

THE PORTRAYALS OF SYMBOLS CHARACTERIZING MALAYSIAN CULTURAL VALUES IN THE LOCAL CHILDREN ANIMATED TELEVISION SERIES

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ABSTRACT

The portrayal of local content in television programmes plays an essential role in promoting local culture and inculcating cultural values to the viewers. The primary goal of this study was to explore the Malaysian cultural content and values portrayed in the local children's animated television series. A qualitative content analysis was conducted on 20 locally produced children's animated series to identify the portrayal of Malaysian cultural values. NVivo 10 qualitative software was employed to analyse the content of 118 episodes from the selected series with the use of non-probability sampling because data were limited and based on the researcher's judgement in ensuring the representativeness and appropriateness of data to suit the research objectives. Using symbol as the main variable of this study, five themes were extracted from the content analysis, namely (i) agriculture activities; (ii) traditional garments and accessories; (iii) cuisine; (iv) architecture; and (v) apparatus. The findings indicated that the portrayals of local symbols were present in the scenes of the analysed animated television series, especially in the local-themed series such as "Upin dan Ipin", "Bola Kampung Extreme", "BoBoiBoy", and "The Amazing Awang Khenit". The findings shows that the Malaysian cultural values were portrayed in the local animated television series, and the Malay culture was more profoundly portrayed in three of the five themes, representing the dominant ethnic group in Malaysia. There were also portrayals of various cultural symbols from different ethnicities in the children animated television programmes, demonstrating an ongoing effort to maintain the harmonious aspect in the society. In conclusion, Malaysian cultural values and symbols were represented in the animated series. However, not many of the series had high rating viewership, leading to the question of whether home-grown production is creative enough to attract children's attention and to create loyal viewership. Even though the values embedded in the animated series were present, this situation was undermined by low viewership which might not be significant enough to bring about lessons on cultural values among young children. Future studies should engage audience study to illuminate the relationship between exposure to local animated television series and the cultivation of cultural values among children viewers.

Key words: Cartoon, Children, Content analysis, Cultural values, Malaysian animated television series.

INTRODUCTION

Television plays the role of an agent that cultivates the culture regarding the values, beliefs, and norms of an individual, a society, or a country (Gerbner et al., 2002; Gladkova, 2013). However, the domination of foreign media on television facilitates the process of globalisation by displaying translocal culture portrayals and enabling them to penetrate other societies. The foreign television programs, especially from the Western countries, are strongly influenced by the popular culture with a strong trend towards commercialising Western cultures and individualistic values (Fadly, 2012; Maity, 2013) This is a concerning issue as children as frequent viewers, begin learning about the social world from television several years before the beginning of their formal education. The increasing number of foreign programs and contents could potentially transmit negative effects towards the local culture. Many people are concerned that the frequent, heavy broadcasting of foreign dramas, animations, and films on local television channels would gradually undermine the local cultures and values ("Di sebalik kebanjiran program luar", 2008). The foreign influence through the media could be accessed easily by the viewers, and inevitably, foreign cultures or translocal cultures may supersede local cultures in almost every aspect. It is vital to expose the children to the importance of appreciating and being devoted to the preservation of cultural heritage and cultural values. Khoo Kay Kim, a Malaysian historian and academician, believed that the society should be inculcated with good social manners during their early years for them to embrace such values as they grow older (Amirul, 2011). A Malay saying, "melentur buluh biar dari rebung", which translated as "bend a willow while it is young" connotes nurturing the Malaysian generation to appreciate the diverse cultural values of the country's multicultural communities should start from a young age.

Children are attracted to watch animated-typed television programme compared to other types of format on the television (Forge & Phemister, 1987; Gerbner, 1972; Zain & Salleh, 1987). Malaysia sets out to excel in the digital content industry, and its government facilitates the growth of local animated television series by supplying resources and funds to the local creative industries (Nizam, 2012). At present, the Malaysian animation industry has proven that local creative industry developers can produce good quality local animated television series ("Bangga pencapaian animasi kita," 2012). Despite their success in being broadcasted internationally, the devotion of current Malaysian children's animated television series towards the idea of instilling cultural values and national identity among the viewers is still questioned. Few parties are also concerned about whether the characters and stories in the locally produced animated television series represent the way of life and cultural values of Malaysians. Hassan Abd Muthalib, a Malaysian animation pioneer, mentioned his concern in his interview with and also mentioned that on the development of the story development, scriptwriting and visual development is important to deliver more impact to the animation than production design (Ismail, 2017). Therefore, awareness on the content of the animated television

program is vital to ensure that the portrayals can be an ideal medium to educate children about their cultural heritage and to teach them to values and embrace their cultural heritage.

