



Peircean Semiotic Analysis of Peurateup Aneuk for Tawhid Instillation in Mahārah al-Qirā'ah Materials

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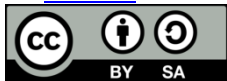
Tawhid instillation

ABSTRACT

The Peurateup Aneuk tradition in Acehnese society embodies cultural and religious values related to tawhid, family education, and moral formation. Although previous studies have examined Peurateup Aneuk primarily from cultural, religious, and educational perspectives, limited attention has been given to its integration as local cultural material in *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* (Arabic reading skills) instruction, particularly as a medium for internalizing tawhid values. This study examines the function of Peurateup Aneuk as a semiotic resource for tawhid internalization in *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* instruction at a state Islamic university in Lhokseumawe. Employing a descriptive qualitative design, data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with one lecturer and six students, and analysis of Peurateup Aneuk reading material. Data were analyzed using Peirce's representamen-object-interpretant framework and the Miles and Huberman model. The findings show that the material enables students to progress from literal comprehension toward cultural, religious, and critical-reflective interpretation. Cultural signs related to Peudodaidi, parental affection, prayer, and religious expressions were interpreted as representations of faith, remembrance of Allah, parental responsibility, and religious character. The study concludes that Peurateup Aneuk functions as a cultural, semiotic, and cognitive resource that connects Arabic reading competence with Acehnese cultural literacy and tawhid-oriented reflection. The integration of this local tradition into *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* therefore offers a culturally contextualized approach to Arabic language learning while strengthening students' religious and cultural understanding.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The *Peurateup Aneuk* tradition is one of the cultural heritages of Acehese society that reflects the close relationship between local customs and Islamic teachings. Traditionally performed as a ceremonial introduction for young children, *Peurateup Aneuk* is more than a social or cultural ritual; it embodies theological values, moral guidance, and spiritual education that are transmitted from one generation to another (Riana et al., 2023). Every stage of the ritual contains symbols that represent gratitude to Allah, prayers for the child's future, and the parents' commitment to nurturing children according to Islamic values (Chandra et al., 2024). As Indonesia continues to promote the preservation of local wisdom within educational contexts, traditions such as *Peurateup Aneuk* offer valuable learning resources that connect religious teachings with students' socio-cultural backgrounds. In Arabic language education, especially *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* (reading skills), the integration of authentic local cultural content can enrich learning experiences by making reading materials more meaningful, contextual, and relevant to students' daily lives.

Several previous studies have explored the relationship between Acehese traditions, Islamic values, and education from different perspectives, particularly through studies of traditions such as *Peusijek* and *Khanduri Blang*. However, the existing literature has not yet specifically examined the tradition of *Peurateup Aneuk* and its relationship to Islamic values and education. This indicates a gap in the literature, as the cultural and educational dimensions of *Peurateup Aneuk* remain underexplored. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by examining *Peurateup Aneuk* as an Acehese tradition that embodies Islamic values and has potential significance for educational practices and the transmission of Islamic values within the community. Anwar & Ribawati (2025) investigated the *Peusijek* tradition and demonstrated that its symbolic practices function as a medium for instilling *tawhid* and character education within the Acehese community. Similarly, Anismar et al. (2021) examined the *Khanduri Blang* ritual using a semiotic approach and revealed that the ritual symbols strengthen the community's spiritual awareness and collective religious identity. In the field of Arabic language education, Fathoni (2024) reported that integrating local traditions into Arabic teaching materials increased students' learning motivation because the learning content reflected familiar cultural experiences. Other studies have also emphasized the importance of incorporating local wisdom into Islamic education to preserve cultural identity while fostering students' religious and moral development (Raisul Umam & Andi Musthafa Husain, 2024). These findings indicate that local traditions possess considerable educational value and can contribute positively to contextual learning.

Although previous studies have provided important insights, several limitations remain. Existing research has primarily focused on identifying religious, cultural, or character values within Acehese traditions without conducting a comprehensive analysis of the signs and meanings embedded in ritual practices through Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic framework. Moreover, studies discussing the integration of Acehese local wisdom into Arabic language learning have generally emphasized curriculum development or cultural relevance rather than examining how symbolic meanings can be transformed into pedagogically appropriate reading materials. Consequently, the educational potential of the *Peurateup Aneuk* tradition has not been fully explored,

particularly in relation to its use as a culturally relevant context for *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* learning that may support students' linguistic competence, cultural literacy, and spiritual understanding. This gap indicates the need for a qualitative-descriptive study that explores how the Peurateup Aneuk tradition is represented and utilized in the learning process, particularly through observation of classroom practices and the integration of its cultural and semiotic dimensions into *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* instruction.

Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory provides a comprehensive framework for uncovering the meanings embedded within cultural symbols through the interrelated concepts of representamen, object, and interpretant (Kartika & Supena, 2024; Khairunnisa et al., 2025). Applying this framework to the *Peurateup Aneuk* tradition enables a deeper interpretation of the theological messages conveyed through ritual objects, actions, and expressions while revealing their educational significance. The scientific merit of this study lies in its interdisciplinary approach, which combines cultural semiotics, Islamic education, and Arabic language pedagogy. Unlike previous studies that have examined these aspects separately, this research interprets the symbolic meanings embedded in *Peurateup Aneuk* through Peirce's semiotic theory. It examines their relevance to the use of culturally responsive *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* teaching materials that had been previously developed and implemented in the learning process. Therefore, this study contributes theoretically by enriching the application of Peircean semiotics in the study of Islamic local traditions and practically by demonstrating how existing Arabic language teaching materials can incorporate and reflect local wisdom and cultural values.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the symbols contained in the *Peurateup Aneuk* tradition using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory, identify the Tawhid values represented through these symbols, and examine how students construct meaning (*interpretant*) and internalize Tawhid values when engaging with *Peurateup Aneuk* texts in *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* learning. By focusing on students' interpretive processes and responses during classroom reading activities, this study seeks to reveal how culturally embedded symbols are transformed into meaningful religious understanding and internalized values through Arabic language learning. Through this approach, the study is expected to contribute not only to the preservation of Acehnese cultural heritage but also to the development of a more meaningful, culturally responsive, and spiritually oriented model of Arabic language learning.

2. METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach to interpret the symbolic meanings embedded in the *Peurateup Aneuk* tradition and to examine their potential integration into *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* (Arabic reading skills) teaching materials. A qualitative design was selected because it enables an in-depth exploration of cultural symbols, participants' interpretations, and educational meanings within their natural context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The primary textual data analyzed in this study were drawn from an existing Arabic reading teaching material entitled *Al-Qirā'ah al-Mawḍū'iyah Baina at-Taḳālīdiyyah wa at-Tsaqāfah al-Maḥalliyyah*, published in 2024 and authored by Safwan. Thus, the text analyzed in this

study was not developed or constructed by the researchers as a research instrument but constituted pre-existing instructional material. The material was examined to identify and interpret the representation of local cultural values and symbols, particularly those related to the Peurateup Aneuk tradition. Peirce's triadic model of semiotics, consisting of the representamen, object, and interpretant, served as the analytical framework for interpreting the signs contained in the Peurateup Aneuk tradition and their representation in the existing teaching material.

Participants

The study was conducted in the Arabic Language Education Program at UIN Sultanah Nahrasiyah Lhokseumawe during the 2025/2026 academic year. The participants consisted of 30 third-semester undergraduate students enrolled in the *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* course. All students registered in the course were included as observation participants because they were directly involved in the implementation of the learning activities. For the interview stage, purposive sampling was employed to select one lecturer responsible for the course and six students who actively participated during classroom discussions and demonstrated the ability to explain the meanings of the cultural symbols presented in the teaching materials (Patton, 2015). The inclusion criteria for student interviewees were: (1) active attendance throughout the observation period, (2) participation in classroom discussions, and (3) willingness to participate voluntarily in the interviews. No participants were excluded after recruitment.

Data Collection

Data were collected through document analysis, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews. Document analysis was conducted as the primary data collection technique to identify and examine the *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* reading texts and teaching materials incorporating the Peurateup Aneuk tradition. The textual data were analyzed to identify the Peurateup Aneuk symbols and their representations of tawhid values within the reading materials. Particular attention was given to the linguistic and symbolic elements embedded in the texts, which subsequently served as the primary corpus for the Peircean semiotic analysis.

Classroom observations were conducted over four instructional meetings within one month to document how the teaching materials based on the Peurateup Aneuk tradition were implemented in *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* learning activities. The observations focused on students' engagement, their interactions with the teaching materials, and their responses to the symbolic representations contained in the reading texts.

Semi-structured interviews were subsequently conducted with one lecturer and six selected students to obtain a deeper understanding of their interpretations of the tawhid values represented through the Peurateup Aneuk symbols. An interview guide was prepared based on Peirce's semiotic concepts, covering participants' interpretations of the ritual symbols, their understanding of the theological meanings conveyed through these symbols, and their perceptions of the relevance of the materials to Arabic reading instruction. All interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim prior to analysis. The data obtained from document analysis, classroom observations, and interviews were then triangulated to strengthen the credibility and comprehensiveness of the findings.

Data Analysis

The study was conducted in four stages. First, the teaching materials containing narratives about the *Peurateup Aneuk* tradition were implemented in *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* learning activities. Second, the relevant reading texts and teaching materials were analyzed to identify the symbols of the *Peurateup Aneuk* tradition and their representations of *tawhid* values. Third, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews were conducted to examine how the materials were used and how students understood the symbolic and theological meanings presented in the texts. Finally, the data from documents, observations, and interviews were organized and prepared for qualitative analysis.

