of character values in storybooks as teachable content, but has not examined in depth how these values are constructed through the flow of characters' experiences. Meanwhile, studies (Moya Guijarro, 2014) highlight the relationship between text and images in constructing meaning, but do not specifically attribute them to the character education dimension. This research fills this gap by showing that the values of patience, empathy, and manners are not only present as content but also built through the narrative process and the characters' transformation.

Furthermore, compared to the study (Moses, 2015) that emphasized the role of images in helping the comprehension of texts in bilingual children, the results of this study show that illustrations not only function as a support for language comprehension, but also as a medium for emotional representation and the formation of moral meaning. This shows that the multimodal function in children's books is not single but simultaneously supports biliteracy and character education. Thus, the findings of this study not only confirm the theory of character education but also extend previous research by showing that integrating transformational narratives, multimodal illustrations, and bilingual contexts is an effective strategy for building a more holistic understanding of early childhood morality.

The representation of internal conflict, namely anger because desires are not fulfilled, also strengthens the pedagogical relevance of this book. The conflict is resolved through calm verbal

communication with the mother figure, thereby illustrating emotional regulation supported by social support. These findings are consistent with research showing that self-regulation skills in early childhood develop through social interaction and adult guidance. For example, research by Graziano et al. (2007) found that emotion regulation plays an important role in children's early academic success and develops through social environmental support, particularly interactions with parents and teachers. In line with that, a longitudinal study by Montroy et al. (2016) shows that the development of self-regulation in early childhood occurs gradually and is strongly influenced by the quality of social interaction and parenting practices.

In addition, experimental research by Schoppmann et al. (2023) in PLOS ONE shows that reading picture storybooks can significantly increase children's use of emotion regulation strategies, such as calming down and managing responses to frustrating situations. These findings reinforce the idea that storybooks function not only as a literacy medium but also as an effective means of social-emotional learning.

Thus, this book not only conveys moral messages explicitly, but also models concrete strategies for managing emotions through positive social interactions. This shows that the integration of narratives, illustrations, and character relationships in children's books has significant potential to support early childhood social-emotional development in a more contextual and applicable manner.

From a linguistic perspective, the analysis shows that Indonesian and English texts in books exhibit a high degree of meaning equivalence, with simple and repetitive sentence structures. The simplicity of this structure is in harmony with the characteristics of early childhood language development and supports the process of biliteracy. Exposure to two languages in the same narrative context allows children to build metalinguistic awareness through cross-linguistic comparison of meanings (Oshchepkova et al., 2023). The role of illustration becomes crucial in this context, as explicit visuals help bridge the gap in understanding second-language vocabulary without taking away the context of the story's meaning. These findings expand on the findings of Moses (2015) who emphasized the importance of images in helping young bilingual readers understand multimodal texts. In this book, illustrations not only clarify lexical meaning but also reinforce the story's emotional and moral dimensions, so that biliteracy and character education are integrated simultaneously.

In the multimodal dimension, this study found a strong intersemiotic complementarity relationship between text and illustration. Meaning is not constructed by verbal language alone, but through the orchestration of various semiotic modes such as facial expressions, gestures, colors, and layouts. These findings are consistent with the multimodality framework that states that multimodal texts are complex sign systems that integrate various semiotic resources in the formation of meaning (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001). Facial expressions with swooping eyebrows, open mouths, and toy slamming gestures visually reinforce the verbal label of "angry", so that children gain concrete representations of emotions that are linguistically abstract. This systemic integration between text and images is also in line with findings (Moya Guijarro, 2014) that emphasize that children's picture books construct meaning through the functional relationship between verbal and visual modes. However, unlike the study which focuses more on visual systemic analysis, this study integrates the dimension of character values within the framework of multimodal analysis, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding.

The color function in this book also shows significant symbolic consistency. The use of warm colors such as red and orange during the conflict, then transitioning to cool colors such as blue and green when the character begins to calm down, visually represents the psychological dynamics. In the perspective of multimodal analysis, color is a semiotic resource that has ideational and interpersonal potential in building meaning (Ledin & Machin, 2020). The colors in this book are not decorative, but rather a visual metaphor for the change in the characters' emotions. These findings expand on the study of Cheng et al. (2025) that emphasized the importance of multimodal literacy in children's books, by showing that even simple visual elements can serve as pedagogical tools in learning emotion regulation.

If reviewed from the context of previous research, it can be seen that many studies still separate the analysis of the content of character values and multimodal analysis. Syahrial et al. (2022) focused on character-value indicators in textbooks, while Gu & Catalano (2022) examined social representation using a multimodal critical discourse approach. The study of Zhou et al. (2025) focused on multilingual learning through wordless books, and Unsworth (2013) emphasized the importance of multimodal analysis in classroom practice. However, research that simultaneously integrates content and multimodal analyses of bilingual children's books on the theme of emotion regulation remains relatively limited. In this context, the article presents an update, showing that moral messages about self-control are built through a synergy of simple bilingual texts, expressive illustrations, child-friendly layouts, and consistent color symbolism.

Thus, the main contribution of this research lies in demonstrating that multimodal bilingual children's books constitute an integrated semiotic system capable of simultaneously developing biliteracy, emotion regulation, and character education. Moral meaning is not solely in the text, but is constructed through the dynamic interaction between language and visuals. These findings reinforce the urgency of developing and using multimodal bilingual children's books in early childhood education in Indonesia, while emphasizing that integrating content and multimodal analysis provides a stronger theoretical and methodological foundation for studying early childhood literacy.

4. Conclusion

The bilingual children's book "*Aku Bisa Mengendalikan Amarahku*" (I Can Control My Anger) has proven to be an effective literacy medium for developing moral, language, and visual aspects in early childhood. The main findings of this study show that self-control is represented by the character of the "learning figure," who undergoes emotional transformation, and is strengthened by the synergy between bilingual texts and visual illustrations through intersemiotic complementarity. Character values such as patience, empathy, and manners are not only conveyed verbally, but are modeled concretely through storylines, character expressions, the use of colors, and child-friendly layouts.

The contribution of this research lies in integrating content and multimodal analyses in the study of bilingual children's books, demonstrating that the formation of moral meaning occurs through the dynamic interaction between language and visuals within an integrated semiotic system. This approach expands the study of early childhood literacy by positioning books as a medium that simultaneously develops biliteracy, emotional regulation, and character education.

The implications of this study underscore the importance of using multimodal children's books in early childhood education. Educators and parents can use these books as a strategic means to support children's social-emotional development through contextual, visual, and interactive reading experiences.

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