

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the research methodology used in this present study to examine the cultural representation in a picture book entitled *It's Amma's Birthday Tomorrow* by Janaki Sooriyachrachchi. It revolves around the research design, the subject and context of the study, the data collection, data analysis, data presentation and the synopsis of the picture book.

3.1 Research Design

The research design of the study was a descriptive qualitative method. It because the aim of the study was to describe and interpret the cultural representation in a picture book entitled *It's Amma's Birthday Tomorrow* by Janaki Sooriyachrachchi. This is in line with Belk (2006, p. 15) who suggests a descriptive qualitative method is the method which is “interpretative and subjective”. Further, Sevilla, et. al., (1992) and Gay, et. al, (2006) add that a descriptive qualitative method is a method that attempts to describe and investigate the particular phenomena and current situation. Since the data in this study were used to develop concepts and theories that help people to understand the subject of the study, the descriptive qualitative method is an appropriate method for this present study.

3.2 Subject and Context of the Study

A picture book entitled *It's Amma's Birthday Tomorrow* was the main subject of this study. The book was written by Janaki Sooriyarachchi, a children's book author and illustrator. She has written and illustrated more than 195 story books for children. She also has won many international awards and prizes.

The reason for choosing the picture book was because the word *Amma* in *It's Amma's Birthday Tomorrow* is something unusual. The title of the picture book is using the English language but the word *Amma* is not originally from English language. Hence, the writer is interested to analyze the intention of the author from the use of the word *Amma* as the title of the picture book.

Moreover, based on the type of picture book, it belongs to the picture story book. The picture story book is the most common type of a picture book for children. It helps children to understand and comprehend the story easily. Thus, it enables children to obtain the message containing good lessons through the story presented.

3.3 Data Collection

The data were collected from the picture book entitled *It's Amma's Birthday Tomorrow* by Janaki Sooriyachrachchi. The data were presented in the form of images and words which were critically analyzed using cultural representation that proposed by Hall (1997) and multimodal approach in the picture book by Joyce and Gaudin (2011).


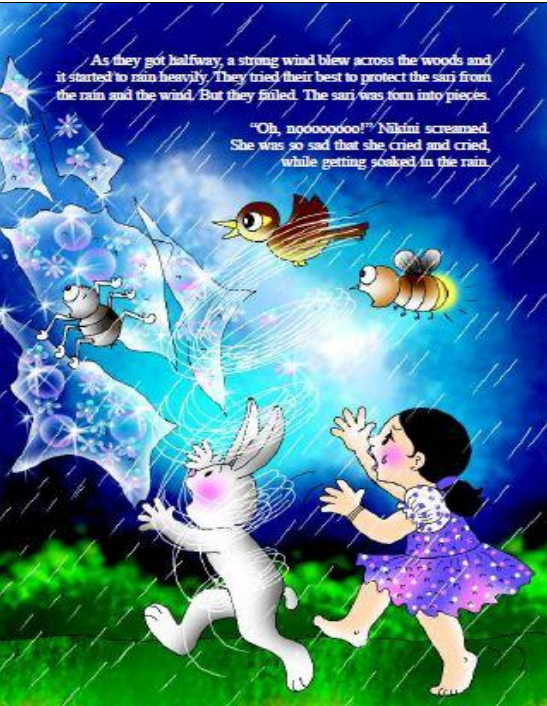
3.4 Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the present study conducted the stages of multimodal approach based on Joyce and Gaudin (2011). According to them, the representation of culture can be depicted through the narrative and the images which belong to the grammar of design. The representation of culture through the narrative covers the character, setting and the action. In addition, the representation of culture through the grammar of design includes book details and the physical appearances of the character. Furthermore, the present study also employed Hall's (1997) theory about cultural representation to support the previous stages. Then, the result of the analysis was interpreted into the narration.