Hence, one feasible way to identify if Malaysian culture is represented in television programmes is through examining the animated television programme content. The portrayals in the form of signs and symbols in the animation are reflections of people's lifestyle that can contribute to the establishments of national identity. The importance of these portrayals in animation may have an indirect impact on the behaviour of the viewers. This paper aims at exploring the portrayals of the culture that symbolised the Malaysian cultural values in television programmes with the focus on the content of locally produced television animation series. Generally, it may be assumed that locally produced animated series do portray Malaysian culture in its content. Studies were mostly on popular animated series such as "*Upin dan Ipin*" and "*Kampung Boy*". In this regard, not many studies have examined the content of other new local children's animated series that were approved to and aired on local television channels for Malaysian viewers. This study analyses locally produced animated television series aired on the local broadcast to identify the cultural values that were portrayed in its content.

REPRESENTATION OF MALAYSIAN CULTURE IN TELEVISION

The Malaysian population consists of various races, religions, customs, and cultures. The term "culture" refers to an integrated and shared pattern of human behaviours that include thought, speech, action, and artefacts. Culture carries the identity of one country, making a nation unique compared to another. It represents the country's race, ethnic, and people, therefore, preserving culture is an important matter within a nation. Extensive studies had been done to preserve culture, and one commonly used measures are through the creative industry (Hani, Azzadina, Sianipar, Setyagung, & Ishii, 2012). The survival of culture depends on the capacity of its members to learn and transmit knowledge to succeeding generations so that they know how they are expected to behave (Asma, 1996). Meanwhile, the term "value" is defined as the central element of a culture that serves as a guideline to proper daily behavioural conduct (Asma, 1996).

Parents often play a role in the teachings of cultural values and maintaining the cultural traditions with children with the use various means, including the media. Hence, it is possible to leverage the media to educate viewers on cultural values by promoting repetitiously in the content of the television programmes. Accordingly, many efforts had been made aligned with this concept, and the animated television series is one of the ideal media options. "*Kampung Boy*" is one of the examples of early animated television series that best portrays the Malaysian culture and traditions (Hassan, 2007). Other newer examples are "*Upin dan Ipin*", "*Boboiboy*", and "*Bola Kampung*". These local animated television series are known to represent Malaysian environment, language, and social values.

Local animations produced with Malaysian cultural content have been proven to be accepted and acknowledged internationally. This achievement shows that Malaysian cultural productions could also be promoted internationally like how Japan successfully promoted its culture through animation, indirectly embedding the interest among viewers to learn about the country and its culture (Nizam, 2012). Mahamood (2001) also stressed the importance of having local culture elements in Malaysian animation. By repeating the exposure of the same or similar cultural portrayals, the media is expected to facilitate the transmission of cultural heritage to the future generation, and to influence viewers in preserving the culture and fundamental values of the Malaysian society.

CULTURAL VALUES REPRESENTATION IN LOCAL ANIMATED SERIES

An unlimited number of elements makes up culture which is defined by Hofstede (2001) as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another. Hofstede (1984) advocated that values form the core of culture. Nevertheless, the values are also a way in which these values are interpreted and brought into conscious awareness through social practice (Hofstede, 2001). In general, Wan Norhasniah and Mohd Ridhuan Tee (2012) described the concept of value as the belief that affects individuals or social institutions such as family or school, acting as the core values adopted by society.

Hall and Hall (1990) divided culture into two separate components, namely material culture and nonmaterial culture. Material culture is physical in the sense that it can be seen and touched. Conversely, nonmaterial culture refers to creations and abstract ideas that are not embodied in physical objects. Material culture comprises all the things that human beings make, create, and attach meaning to. It refers to all the tangible objects such as cities, architecture, transportation system, communication system, weapons, tools, clothing, food, and technology (Tischler, 2013).

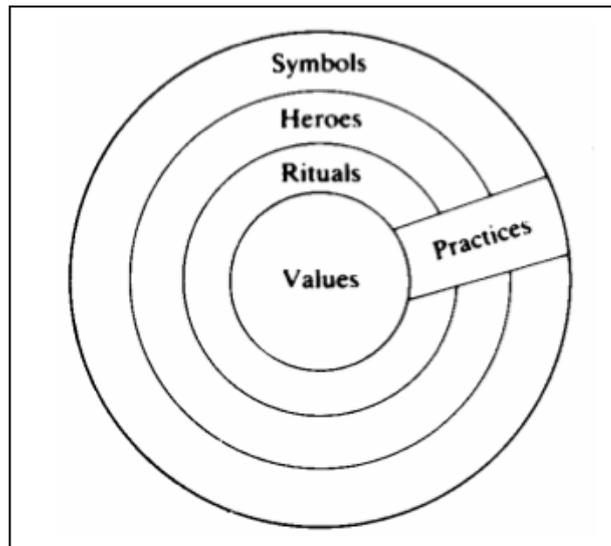


Figure 1. Elements of Culture
Source: Hofstede (2001)

Figure 1 shows the elements of culture that were developed by Hofstede (2005) where the aspects of culture visualised as layers of an “onion”, around a core that consists of values. The internal layer represents values, whereas the external layers reflect external practices. The outermost layer, symbols, is composed of the artefacts, products, and patterns of behaviour such as word gestures, pictures, or objects with a special meaning only recognised by the members of the culture concerned. The following layer encompasses the heroes who may be real, inspiring persons, or those imagined to act as social role models.