Data were collected through document analysis, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews. Document analysis was the primary data collection technique because the Peircean semiotic analysis required the *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* reading texts as the main textual corpus. The analysis focused on the teaching materials that incorporated the *Peurateup Aneuk* tradition, particularly the linguistic and symbolic elements representing *tawhid* values. These texts served as the main corpus for the Peircean semiotic analysis.

Classroom observations were conducted over four instructional meetings within one month. The observations focused on the implementation of the teaching materials, students' engagement, their interactions with the texts, and their responses to the symbolic representations of the *Peurateup Aneuk* tradition.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with one lecturer and six selected students to gain a deeper understanding of their interpretations of the *tawhid* values represented through the *Peurateup Aneuk* symbols. The interview questions addressed the meanings of the ritual symbols, the theological values conveyed through them, and the relevance of the materials to Arabic reading instruction. With participants' consent, all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

The data from document analysis, classroom observations, and interviews were triangulated to strengthen the credibility of the findings. Member checking was also conducted by asking the interview participants to verify the accuracy of the transcripts and the researchers' interpretations. These procedures helped improve the credibility and dependability of the study. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

The analysis of the *Peurateup Aneuk* reading text identified several cultural units that function as signs conveying meanings related to *tawhid* values. From a Peircean semiotic perspective, these signs can be examined through the relationship between the representamen, object, and interpretant. The cultural expressions, actions, and objects represented in the text refer to specific practices within the *Peurateup Aneuk* tradition. At the same time, their interpretants reveal religious meanings related to belief in Allah, gratitude, prayer, reliance on Allah, and the recognition of Allah's authority over human life. Thus, the text does not merely present *Peurateup Aneuk* as a cultural practice but also provides symbolic representations through which students can connect local

cultural knowledge with Islamic theological concepts.

These semiotic findings were subsequently incorporated into the *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* teaching material in the Arabic Language Education Program at UIN Sultanah Nahrasiyah Lhokseumawe. As shown in Figure 1, the material presents the *Peurateup Aneuk* text as an Arabic reading passage accompanied by learning objectives (*al-ahdāf al-ta'limiyyah*), learning indicators (*al-mu'ashshirāt*), vocabulary activities, and reading comprehension tasks.



الوحدة الثانية عشرة
بيوراتيب أنوك
PEURATEUP ANEUK

تُعتبر "بيوراتيب أنوك" إحدى الممارسات الثقافية التي تعكس غنى التراث المحلي لمجتمع آتشيه، حيث تدمج بين التعليم الديني والأخلاقي، فضلاً عن تربية الأطفال منذ سن مبكرة. في هذا السياق، يُعتبر "بيوراتيب أنوك" بمثابة فن من فنون الكلام الذي يستخدم الأناشيد الشعرية لنقل القيم الإسلامية والأخلاقية للأطفال، مما يساهم في تشكيل هويتهم الشخصية وروحهم الدينية منذ بداية حياتهم.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mq5xxT6a5c>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjP8EBvjPg8>

الأهداف التعليمية

- أن يفهم الطالب محتوى النص المتعلق بموضوع "بيوراتيب أنوك" ودوره في التربية المبكرة.
- أن يحدد الطالب الأفكار الرئيسة والأفكار الفرعية في النص.
- أن يكتسب الطالب مفردات جديدة تتعلق بالموضوع، ويستطيع استخدامها في سياق مناسب.
- أن يحلل الطالب القيم الدينية والأخلاقية الواردة في النص.



المؤشرات

- يقرأ الطالب النص قراءة صحيحة خالية من الأخطاء النحوية واللفظية.
- يحدد الطالب الأفكار الرئيسة للنص، مثل دور "بيوراتيب أنوك" في التعليم المبكر.
- يحلل الطالب القيم الدينية والأخلاقية في "بيوراتيب أنوك" مثل: حب الله ورسوله، الصدق، واحترام الوالدين.
- يحدد الطالب دور الشعر والغناء في ترسيخ القيم التربوية.
- يوضح الطالب أهمية المحافظة على التراث الثقافي مثل "بيوراتيب أنوك" لنقل القيم للأجيال القادمة.

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Figure 1. Objectives and Indicators of *Maharah al-Qira'ah* Learning for Students

As presented in Figure 1, the learning objectives emphasize students' ability to comprehend the main ideas of the text, identify vocabulary according to its context, and understand the cultural meanings represented in the *Peurateup Aneuk* tradition. The learning indicators also direct students to identify and interpret religious meanings contained in the cultural practices described in the text. Therefore, the structure of the material provides a pedagogical framework for connecting Arabic reading comprehension with the interpretation of culturally embedded religious meanings.