3.5 Data Presentation

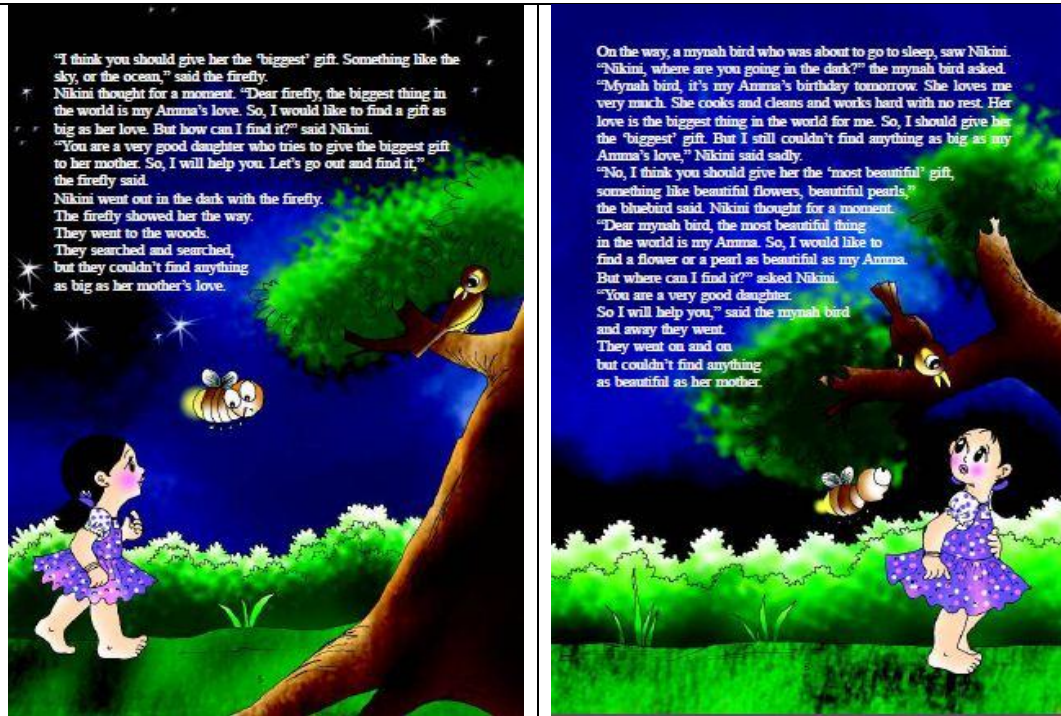
To accomplish the data analysis of the study, the presentation of the data is formulated in the form of table. The design of the table is as follows:

Table 3.1 Sample of Analysis in the Picture Book *It's Amma's Birthday Tomorrow* that Represents Sri Lankan Culture

The representation of Sri Lankan culture through narrative	
Picture 1	
<p>"My darling, do you know what is the most beautiful, most precious and the greatest thing to me? That is my little daughter. What I like most is her love. The love I felt from you today is the greatest, biggest, most precious and the most beautiful gift I've ever had in my life," said her mother and she hugged her.</p> <p>Nikini was very happy and so were her friends. All of them went home with her, to celebrate the birthday.</p> 	<p>As they got halfway, a strong wind blew across the woods and it started to rain heavily. They tried their best to protect the sarj from the rain and the wind. But they failed. The sarj was torn into pieces.</p> <p>"Oh, noooooooo!" Nikini screamed. She was so sad that she cried and cried, while getting soaked in the rain.</p> 
Non-human characters	
<p>Firefly</p>	<p>As can be seen in the picture 1, the use of firefly in this story represents the folktale of traditional Sri Lanka because Sudeshna (2008) asserts that firefly is usually used as the metaphor to represent the agricultural society in Sri Lanka. Further, firefly is often times seen in natural environment without pollution. Sudeshna (2008)</p>

	also states that firefly is a popular type of insect that is usually used in Sri Lankan children's picture book.
Rabbit	Rabbit is associated with the prosperity in Sri Lanka which portrays the richness and the soundness for the people of Sri Lanka (Miranda, 1994). Moreover, rabbit is also often used in children picture book in order to introduce to the children about the cuteness of the animal (Joyce & Gaudin, 2011)
Bird	Bird is depicted in the illustration. It can be seen in the picture 1 above. In relation to Sri Lankan culture, the term bird is often used in the Sri Lankan children picture book which indicates the loyalty (Miranda, 1994). Further she asserts that people in Sri Lanka hinterland often keep the bird as their animal pet as well as believe that bird is the symbol of loyalty.
Spider	The illustration of the spider in general hints never give up because Roy (2008) emphasizes that spider build its cobweb by their self without helped by other spiders. Hence, in this picture book, the spider does not represent the culture but it can be related to the main character's personality who never gives up getting the precious gift for her mother in the story. It is different with the other animals which represent the Sri Lankan culture but the spider represents the characteristic of Nikini who is never gives up getting what she wants in her life which fits with general characteristic of Sri Lankan children in the current cartoon film entitled <i>Little Krishna</i> .