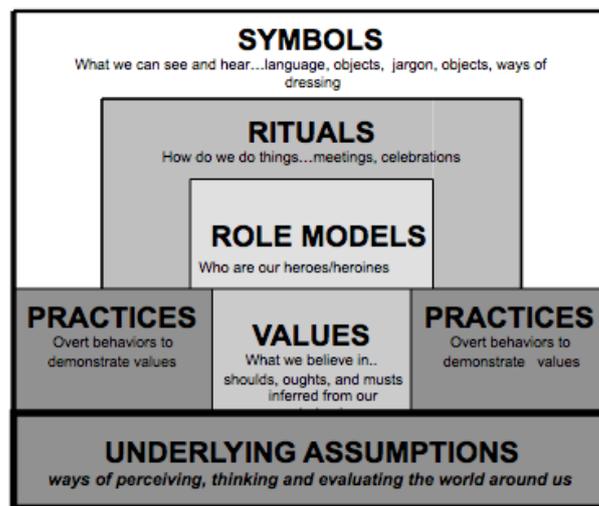


Figure 3. Key Elements of Culture
Source: Asma (1992)

Similarly, Asma (1996) elaborated that the embodiment of conscious parts which are the symbols, rituals, and heroic elements are the visible and identifiable objects and artefacts such as buildings, logo, language and vocabulary used, ways of addressing, and beliefs about the use and distribution of power and privileges. In order to illustrate, the use of symbols characterising cultural values may help viewers to understand these external practices easily: wearing *songkok*, a black headgear usually worn by Malay men, during a special event like formal event (symbols); greeting and kissing the hand of the elderly (rituals); or admiring P. Ramlee as a legendary filmmaker (heroes). Despite their visibility, the cultural meanings in the symbols are invisible to an outside observer and are reflected only in the ways that can be interpreted by insiders. The symbols characterising cultural values extracted from the five themes were agriculture activities; traditional garments and accessories; cuisine; architecture; and apparatus. These symbols create an identification of the Malaysian culture and influence the viewers to appreciate their culture.

Animation can be assumed as part of a broader cultural industry through various complex sets of signs and symbols. The success of animated films in the 1990s and the early adaptation of digital technology to produce animation started to drive the interest of creative producers towards animated television series. With the development of better technology during the 2000s, the creative industry began to produce computer-generated animations. Local animation moved from *Usop Sontorian*; a cell animation produced animated series to with settings of a rural Malaysian kampung and representation of characters from various ethnicity,

to a more advanced computer animated animation like the creation of the animated series like *Upin dan Ipin* and *Boboiboy*. *Upin dan Ipin* incorporating elements of culture in its episodes, and *Boboiboy* is a superhero-themed animation which emphasises the importance of unity and friendship in their content. Producing a child as the main character instead of an adult was a vital step for the local industry as research had shown that children are more likely to imitate peer rather than adult models. By repeating the exposure of the same or similar sign and symbols of culture, and the use of child characters, the media is expected to facilitate the transmission of cultural heritage to the future generation, and to influence young viewers in preserving the culture and fundamental values of the Malaysian society.

Notably, promoting Malaysian culture were mainly part of the objectives in most of the local animated series (Burhabuddin, Ainon, & Usamah, 2007; Nizam, Anas, Jean, & Dzubir, 2012). "*Kampung Boy*" is one of the examples of early animated television series that best portrays the Malaysian culture and traditions (Hassan, 2007). Other newer examples are "*Upin dan Ipin*", "*Boboiboy*", and "*Bola Kampung*". The animated television series present children characters in the events of everyday life in the village (*kampung*). These local animated television series are known to represent Malaysian environment, language, and social values (Burhabuddin, Ainon, & Usamah, 2007; Nizam, Anas, Jean, & Dzubir, 2012).

Many other new animated television series bloomed in the present years with the creation of *The Amazing Awang Khenit*, *Rimba Racer*, *Agen Ali* and *Didi and Friends*. Some animated series have been successfully broadcasted and accepted globally, and have gained respect and popularity for promoting Malaysian values. The success of *Upin dan Ipin* animated TV series in Indonesia and *Boboiboy* in Japan is prominent evidence that there will be an increasing demand for good quality local animated production. Apart from promoting Malaysian animated television series and films, this achievement also forges Malaysian identity in the eyes of the world. Broadcasters and distributors are now more open to providing funding to companies with promising animation IPs as local creative content industry raked in revenue and the increased export of local animation sector (Chong, 2018).