However, the evidence of students' understanding of tawhid values was derived not merely from the instructional objectives but from the learning process observed in the classroom. The classroom observations showed that the lecturer explicitly guided students to move from understanding the literal meaning of the text toward interpreting its symbolic meanings. After students identified unfamiliar vocabulary and discussed the meaning of the sentences, the lecturer asked questions that directed their attention to the relationship between particular cultural practices and Islamic beliefs. For example, students were asked to explain what religious meaning could be found in the expressions of gratitude, prayer, and dependence on Allah represented in the Peurateup Aneuk tradition. The lecturer then asked students to provide textual evidence and explain why a particular cultural practice could be interpreted as reflecting a tawhid value. This process enabled students to construct the symbolic meaning of the text through discussion rather than simply receiving the interpretation from the lecturer.

The lecturer's interview further confirmed this instructional process. The lecturer explained that students were first guided to understand the Arabic text and its cultural context before being asked to interpret the religious meanings contained in particular expressions and practices. The lecturer stated that the discussion was directed toward helping students recognize that cultural practices could contain religious meanings when they were connected to beliefs in Allah. Thus, the lecturer's role was not limited to explaining vocabulary and sentence structures but also involved guiding students to establish the relationship between the cultural signs identified in the text and the tawhid concepts they represented.

Students' interviews provided additional evidence of this process. Several students reported that the Peurateup Aneuk-based reading text was easier to understand because the tradition was familiar to them as part of their Acehnese cultural environment. This prior cultural knowledge helped them recognize the practices described in the Arabic text and subsequently connect them with specific religious meanings. In particular, students associated expressions of gratitude and prayer in the tradition with recognition of Allah's blessings and dependence on Allah. Other students interpreted the religious practices described in the text as reminders that human beings should acknowledge Allah as the source of blessings and guidance. These responses indicate that students did not merely recognize the cultural meaning of the text but were able to relate particular cultural signs to specific concepts of tawhid.

The classroom observation also showed that students actively negotiated these meanings through collaborative activities. After reading the text individually, students identified unfamiliar vocabulary and discussed its meaning in small groups. They then identified cultural practices or expressions that could function as signs of tawhid values and explained their interpretations to the class. During the presentations, the lecturer asked students to clarify the relationship between the cultural sign, the practice represented by the sign, and the religious meaning they attributed to it. This interaction provided observable evidence that students were engaging in an interpretive process in which linguistic comprehension, cultural knowledge, and religious understanding were connected.

Taken together, the findings indicate that the use of *Peurateup Aneuk* in *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* learning functioned at two interconnected levels. At the textual level, the Peircean analysis revealed cultural signs that contain meanings related to tawhid values. At the pedagogical level, classroom observations, lecturer interviews, and student responses demonstrated how these meanings were introduced, discussed, and interpreted during the learning process. Therefore, the contribution of the material to tawhid-oriented learning should not be understood solely from the formulation of learning objectives but from the observable process through which students interpreted cultural signs and connected them with specific Islamic theological concepts. The detailed sequence of these learning activities is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Classroom Observation Results of *Peurateup Aneuk* Integration in *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* Instruction

Learning Stage	Lecturer's Activities	Students' Responses	Main Findings
Reading the text	Guided students to read the <i>Peurateup Aneuk</i> text	Students read independently	Students understood the general content of the text
Vocabulary discussion	Explained unfamiliar Arabic vocabulary	Students identified new vocabulary	Vocabulary understanding supported text comprehension
Symbol identification	Asked students to identify symbols related to <i>tawhid</i>	Students identified ritual elements and their meanings	Students recognized religious values embedded in the tradition
Group discussion	Facilitated interpretation and presentation	Students discussed and presented interpretations	Students actively constructed meaning collaboratively

Table 1 details the four instructional stages: guided reading, vocabulary discussion, symbol identification, and group discussion. Through this progression, students systematically developed reading comprehension while internalizing embedded tawhid values.

3.2 Discussion

Peircean Semiotics in Mahārah al-Qirā'ah: Peurateup Aneuk as a Medium for Tawhid Internalization

The semiotic analysis of the *Peurateup Aneuk* text focuses on the relationship between the representamen, object, and interpretant to reveal how cultural signs convey *tawhid* values within *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* learning. In Peircean semiotics, meaning is produced through a triadic relationship among the sign or representamen, its object, and the interpretant generated through the process of interpretation (Firmansyah, 2022; Hojatizadeh, 2024). This framework has been widely applied to analyze how linguistic, visual, and cultural signs acquire meaning within particular social contexts (Islamiati et al., 2023; Sapwan et al., 2022). Several textual expressions were therefore selected based on their prominence in representing the religious and cultural meanings identified

during the learning process. The semiotic interpretation of these expressions is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Peircean Interpretation of Religious Signs in the *Peurateup Aneuk* Text

