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Corresponding Author:  
Supadi  
supadi5565@gmail.com

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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AND SEMIOTICS IN ENHANCING CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING IN EFL LEARNING

**Supadi**

*Universitas Indraprasta PGRI Jakarta, Indonesia*

*e-mail: supadi5565@gmail.com*

**Abstract:** This study aims to explore the role of education management through the use of semiotics in enhancing students' understanding of cultural context in English language learning at the senior high school level in Jakarta. The unit of analysis comprises educational management policies and teaching strategies based on semiotic principles. This research employs a qualitative design with a descriptive approach. The data sources include English teachers, senior high school students, and policy documents related to teaching strategies. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. The collected data were then analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns in the implementation of semiotics in English language instruction. The findings indicate that the integration of semiotics into education management significantly enhances students' comprehension of English by facilitating the interpretation of culturally relevant signs and symbols. This research contributes valuable insights into how semiotic approaches can be effectively incorporated into education management policies to improve the effectiveness of culturally contextualized language learning.

**Keywords:** Cultural context; Educational management; Semiotics of learning

## MANAJEMEN PENDIDIKAN DAN SEMIOTIKA DALAM MENINGKATKAN PEMAHAMAN BUDAYA DALAM PEMBELAJARAN EFL

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran manajemen pendidikan melalui penggunaan semiotika dalam meningkatkan pemahaman siswa terhadap konteks budaya dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di tingkat sekolah menengah atas di Jakarta. Unit analisis dalam penelitian ini mencakup kebijakan manajemen pendidikan dan strategi pengajaran yang didasarkan pada prinsip-prinsip semiotika. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif. Sumber data meliputi guru bahasa Inggris, siswa sekolah menengah atas, dan dokumen kebijakan yang berkaitan dengan strategi pembelajaran. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi kelas, dan analisis dokumen. Data yang terkumpul kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola-pola dalam penerapan semiotika dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi semiotika ke dalam manajemen pendidikan secara signifikan meningkatkan pemahaman siswa terhadap bahasa Inggris melalui interpretasi tanda dan simbol yang relevan secara budaya. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan berharga tentang bagaimana pendekatan semiotik dapat diterapkan secara efektif dalam kebijakan

manajemen pendidikan guna meningkatkan efektivitas pembelajaran bahasa yang berbasis pada konteks budaya.

**Kata kunci:** Konteks budaya; Manajemen pendidikan; Semiotika pembelajaran

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## INTRODUCTION

Social facts in the form of material objects in English language learning can be observed through the use of cultural symbols, signs, and representations that shape students' understanding. Cultural context plays a pivotal role in constructing meaning, while educational management is responsible for designing strategies that effectively integrate semiotic elements to enhance learning outcomes. Language acquisition is intrinsically linked to the comprehension of cultural paradigms, as learners engage not only with lexical items but also with the ideologies and practices embedded within the language's cultural framework (Maqsood et al., 2024). Robust language education fosters intercultural communicative competence, enabling learners to navigate cultural diversity and engage meaningfully across varied contexts (Berdigozhina, 2024).

Engagement with cultural artifacts—through media and interactions with native speakers—significantly boosts learners' motivation and contextual understanding, thereby enhancing the relevance and depth of language acquisition (Chung & Long, 2024). Implementing culturally responsive curricula and assessments prepares learners to become effective communicators in a globalized society (Procel et al., 2023). The use of cultural symbols in teaching materials, such as idiomatic expressions or culturally specific gestures, aids students in interpreting language through their own cultural lenses. Supported by education management rooted in semiotic principles, educators can employ visual media and multimodal texts to improve students' communicative competence within global contexts. Therefore, social facts—manifested as signs and symbols—play a central role in English language learning. Their effective use relies heavily on education management strategies grounded in semiotic theory and cultural relevance.

Although cultural context in English language learning has been widely examined—particularly in enhancing the understanding of vocabulary and expressions during cross-cultural communication—the role of educational management in systematically integrating semiotic approaches into secondary school curricula remains underexplored. Semiotics, the study of how signs produce meaning, is crucial in educational frameworks that incorporate diverse cultural interpretations (Ley & Gannon-Cook, 2023). Embedding semiotic principles into curricula necessitates a critical examination of pre-existing cultural biases that may impede optimal learning (Ley & Gannon-Cook, 2023). Instructional planning informed by semiotics, including the use of visual aids and digital platforms, has been shown to enhance student engagement and comprehension (Valeiras-Jurado & Fortanet-Gómez, 2024).

Empirical studies reveal that learners often struggle with semiotic representations, particularly in abstract or technical subjects such as mathematics and science (Linder et al., 2024; Ferretti et al., 2024). While research on semiotic applications in higher education and informal learning settings exists, studies focusing on formal school systems and their educational policies remain sparse and fragmented. This study, therefore, addresses a critical gap by exploring how education management can systematically integrate semiotic strategies to enhance cultural understanding in English learning at the high school level. This contribution is essential for developing culturally and symbolically informed pedagogical practices.