Muliyadi (2001) have stressed out on the importance of having local culture elements in Malaysian animation. It is essential to create a representation of culture in which could help the understanding about other cultures and nations that are often mediated from what the viewers receive through visual information (Mitra, 1999). As Hassan (2000) have mentioned, animation production must be viewed as a business that promotes local stories to the local audience. The local society shall become the consumer of local culture. Many episodes in the local television animation series were set in a background setting to describe Malaysia's culture and the different races in Malaysia and "*Upin dan Ipin*" is one of the examples of a good presentation of cultural content and values of life for the local audiences. Several media productions in Malaysia have successfully portrayed and promote Malaysian culture for example "*Kampung Boy*", "*Upin dan Ipin*", "*Boboiboy*", and "*Bola Kampung*". However, some customers in the creative sector look for a blend of modern and traditional cultures, particularly the younger generation (Allenby, 2006) which raises the concern of the current content of newer animated television series aired in Malaysia.

METHODOLOGY

Non-Probability sampling was used, as data were limited. A number 118 episodes from 20 children's animated television series broadcasted on the four Malaysian free-to-air channels (TV1, TV2, TV3 and TV9) were selected. The television programmes were recorded from 7.00 am to 7.00 pm, recording video of animated television programs from Monday to Sunday from January 2012 to December 2014 with the range of 10 to 20 minutes each episode. Content analysis was used to examine cultural symbol references. All recorded footage as collections of data were analysed and transcribed. They were viewed and coded with Nvivo using the thematic coding. The thematic criterion method was applied for the segmentation in this study. The method includes coding the presence of audio-visual of Malaysian cultural symbols portrayed in the scenes of the episodes. In other words, each episode contained multiple scenes, and each scene consisted of the units of codings. The transcription was done based on content portrayals, characters' behaviours, and cultural values portrayed visually or verbally in the scenes of each episode of the animated television series.

Visual portrayals were transcribed according to the length of time they were visible to the viewer and how frequent they were portrayed. For this study, as shown in Table 1, 20 animation titles were chosen as samples and the episodes were recorded during the airing hours on local broadcast television. The animated series was locally produced and was initially intended for the local viewers. In ensuring the representativeness and appropriateness of the data to suit the objectives of the study, the large numbers of episodes of certain animated television series compared to other series were lessen to a number of episodes with a total of approximately 210 minutes per animation titles.

Table 1: List of Malaysian animation titles, number of episodes and duration

Titles	Number of Episodes	Duration of time (minutes)
1. Arnab dan Kura-Kura	4	114.59
2. Boboiboy	7	140.96
3. Bola Kampung Extreme	7	175.73
4. Cingkus Blues	14	141.21
5. Doplo Doplo	7	174.94
6. Dunia Eicak	7	164.61
7. Jaguh Silat	5	117.24
8. Kancil	5	138.07
9. Mac & Ted	5	115.96
10. Nadim	5	118
11. Ninja Cat, Ichi Ni San!	10	196.88
12. Paksi Adiwira	3	74.76
13. Planet of the Reban	2	53.34
14. Planet Saga	5	128.03
15. Puteri	6	41.81
16. Raihan Rangers	5	128.7
17. Supertots	2	40.52
18. The Amazing Awang Khenit	5	85.86
19. Ummi... Ceritalah Pada Kami	4	104.21
20. Upin dan Ipin	10	202.79

Cultural contents conveyed in the formation of material and nonmaterial cultures covers a wide range of tangible objects such as agriculture activities, traditional garments and accessories. Particularly for this study, the elements of culture categorised as symbols were identified. Examples of the objects are clothing, food, pictures, styles, plants, environment, and words that are recognised by one's culture, while the examples of the visible artefact are places of worship and buildings (Asma, 1996). Additionally, Omar and Ishak (2014) and Chioma (2013) also identified few categories of symbols in culture in their content analysis research. Based on their study, a total of five categories were adapted to form the categories to define cultural symbols. These categories can be seen in Table 2. The categories that describe the symbols are agriculture activities; traditional garments and accessories; cuisine; architecture; and apparatus. These categories are the material cultures that are portrayed and represented in the forms of pictures and equivalent in the animation.

Table 2: Coding sheet of cultural symbol categories

Category	Coding Definition	Coding Rule and Examples
Agriculture activities	The science, art, or occupation concerned with cultivating land, raising crops, and feeding, breeding, and raising livestock. Plants or flowers that are shown or highlighted.	Portrayals of plants or flowers that are known as an identity of Malaysia or available mainly in Malaysia. Agriculture and agricultural activities practised by Malaysians. Examples: Bunga raya, Pokok kelapa, <i>Bunga Rafflesia</i> , Paddy field, Cow rearing, Chicken rearing
Traditional garments and accessories	Any form of attire worn on any part of the body, which was visible in the animation. May also include the values of clothing in Malaysia.	The attires must show clear, unique origins of Malays, Chinese, Indians, or aborigines, and/or demonstrate the values of clothing. Examples: <i>Baju Melayu</i> (Kamal, 2005; Siti Zainon, 2007), <i>Baju kurung</i> , <i>Sam foo</i> , <i>Cheongsam</i> , <i>Dhoti</i> , <i>Sari</i> (Siti Zainon, 2007), <i>Pending</i> ("Alat-alat kebesaran diraja," 2009)
Cuisine	Dishes, beverages, cutlery, and anything related to the nature of the food and drinks	Food, drinks, food-related objects and practices that must portray characteristics which are unique to Malaysians. Examples: <i>Nasi lemak</i> (Zainal, 2007), <i>Satay</i> (Zainal, 2007), <i>Dumpling</i> (Zainal, 2007), <i>Chapati</i> (Zainal, 2007)
Architecture	Anything built or constructed, and conspicuous objects on land that relate to a specific location	Manmade buildings or natural landmarks that must represent Malaysian identity. Examples: KLCC, Kota A Famosa, Surau (Kamal, 2005)