Textual Sign	Representamen	Interpretant	Tawhid Meaning
<i>Lailahaillallah</i>	Verbal expression of <i>kalimat tayyibah</i>	Recognition of Allah as the only God	<i>Tawhid al-ulūhiyyah</i>
<i>Muhammadurrasulullah</i>	Verbal declaration	Recognition of the Prophet as Allah's messenger	Faith in Allah and His Messenger
<i>Kalimat tayyibah keu ubat hate</i>	<i>Kalimat tayyibah</i> described as “medicine for the heart”	Faith as a source of spiritual strength	Strengthening faith
<i>Allah ta ingat dalam hate</i>	Expression of remembering Allah	Faith as an internal consciousness of God	<i>Dhikr</i> and awareness of Allah
<i>Ahudep ngon cahaya nabi</i>	“Light of the Prophet”	The Prophet as a source of religious guidance	Following prophetic guidance

The integration of *Peurateup Aneuk* into *Mahārah al-Qirā’ah* expands reading beyond literal comprehension toward interpretive meaning-making. As shown in Table 2, students were not only involved in decoding Arabic vocabulary and sentence structures but were also encouraged to interpret cultural and religious meanings represented through the text. From a Peircean perspective, this process can be understood as semiosis, namely the process through which a sign generates meaning through its relationship with an object and an interpretant (Khotimah & Sofa, 2025; Nayogi et al., 2025). Similar applications of Peircean semiotics to literary texts demonstrate that textual expressions can function as signs whose meanings extend beyond their literal linguistic forms and depend on the reader's interpretive process (Derakhshan, 2024). Thus, the *Peurateup Aneuk* text functions not merely as linguistic input but also as a semiotic resource through which students construct meanings related to Acehese cultural identity and *tawhid* values (Hayati et al., 2025).

Three prominent dimensions of *Peurateup Aneuk* became significant in the students' interpretation: (1) the *Peudodaidi* practice as a representation of early Islamic education, (2) affectionate parental touch as a symbol of moral and spiritual responsibility, and (3) prayer, poetry, and *tilawah* as expressions of religious orientation and recognition of God. These dimensions demonstrate that the meaning of the tradition is not limited to its observable cultural practices but is constructed through the relationship between the signs, their cultural referents, and the interpretations developed by the students (Munawwarah et al., 2025; Veryawan et al., 2025; Wulandari, 2023).

The Peudodaidi Practice as a Representation of Early Islamic Education

The *Peudodaidi* practice represented in the *Peurateup Aneuk* material is not merely presented as a means of soothing or putting a child to sleep. Within the students' interpretation, the practice represents an early form of family-based education in which affection, faith, and moral guidance are introduced from childhood. In Peircean terms, the representation of the cradle and the activity of rocking the child constitute signs that direct the reader toward the broader object of Islamic child-

rearing. The resulting interpretant associates the practice with the responsibility of parents to introduce religious values and moral conduct from an early age (Amalia & Sirait, 2025).

This interpretation demonstrates that a culturally familiar practice can become a starting point for understanding abstract religious concepts. The students' interpretation of *Peudodaidi* connected the physical practice of caring for a child with broader ideas concerning belief in Allah, following the Prophet Muhammad, respecting parents, and developing good character. The meaning was therefore generated through the interaction between the cultural sign presented in the text and the students' prior cultural and religious knowledge (Wulandari, 2023).

This finding is consistent with previous Peircean analyses of literary and cultural texts, which demonstrate that a cultural object can function as a sign whose meaning extends beyond its observable form (Livytska, 2020). In the present study, however, the significance of the sign extends into the pedagogical context because students do not merely identify its cultural meaning but also relate it to the principles of Islamic education. This process is consistent with Al-Attas (1991) emphasis on *adab* as an essential dimension of Islamic education, in which religious consciousness, respect for parents, and proper conduct constitute integral elements of human development.

Affectionate Touch as a Symbol of Moral and Spiritual Education

The affectionate gestures represented in *Peurateup Aneuk* were interpreted by the students not merely as expressions of parental affection but also as representations of parental responsibility in the moral and spiritual development of children. The physical expression of affection becomes a sign that directs interpretation toward the educational responsibility of parents to introduce faith, morality, and good character within the family.

Within Peircean semiotics, the meaning of such a sign emerges through its relation to the object it represents and the interpretant produced by the reader. Previous studies applying Peircean analysis to cultural and religious phenomena demonstrate that observable practices can contain meanings that are not immediately apparent at the literal level but become accessible through interpretation (Haase, 2022). In the present study, students interpreted parental affection as an expression of *amanah* in Islamic education. They associated it with the obligation to respect and honor parents as the first educators of the child (Salamah et al., 2024).

This interpretation also corresponds with Lickona's (1992) view that moral values are developed through interpersonal relationships, modeling, and affective interaction. Consequently, *Peurateup Aneuk* presents *tawhid* not as an isolated theological concept but as a value that is connected to moral conduct and interpersonal relationships. Faith is therefore represented as having implications for how individuals relate to parents and other members of society (Rozinah et al., 2024).