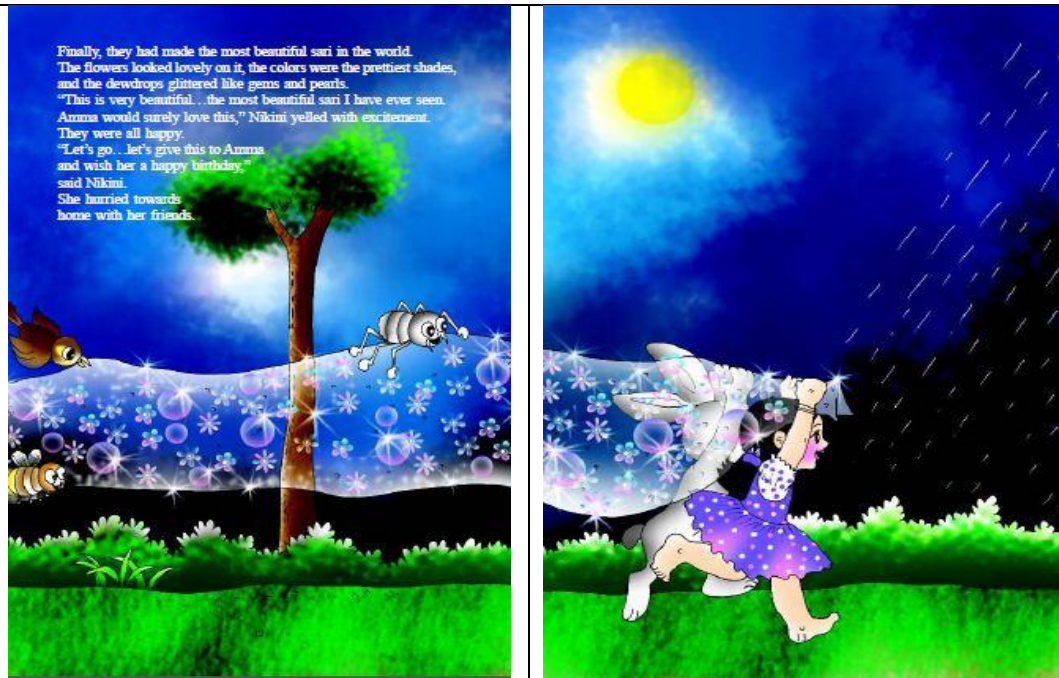
Picture 2



Setting

The setting in the picture book also helps to represent the culture of Sri Lanka. Setting refers to the space in which the characters and the action are found (Joyce & Gaudin, 2011). According to Creany, et.al., (1993), setting is one of the attributes of the culture because it can identify one culture or stereotype in the illustration. For instance, in this picture book, the setting of the story is mostly in the forest. It can be seen from the illustration that describes the trees and the grass. The existence of the grass and the trees are portrayed though the green color. Green color in the illustration is often related to nature and freshness (Wooten and Cullinan, 2009). Hence, green color describes the nature in the forest as well as contributes to the setting of the story. The illustration can be seen in the picture 2 below which describes the setting that the story takes place in the forest.

Picture 3



Action

Another narrative element which supports the representation of Sri Lankan culture is the action. Based on Joyce and Gaudin (2011), a representation of certain culture can be seen from the way the character makes a choice for actions. For example, in this picture book, Nikini as the main character made a choice to choose *sari* as the gift for her mother's birthday. She chose *sari* as suggested by her animal friends based on the text. In the text, the animal friends considered sari as the precious gift for her mother. Therefore, from the choice of action done by the main character in the story, it can be said that Nikini chooses sari as the precious gift for her mother because the author of the picture book intends to introduce the culture of Sri Lanka into the dress which called *sari*. Moreover, *sari* is a product of culture because Sudeshna's (2008) idea states that *sari* is the traditional dress for women in Sri Lanka. Hence, in this context, *sari* represents the Sri Lankan culture.

3.6 Synopsis

The identity of the book below is written by following the steps that Joyce and Gaudin (2011) propose in examining a picture book as follows:

Book Title : It's Amma's Birthday Tomorrow

Author : Janaki Sooriyachrachi

Published : 2008, Sri Lanka

Publisher : Tikiri Publisher

Story : It's Amma's Birthday Tomorrow tells about a little girl named Nikini who really loves her mother. She lives with her mother and her father near the forest. Instead of human characters such as Nikini and her parents, there are non-human characters such as firefly, bird, rabbit and spider. They become Nikini's good friends and always help Nikini in journey to get the special gift for her mother's birthday along the night in the dark forest. The story began with her father who recalls Nikini about her mother's birthday tomorrow. He brings a big gift box for Nikini's mother. Nikini really loves her mother so she thinks about how to gift the very special gift for her mother. In addition, she goes to the forest in looking for the gift accompanied by her animal friends. She finally found the sari to be given as the precious gift for her mother. But then, the sari broke into the pieces by the rain. Nikini cries beneath the tree and her mother found her crying. This story mostly tells about how hard Nikini's effort to get something precious for her mother. Even though, actually her mother does not ask anything from Nikini in her birthday.

Narrator : It's Amma's Birthday Tomorrow is told from the first person narrator in the dialogue. Nikini as the main character uses the direct speech that described to the reader about what she does, experiences and remembers. This is often found in the text of picture book that written for very young children. So that the intended audience or the reader of this picture book is the age two to six years old. However, in the written

context this picture book is using the third person narrator that is told by the author of the picture book.

Characters : The main character in the picture book is Nikini. Nikini is the main protagonist of the story. She has her own unique characteristics of a good daughter in her age and never gives up getting what she wants in her life. Furthermore, Nikini's physical appearance describes the characteristic of people in Sri Lanka that always barefooted everywhere in the story. There are also minor characters in the story such as a firefly, bird, rabbit and spider. They become the helpers of the main character's goal.

Time : The story of It's Amma's Birthday Tomorrow occurs over the short frame time of a single night. It is beginning in the evening when Nikini is in the house that recalled by her father about her mother's birthday tomorrow. Then, it is ending when her mother found Nikini is crying beneath the tree in the morning because she found nothing to be given to her mother's birthday.

Setting : The setting of this picture book is in the forest where it becomes the familiar location to be identified by the children. The setting is described by the illustration of trees and the grass in the forest. It also describes the condition of Sri Lanka hinterland which most of the district at that country is the forest.