Apparatus	Any apparatus that are used in an activity, event, celebration, ritual, or religious practice.	The apparatus is visible, whether or not used for a purpose. The tools are defined by knowledge as a representation of Malaysian culture or Malaysian common practice. Examples: <i>Bunga telur</i> (Zainal, 2007), Buddhist statue (Benny Liow & Ong, 2005), <i>Alaku Kavadi</i> (Zainal, 2007), <i>Tudung saji</i> (Munan, 2007)
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Qualitative content analysis was used as a method to achieve the aim to analyse repeating themes in the animated television series and to examine the cultural portrayals that are most frequently presented to the children viewers. The process in qualitative content analysis does not only focus on the text frequency but aims to situate text in either verbal, print, or other media sources within a context of meaning that frames the language, for a better understanding of the subject (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The qualitative content analysis was done through using Mayring's Step Model Category Development where Mayring (2000) explained that there is flexibility in using inductive and deductive procedures for qualitative content analysis. The procedure begins with a unit of analysis consisting of transcripts like dialogues in the animation series. From that unit of analysis, the coding framework was constructed via both content-driven (deductive), and data-driven (inductive) approaches. In deductive category development, the categories and characteristics were utilised preconceived codes or categories derived from relevant prior research, and in the inductive category development, the codes were diligently from the data that occur repetitively.

Qualitative software, NVivo 10, was employed to analyse the content of the 118 episodes. This software assisted the researcher in searching, organising, categorising, and annotating the textual and visual data of the sample videos. In selecting the unit of analysis, the researcher decides which data are analysed by focusing on six main variables. It may be part of the text data such as transcripts of dialogues, observation of characters' behaviour, and visual representation of the material culture portrayed. Visual portrayals were transcribed according to the length of time they were visible to the viewer and how frequent they were portrayed. After the transcription of the audio and visual content of each animated television episode was completed, the researcher coded the transcripts into each theme codes; (i) agriculture activities; (ii) traditional garments and accessories; (iii) cuisine; (iv) architecture; and (v) apparatus and the results were calculated in percentages from the duration of time the symbols were portrayed. As an instrument for the analysis, the researcher decided which scenes were classified, counted, and summarised. It is important to note that the researcher was aware of the Malaysian culture and several discussions and facts on Malaysian culture in this study were derived from the researcher's background and experience. Drawing on personal experience and knowledge was necessary due to the lack of sources and materials discussing the Malaysian culture. These definitions and coding rules were adapted from Mohd Sidin and Md Amir (2014) and Chioma (2013). They were also verified by the "Encyclopedia of Malaysia; People and Tradition" (Hood, 2006), "Crafts and Visual Arts" (Syed Ahmad, 2007), "Performing Arts" (Ghulam-Sarwar, 2004), "Plants" (Soepadmo, 1998), "Language and Literature" (Asmah, 2004), and "Religion and Beliefs" (Kamal & Ghazali, 2005).

FINDINGS

The findings obtained in forms of visual images in scenes of the episodes show that there are cultural symbols portrayed in the local animated television series. Table 4.3 shows the percentage of the visual coverage of symbol portrayals in the animated TV series. The findings of this study identified the Malaysian cultural symbol portrayals in the animated television series (e.g. *baju kurung*, *nasi lemak* and coconut trees). Portrayals of the objects that were unidentified or those that do not belong to the Malaysian culture (e.g. regular clothing, brick houses and common trees) were excluded from the analysis.

Table 3: Cultural symbols portrayed in the animated television series

Animated TV series	Agriculture	Garments	Cuisine	Architecture	Apparatus
<i>Arnab dan Kura-Kura</i>	-	2.94%	4.71%	-	-
<i>BoBoiBoy</i>	-	2.94%	2.68%	1.87%	1.86%
<i>Bola Kampung Extreme</i>	5.59%	13.51%	-	1.56%	-
<i>Cingkus Blues</i>	-	3.11%	1.51%	1.69%	3.47%
<i>Doplo Doplo</i>	-	1.64%	2.05%	1.02%	1.49%
<i>Dunia Eicak</i>	0.98%	1.71%	-	-	-
<i>Jaguh Silat</i>	9.25%	23.26%	2.28%	9.02%	-
<i>Kancil</i>	-	1.22%	-	1.07%	1.15%
<i>Mac & Ted</i>	1.16%	-	0.62%	1.20%	0.53%
<i>Nadim</i>	-	1.99%	-	3.31%	1.29%
<i>Ninja Cat, Ichi Ni San!</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Paksi Adiwira</i>	0.76%	4.03%	-	2.46%	1.57%
<i>Planet of the Reban</i>	-	-	-	2.80%	1.07%
<i>Planet Saga</i>	-	-	0.98%	-	-