Prayer, Poetry, and Tilawah as Signs of Religious Orientation

The prayers, hopes, and poetic expressions contained in *Peurateup Aneuk* represent a form of family aspiration oriented toward the religious and social development of the child. The hope that a child will grow into a pious, respectful, and socially beneficial person is not merely an emotional expression but also functions as a culturally transmitted educational message (Hamidah & Abdullah, 2025).

The use of poetic and symbolic expressions is particularly relevant to Peircean analysis because literary language frequently conveys meaning beyond direct reference. Previous studies applying Peircean semiotics to poetry and literary texts demonstrate that linguistic expressions can operate as signs whose meanings develop through the interaction between textual representation and interpretation. In the *Peurateup Aneuk* material, expressions related to Allah, the Prophet, prayer, and spiritual guidance provide students with textual signs through which religious concepts become accessible within a familiar cultural context (Grabus, 2024; Munira & Musfirah, 2023).

In the *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* classroom, students therefore did not merely learn vocabulary and Arabic sentence structures. They also interpreted the religious orientation embedded within the text. The reading activity became an opportunity to recognize how prayer, poetry, and *tilāwah* function as expressions of submission to Allah and aspirations for religious character. In this sense, the *Peurateup Aneuk* material functions as a form of religious socialization within Arabic reading instruction, connecting language learning with cultural identity and religious meaning (Nayogi et al., 2025; Salsabila, 2025).

From Linguistic Representation to Cultural and Religious Interpretation

The semiotic interpretation described in the previous section can be further understood through the stages of reading experienced by students during the *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* learning process. At the initial stage, the *Peurateup Aneuk* text functions as a representamen, namely the perceptible form through which students encounter the cultural tradition. In Peircean theory, the representamen constitutes the form through which an object becomes accessible to interpretation (Ghufron et al., 2025). In the classroom, students first interacted with the Arabic representation of the tradition through reading activities, including vocabulary identification, sentence comprehension, and recognition of the general meaning of the text.

At this stage, reading was not limited to mechanically translating individual words. Instead, students gradually recognized how linguistic forms convey meanings embedded within a particular cultural context. This finding is consistent with previous studies applying Peircean semiotics to literary texts, which demonstrate that linguistic expressions may function as signs whose meanings are constructed through their relationships with cultural objects and interpretive responses. The textual representation of *Peurateup Aneuk* therefore became the initial point of interaction between the reader and the cultural phenomenon represented in the teaching material (Pratiwi et al., 2026).

The second stage involved connecting the signs encountered in the text with the cultural practices and religious concepts to which they referred. Classroom observations and student interviews indicated that students associated descriptions of *Peurateup Aneuk* with their prior knowledge of Acehnese cultural practices and Islamic teachings. Because the tradition was familiar to many students, they were able to use their existing cultural knowledge as an interpretive resource. This process enabled students to move from literal comprehension toward a more contextual understanding of the cultural and religious meanings represented in the text (Devy & Purwowidodo, 2024; Riana et al., 2023; Syuhadak et al., 2025).

Within Peircean semiotics, the relationship between signs and their objects can be examined through the categories of icon, index, and symbol. Previous studies have demonstrated the

applicability of these categories in identifying different forms of meaning embedded in cultural, literary, and visual signs (Aryani & Yuwita, 2023). An iconic relationship is established when a sign conveys meaning through a perceived resemblance to its object, whereas an indexical relationship emerges through a contextual or existential connection. A symbolic relationship, meanwhile, depends on socially and culturally established conventions (Firmansyah, 2022).

In the *Peurateup Aneuk* material, symbolic signs are particularly prominent in expressions associated with Islamic belief, such as “Lailahaillallah” and “muhammadurrasulullah.” Their meanings depend on established Islamic linguistic and theological conventions. Other expressions, such as “kalimat tayyibah keu ubat hate,” employ figurative language in which the *kalimat tayyibah* is represented as “medicine for the heart.” Such expressions enable students to understand an abstract spiritual concept through a more concrete and familiar representation. The different semiotic relations within the text therefore provide multiple pathways through which students construct meaning (Jabar & Mansor, 2021).

The interpretive process was also influenced by students' prior cultural and religious knowledge. Interview findings showed that students perceived the text as close to their everyday cultural environment because it represented a tradition that they had encountered within Acehese society. This familiarity allowed them to connect textual information with personal experiences and previously acquired knowledge of Islamic values. The meaning of the text consequently emerged not exclusively from the linguistic signs themselves but from the interaction between textual information, cultural references, and the reader's background knowledge (Waheed et al., 2026).

The classroom discussions further demonstrated this interpretive process. After reading and understanding the text, students were encouraged to identify elements of *Peurateup Aneuk* associated with *tawhid* values and explain their interpretations. The process moved students beyond identifying what the text explicitly stated toward considering what particular cultural practices and religious expressions meant within an Islamic worldview. Consequently, interpretation emerged through an interaction among the textual sign, the cultural object represented by the sign, and the students as interpreters (Khotimah & Sofa, 2025).