<i>Puteri</i>	-	1.71%	-	-	-
<i>Raihan Rangers</i>	-	1.37%	-	1.78%	-
<i>Supertots</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>The Amazing Awang Khenit</i>	3.05%	19.76%	2.39%	2.30%	0.97%
<i>Ummi... Ceritalah pada kami</i>	-	2.88%	-	2.89%	1.86%
<i>Upin dan Ipin</i>	6.39%	21.88%	12.61%	8.05%	7.11%

Malaysia is rich with agriculture; therefore, portrayals of Malaysian agriculture are common to reflect the Malaysian culture. Five animated TV series that were set in the Malaysian rural village (*kampung*) had a higher percentage coverage of agriculture portrayals: *Bola Kampung Extreme*, *Jaguh Silat*, *Paksi Adiwira*, *The Amazing Awang Khenit* and *Upin dan Ipin*. In the *Bola Kampung Extreme* animated TV series. The percentage coverage of agriculture portrayals in the animated TV series indicated that portrayals of the Malaysian agriculture were regularly portrayed in the *Bola Kampung Extreme* animated television series. The scenes visual portrayals include coconut tree, banana tree, rambutan tree, cornfield, paddy field, Rafflesia flower, aloe vera plant, pitcher plant, cow, monkey, sun bear, chicken, goat, duck, mudskipper, eel, and catfish.

Table 4: Malaysian Agriculture Visual Portrayals in the Animated TV Series

Animated TV series	Portrayals
<i>Bola Kampung Extreme</i>	Catfish, Eel, Paddy field worker, Monkey, Coconut trees, Paddy field, Cornfield, Rambutan trees
<i>Dunia Eicak</i>	Rafflesia flower
<i>Mac & Ted</i>	Aloe Vera plant
<i>Paksi Adiwira</i>	Mudskipper, Coconut tree
<i>The Amazing Awang Khenit</i>	Chicken, Catfish, Horse carriage, Tapir, Goat, Sun bear
<i>Jaguh Silat</i>	Coconut tree
<i>Upin dan Ipin</i>	Coconut tree, Buffalo, Duck, Oranges, Pitcher plant, Banana tree

Characters in the animated television series represent the people in Malaysia of different ethnic backgrounds by the distinct set of traditional attire they wore that reflects their cultures. The characters wore the same clothes throughout the episodes to maintain continuity from scene to scene. Malaysian clothing portrayals were mostly coded in the *Bola Kampung Extreme*, *Jaguh Silat*, *The Amazing Awang Khenit* and *Upin dan Ipin* animated TV series. On the general occasion, some characters were seen wearing normal clothing but significant as a Malaysian identity such as *Baju kurung*, *Tudung* (headscarf), *Songkok* and *Kain pelekat/batik*. For example, Nasya, the female character in *Bola Kampung Extreme* was regularly portrayed wearing *baju kurung*, while Azizul, another main character, wore *baju Melayu teluk belanga* (baju Melayu with round neckline). The two of the main characters in *Bola Kampung Extreme* wears traditional clothing in most of the scenes even while playing football. In special episodes, such as *Riang Raya (Upin dan Ipin)* and *Gong Xi Fa Cai (Upin dan Ipin)*, the characters wore traditional clothing to represent their race. Silat outfit was coded in the episodes of the *Jaguh Silat* animated TV series which comprising the *tanjak*, *silat* outfit and *kain sampin*. There were human and anthropomorphic characters wearing the headscarf in the animated TV series. It generally to portray a good Islamic behaviour as the series also emphasised Islamic values associated with the official religion of the country.

Table 5: Malaysian Garments Portrayals in the animated TV series

Animated TV series	Portrayals
<i>Arnab dan Kura Kura</i>	Songkok, Kain pelekat, headscarf
<i>Boboiboy</i>	Woman/girl headscarf, Men's kopiah, Malaysian school uniform
<i>Bola Kampung Extreme</i>	Men's kopiah, Baju kurung, Baju melayu, Turban
<i>Cingkus Blues</i>	Kain pelekat, Tanjak, Tuku/ Sipiah
<i>Doplo Doplo</i>	Turban, Sari, Malaysian school uniform
<i>Dunia Eicak</i>	Kain pelekat, Songkok
<i>Jaguh Silat</i>	Woman/girl headscarf, Kain pelekat, Tengkolok, Silat attire, Sampin
<i>Kancil</i>	Tengkolok, Traditional, Royal Malay attire
<i>Nadim</i>	Woman/girl headscarf, Baju melayu, Tengkolok, Sampin Baju kebaya, Kain batik
<i>Paksi Adiwira</i>	Tengkolok, Silat attire, Traditional Royal Malay attire, Samfoo
<i>Puteri</i>	Tengkolok, Traditional Royal Malay attire
<i>Raihan Rangers</i>	Woman/girl headscarf, Songkok, Tengkolok
<i>The Amazing Awang Khenit</i>	Woman/girl headscarf, Baju kurung, Songkok, Tengkolok, Sampin, Traditional Royal Malay attire, Kain batik
<i>Animated TV series</i>	Malay
<i>Ummi, Ceritalah Pada kami</i>	Woman/girl headscarf, Men's kopiah, Baju kurung, Kain pelekat

<i>Upin dan Ipin</i>	Woman/girl headscarf, Men's kopiah, Baju kurung, Baju melayu, Songkok, Kain batik, Samfoo, Cheongsam, Mandarin hat, Tang suit, Turban, Kurtis, Kurta, Malaysian Army uniform, Malaysian school uniform
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Portrayals of traditional Malaysian cuisine appeared in the animated television series were likely to promote the variety of food available in Malaysia. The characters in the episodes were portrayed eating the food in the sense of validating viewers that characters also live the same routine as the viewers. Some of the animated TV series purposely showed the image of the food itself and mentioned the names of the Malaysian food in the dialogues. The most common food that was portrayed in the animated TV series is *Nasi Lemak*.

Table 5: Malaysian Cuisine Portrayals in the Animated TV Series

Animated TV series	Portrayals
<i>Arnab dan Kura Kura</i>	Nasi beriani, Karipap, Gulai ayam
<i>Boboiboy</i>	Nasi lemak
<i>Cingkus Blues</i>	Rambutan, Durian
<i>Doplo Doplo</i>	Roti canai
<i>Jaguh Silat</i>	Nasi lemak, Kari, Kuih lapis, Kuih dodol, Keropok lekor, Bahulu, Teh tarik
<i>Mac & Ted</i>	Nasi lemak
<i>Puteri</i>	Kuih Puteri Berendam
<i>Upin dan Ipin</i>	Ayam percik, Kuih talam, Mee goreng, Bubur lambuk, Lemang periuk kera, Koci, Cekodok pisang, Karipap pusing, Kuih cara, kuih lapis, kuih seri muka, Yee sang, huat kueh, shou tao bao, kuih angku, kuih kapit, hakka hee pan, Chuanr chicken, Pau

The tradition Malay architecture could be seen in the background of most animated television series analysed. The average frequency coverage of Malaysian building, structure and house portrayals as listed in Table 3 shows a high percentage in the *Jaguh Silat* animated TV series. Mainly the traditional Malay *kampung* houses were frequent in local-themed series like *The Amazing Awang Khenit*, *Jaguh Silat*, *Paksi Adiwira* and *Upin dan Ipin*. Modern building designs of Malaysia's famous structures such as the KLCC and KL Tower were also portrayed in the animated television series.

Table 4: Malaysian Architecture Portrayals in animated TV series

Animated TV series	Portrayals
<i>Boboiboy</i>	Traditional Malay house
<i>Bola Kampung Extreme</i>	Traditional Malay house, KLCC Twin Tower
<i>Cingkus Blues</i>	KL Tower, Kuching's Cat Statue
<i>Doplo Doplo</i>	KLCC Twin Tower
<i>Jaguh Silat</i>	Traditional Malay house
<i>Kancil</i>	Malay Palace
<i>Mac & Ted</i>	KLCC Twin Tower
<i>Nadim</i>	Traditional Malay house, Tasik Chini, Tasik Dayang Bunting, Makam Mahsuri, Gunung Mat Cincang, Langkawi Eagle Statue
<i>Paksi Adiwira</i>	Traditional Malay house
<i>Planet of the Reban</i>	Traditional Malay house
<i>Raihan Rangers</i>	KLCC Twin Tower
<i>The Amazing Awang Khenit</i>	Traditional Malay house, Malay Palace
<i>Ummi, Ceritalah Pada kami</i>	KLCC Twin Tower
<i>Upin dan Ipin</i>	Traditional Malay house

In the apparatus category, visual images of tools in the form of metal craft, woodcraft, handwoven craft, ceramics and religion-related items were portrayed. The national flag as a part of the national symbol was identified in the scenes of the *Upin dan Ipin* and *Boboiboy* animated TV series to symbolise the power to enforce justice and as a patriotic expression of the characters. Traditional metal crafts were mostly portrayed in the animated series. For example, *tepak sirih*, which symbolises the traditional lifestyle of the Malay ethnic were portrayed in *Barang Silam* episode (*Upin dan Ipin*). *Keris* and *golok*, weapons unique to the Malays and also a symbol of status were portrayed in *Upin dan Ipin* and *Paksi Adiwira*. Traditional games such as *wau*, *congkak*, *jianzi*, *klereng*, *tuju selipar* and *sepak takraw* were portrayed in *Cingkus Blues* and *Upin dan Ipin*.