This process is particularly relevant to the concept of internalization. The findings do not indicate that *tawhid* values were transferred directly from the teaching material to students. Rather, the material created an interpretive space in which students could connect linguistic signs with cultural experience and Islamic concepts. Internalization can therefore be understood as a gradual meaning-making process in which students recognize, interpret, and reflect upon religious values through culturally familiar textual representations. In this context, *Peurateup Aneuk* provides a contextual resource for developing Arabic reading competence while simultaneously creating opportunities for students to reflect on the relationship between cultural practices and belief in Allah.

Dynamics of the Interpretant: Escalation of Reading Cognitive Levels

The findings indicate that students' engagement with the *Peurateup Aneuk* text developed through several levels of meaning-making. The reading process did not remain at the level of identifying vocabulary and understanding explicit information. However, it gradually moved toward interpreting cultural and religious meanings and reflecting on their relevance to students' lives. Such

development is consistent with the view that semiotic interpretation involves an ongoing process of constructing meaning rather than simply identifying a fixed meaning within a text (Nurhuda, 2023). In Peircean terms, the interpretant may therefore be understood as developing through the reader's engagement with signs and their referential and cultural contexts (Narvaez et al., 2019).

In the present study, this development is categorized into three interconnected levels: literal comprehension, interpretive comprehension, and critical-reflective meaning-making, as summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Dynamics of Students' Interpretation in *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah*

Reading Level	Learning Process	Interpretive Activity	Resulting Understanding
Literal comprehension	Students read the text, identify vocabulary, and understand explicit information.	Recognizing linguistic signs and textual information	Understanding the basic content of <i>Peurateup Aneuk</i>
Interpretive comprehension	Students connect textual expressions with Acehnese cultural practices and Islamic concepts.	Constructing meaning through cultural and religious references	Understanding the symbolic and religious meanings of the tradition
Critical-reflective meaning-making	Students discuss the relevance of <i>tawhid</i> values to attitudes and everyday life.	Reflecting on and extending the meanings generated from the text	Developing awareness of the relevance of <i>tawhid</i> values in personal and social life

As outlined in Table 3, the students' interpretive progression spans three distinct stages. At the first level, students engaged in literal comprehension by identifying vocabulary, reading the text, and understanding the explicit information presented in the *Peurateup Aneuk* material. This stage constituted the initial encounter between students and textual signs. Students needed to recognize the linguistic forms before they could interpret the cultural and religious meanings represented by those forms. The observation findings showed that vocabulary exploration and initial text comprehension were important stages in enabling students to access the broader meanings of the reading material.

However, the reading process did not stop at literal comprehension. At the second level, students began to connect textual expressions with their existing knowledge of Acehnese culture and Islamic teachings. Expressions such as “Lailahailallah,” “Muhammadurrasulullah,” and “Allah ta ingat dalam hate” were not interpreted merely according to their lexical meanings. Students related these expressions to concepts of faith, remembrance of Allah, and religious guidance. Similarly, the representation of *Peudodaidi* was interpreted in relation to parental care, early religious education,

and the transmission of moral values. This process demonstrates how the meaning of a textual sign can expand through the reader's interpretive engagement with cultural and religious knowledge, as also demonstrated in previous Peircean analyses of literary texts (Islamiati et al., 2023; Sapwan et al., 2022).

This interpretive development is also consistent with the Construction–Integration Model of reading comprehension, which conceptualizes comprehension as a process in which information from the text interacts with the reader's existing knowledge to construct a coherent mental representation. In the present study, students' familiarity with Acehese cultural practices provided relevant background knowledge that supported their interpretation of the Arabic text. The *Peurateup Aneuk* material therefore reduced the distance between the linguistic content of the Arabic text and the students' experiential knowledge. Cultural familiarity functioned as a cognitive resource that helped students construct meaning from the text (Anugrah, 2025).

The third level involved critical-reflective meaning-making. At this stage, students were encouraged not only to identify religious meanings but also to consider their relevance to personal attitudes and social relationships. Classroom discussions provided opportunities for students to articulate how the values represented in *Peurateup Aneuk* could be related to respect for parents, religious guidance, remembrance of Allah, and the cultivation of good character. The meaning of the signs consequently extended beyond the immediate textual context. Students began to consider the implications of the values represented in the tradition for their own lives (Unstad & Fjørtoft, 2021).

From a Peircean perspective, this progression illustrates the dynamic character of the interpretant. A sign encountered at the textual level generates an initial interpretation, which can subsequently develop as the reader relates the sign to broader cultural, religious, and experiential knowledge. The resulting interpretation may then become the basis for further reflection and meaning-making. Thus, the interpretant in this study should not be understood as a single final meaning but as a developing process through which students progressively deepen their understanding of the text. This understanding is particularly relevant to studies of literary and cultural texts, where meaning emerges through the interaction between textual signs and interpretive activity (Komariah & Nihayah, 2023).