Table 4: Malaysian Apparatus Portrayals in the animated TV series

Animated TV series	Portrayals
<i>Boboiboy</i>	Jalur Gemilang
<i>Cingkus Blues</i>	Wau, Trishaw, Gasing
<i>Doplo Doplo</i>	Jalur Gemilang
<i>Kancil</i>	Gong, Gendang
<i>Nadim</i>	Sumpit, Jalur Gemilang
<i>Paksi Adiwira</i>	Keris
<i>Planet of the Reban</i>	Meriam buluh
<i>Raihan Rangers</i>	Quran
<i>Symbol</i>	Malay
<i>The Amazing Awang Khenit</i>	Keris
<i>Ummi, Ceritalah Pada kami</i>	Sejadah
<i>Upin dan Ipin</i>	Tikar Mengkuang, Keris, Tepak Sirih, Jianzi, Firecracker, Chui Lien, Drum, Pelita buluh, Congkak, Klereng, Tuju Selipar, Sepak Takraw, Jalur Gemilang, Angpau

An inter-coder reliability procedure was conducted to ensure the reliability of the findings. A total of 600 minutes (10 hours) of the video were coded in assessing the first and second reliability tests. The first pilot test yielded intra-coder kappa coefficient of 0.89 and 0.91 for the first and second coders, respectively. Moreover, the inter-coder kappa coefficient was 0.74. Hence, this coding frame was labelled as substantial since the value was in between the range of 0.61 to 0.80 (Landis & Koch, 1977). However, this does not mean that all the categories and portrayals have been identified. The findings are only based on the limitation of the researchers' *knowledge of Malaysian cultural values*.

Based on the data analyses, it is concluded that there are symbols of Malaysian cultures portrayed in the local animated television series and no cultural content portrayals were found in *Ninja Cat Ichi Ni San!* The reason might not be clearly defined but from the author's observation, *Ninja Cat, Ichi Ni San!* animated TV series was intended for international viewers; therefore, western culture was portrayed in the series.

CONCLUSION

This study attempted to identify portrayals of cultural content in the form of material and nonmaterial culture in the local children's animated television series. The result of this content analysis on the local children's animated TV series shows that portrayals of local culture and cultural identity in the form of visual and verbal expression were present. Malaysian cultural symbols were identified and analysed. From the findings, it is suggested that local-themed animated TV series had the most cultural content portrayal coded. The resemblance in character design development and setting of the animated television to the characteristics of a Malaysian were assumed to familiarise the viewers with the same ambience of the Malaysian environment.

Furthermore, the presence of these Malaysian cultural portrayals may reflect the Malaysian identity, mood and atmosphere of the Malaysian lifestyle into the visual of animation. It might somehow inculcate the awareness of the Malaysian's cultural identity by familiarising the viewers with Malaysian cultural identities. As mentioned by Marryan (2010) and Noorsiah (1998), there is a constant need to inculcate knowledge on Malaysian culture and values to newer generation in the hope of preserving the love toward our own culture and heritage. Therefore, the current study showed that the content of the local animated television series was included with Malaysian cultural value portrayals that would be a possible form of education for the children viewers about the Malaysian cultural values. Although not all portrayals may have been identified perfectly, at the very least, the foundations have been laid, and there is always room for improvement for future research.

DISCUSSION

After analysing the sampled animated television series, local animated television series are making a constructive contribution by presenting considerate portrayals of the local culture to the local audience and at the same time promoting local culture to the world. It could be realised that the Malaysian animation production is now well accepted and is highly encouraged to replace the airtime slots provided for foreign cartoons before. It is important to not only focus on the moral of the story in the content, but also the in-betweens that glue the story together and use the amount of screening time viewing contents that is beneficial for the viewers. The producers of children's programming have to play a role in ensuring that national values and cultures are protected because the media has become increasingly influential in children's choices of role models. Policy makers and content developers can find the findings regarding the current content of cultural values in the children's media to improve towards a better method in tabling policies for children's television programmes including from proposing the theme, content, script and the suitable visual images of the animated TV series. Repeated experiences can become patterns that begin in childhood and extend into adolescence. Therefore, the importance of nurturing viewers with cultural values the content of the television programmes should be highlighted, and portrayals of westernised culture in the local content of the productions should be minimised.

In discussing the prospect of animated TV series as a promotion of Malaysian cultural values, one cannot deny its contribution, which has brought the country to the eyes of the world, however, the increasing number of new animated series that were

released for local broadcast questions the author on the quality of the production. Some series that were not highly mentioned in news media such as *Arnab dan Kura-kura*, *Kancil*, *Doplo Doplo* and *Jaguh Silat* were also analysed in the study. Through observation, even though the values embedded in the animated series may be present, it is undermined by low viewership which may not be significant enough to bring about lessons on cultural values among young children. The low quality of its production and lack of research and promotion lead to the question whether these productions are creative enough to attract children's attention and to create loyal viewership. Future studies should engage audience study to illuminate the relationship between production of animated television series and the acceptance of the series to improve stories or scripts that not only incorporate local cultural identity but also improve regarding presentation, storytelling and promotion to attract to the children viewers to watch the content.

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