The progression from literal to interpretive and critical-reflective comprehension demonstrates that the use of local cultural content can support multilayered reading. At the literal level, students develop linguistic comprehension; at the interpretive level, they construct cultural and religious meanings; and at the critical-reflective level, they consider the significance of those meanings beyond the text itself. These levels should not be understood as rigid or mutually exclusive stages, but rather as interconnected dimensions of the reading process (Porto, 2024; Turakulova et al., 2025).

The findings further suggest that *tawhid* internalization in this learning context is better understood as a process of meaning-making rather than as direct transmission of religious information. The text provides signs that introduce religious concepts, while students' prior cultural and religious knowledge enables them to interpret those signs. Classroom interaction then provides an opportunity for students to articulate and reflect upon the meanings they construct. Through this

process, *tawhid* values become connected to familiar cultural practices and everyday experiences rather than remaining abstract theological concepts (Ernawati et al., 2026).

Therefore, the contribution of *Peurateup Aneuk* to *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* lies not only in providing culturally relevant reading content but also in facilitating a progression from linguistic comprehension toward cultural interpretation and religious reflection. The semiotic perspective reveals how meaning develops through the interaction between textual signs, cultural objects, and student interpretation, while the Construction–Integration perspective helps explain how students' prior knowledge contributes to this process. The combination of these perspectives demonstrates that local wisdom can function as a meaningful contextual resource for Arabic reading instruction and for creating opportunities to engage students with *tawhid* values through the process of reading (Nuha et al., 2026; Syarofit et al., 2025).

4. CONCLUSION

The findings demonstrate that students were able to integrate Arabic reading competence with the interpretation of *tawhid* values through the *Peurateup Aneuk* text. Students not only demonstrated the ability to read, identify vocabulary, and comprehend the content of the Arabic text, but also showed the ability to relate cultural symbols and practices presented in the text to Islamic beliefs and *tawhid* values. Classroom observations and interviews indicate that students progressed from understanding the linguistic meaning of the text to interpreting its cultural and religious significance. This integration indicates a high level of learning achievement, as students were able to use their Arabic reading skills to understand and critically interpret the *tawhid* values embedded in a familiar Acehnese cultural context. Thus, the use of *Peurateup Aneuk* as contextual reading material effectively supported the development of Arabic reading competence while strengthening students' understanding of *tawhid* values.

From the perspective of Peircean semiotics, the study reveals that the internalization of *tawhid* values occurs through a dynamic relationship among the representamen, object, and interpretant. Linguistic expressions and cultural practices represented in the *Peurateup Aneuk* text serve as signs through which students construct meanings related to the oneness of Allah, recognition of the Prophet, remembrance of Allah, parental responsibility, and religious character. The interpretive process develops progressively from literal comprehension of linguistic forms to cultural and religious interpretation and, subsequently, to critical-reflective consideration of the relevance of these values to students' personal and social lives. The Construction–Integration Model further helps explain this process by showing how students' prior cultural and religious knowledge interacts with textual information in constructing coherent meaning. Thus, the principal contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that local wisdom can function simultaneously as a cultural, semiotic, and cognitive resource in *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* learning, positioning Arabic reading not only as a linguistic activity but also as a space for cultural literacy and religious reflection.

The study nevertheless has contextual limitations, as the findings were derived from one *Mahārah al-Qirā'ah* course involving third-semester students at UIN Sultanah Nahrasiyah Lhokseumawe. The findings should therefore be interpreted as an in-depth account of meaning-

making within a particular cultural and instructional context rather than as evidence of generalizable causal effects. Future research could examine the use of Peurateup Aneuk and other local wisdom traditions in Arabic reading instruction across different educational levels, institutions, and cultural settings. Further studies may also develop and empirically evaluate structured Arabic reading materials based on local wisdom using mixed-method or longitudinal designs to investigate their contribution to reading comprehension, cultural literacy, and religious value formation. Such research would extend the present study by testing whether the semiotic and culturally contextualized approach identified here can be applied more broadly in Arabic language education.

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The author used Scopus AI to assist in identifying and exploring relevant scholarly references and OpenAI ChatGPT (GPT-5.6 Luna) for language editing, academic writing refinement, and improving manuscript clarity and organization. All references and AI-assisted outputs were reviewed and verified by the author. The author takes full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the manuscript.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
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Mia Nurmala	✓			✓				✓		✓		✓	✓	
J Nurhawani					✓	✓	✓							✓
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Salsabila Zahra			✓						✓	✓	✓			

C : Conceptualization
M : Methodology
So : Software
Va: Validation
Fo: Formal analysis

I : Investigation
R : Resources
D : Data Curation
O : Writing - Original Draft
E : Writing - Review & Editing

Vi : Visualization
Su: Supervision
P : Project administration
Fu: Funding acquisition

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors state no conflict of interest.

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