This research seeks to address the limitations in previous literature by examining the integration of semiotics into English language instruction at the high school level, with a specific focus on cultural relevance and educational management. Although many studies have explored

cultural aspects of language learning and the role of semiotics in meaning-making, few have considered how educational management can design and implement this approach within secondary curricula. Incorporating culturally diverse reading materials can significantly improve students' comprehension of various worldviews, fostering intercultural competence (Xia, 2024). Thoughtfully designed learning tasks that promote interaction and reflection further enhance student engagement with cultural content (Xia, 2024). Comprehensive, multidimensional assessment tools can simultaneously evaluate students' cultural awareness and linguistic proficiency (Xia, 2024), while community and family involvement supports cultural assimilation and academic performance (Vásquez, 2024).

However, many existing strategies emphasize linguistic competencies or traditional pedagogy without addressing how educational management can create policies that incorporate semiotic approaches. Furthermore, the use of signs and symbols in English instruction is often ad hoc, lacking the systematic integration necessary for meaningful learning. This study, therefore, aims to investigate how education management can optimize semiotic strategies to enhance cultural context understanding in high school English instruction, contributing to more authentic, contextualized, and effective teaching practices.

The central hypothesis of this study is that educational management integrating semiotic strategies in English instruction significantly enhances students' cultural comprehension. This is based on the premise that language understanding is not solely linguistic but also hinges on the learner's ability to interpret cultural signs and symbols inherent in communication. Effective management can lead to curricular designs that incorporate semiotic tools—such as visual representations, idiomatic expressions, and culturally symbolic content—that enrich student learning. Studies suggest that visual imagery, signs, and symbols used in ESL instruction improve memory retention and cognitive engagement (Sakahwat et al., 2024). Similarly, incorporating cultural symbols bolsters intercultural competence, crucial for understanding the multifaceted uses of English globally (Wang & Hemchua, 2022). Recognizing language as a carrier of cultural meaning prepares learners to engage in nuanced, authentic communication (Diedrichsen, 2020). Evidence also indicates that schools implementing semiotic-based teaching strategies observe notable improvements in students' ability to relate language use to sociocultural contexts.

Cultural context in language learning refers to the social norms, historical developments, and value systems that underpin communication. Every linguistic element—from vocabulary to idioms—reflects cultural attitudes and behavioral norms. Understanding this context allows learners to interpret English more accurately and comprehend the speaker's intent. Language is a medium for expressing cultural values, beliefs, and social practices (Susianti et al., 2024). For example, the use of honorifics in Japanese language highlights social hierarchy and politeness, offering insight into broader cultural norms. Studies show that students demonstrate higher reading comprehension when texts align with their cultural experiences (Vargas et al., 2024), while unfamiliar cultural contexts pose comprehension challenges. Moreover, neglecting cultural dimensions in language education risks eroding learners' cultural identity, particularly in communities exposed to dominant foreign languages (Omenukwa, 2024).

Consider, for example, the English expression “How are you?” which in Western contexts often functions as a casual greeting, not necessarily expecting a detailed response. In other cultures, however, the same question may elicit a full report on one's well-being. Without cultural insight, students may misinterpret such expressions, leading to communication breakdowns. Thus, integrating cultural context into English instruction is crucial for effective and appropriate social interaction. Education management can play a vital role in implementing semiotic-based approaches to ensure students develop both linguistic and cultural competencies.

Cultural contexts in language learning can be classified into social, historical, and pragmatic dimensions. Each contributes uniquely to the construction of meaning. Social context includes societal norms and expectations governing interactions—such as the use of formal greetings in academic or

professional settings. Historical context involves changes in language use over time; for instance, the word "cool" evolved from a temperature descriptor to a slang term for approval. Pragmatic context refers to how language is used in practice, including elements like humor, sarcasm, or idiomatic expressions that vary across cultures. Understanding these categories helps students interpret English more effectively and use it appropriately across contexts.

Studies from diverse regions confirm these findings. In the Philippines, learners with strong cultural connections exhibit higher comprehension of culturally relevant texts than those unfamiliar with such contexts (Mendoza, 2024). Socioeconomic factors and disparities in educational resources also influence comprehension outcomes (Garil, 2024; Mendoza, 2024), indicating the need for tailored educational strategies. In this regard, education management should consider cultural typologies in planning semiotic-based language instruction.

Educational management involves the planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation of educational systems to achieve desired learning outcomes. In language education, this includes the strategic use of semiotic elements to enhance students' cultural understanding. This process encompasses setting learning objectives, allocating resources, and ensuring alignment between instructional methods and cultural contexts (Nurhikmah, 2024). Ongoing evaluation allows for the identification of areas for improvement, enabling adaptive strategies. Professional development for teachers in semiotics and cultural sensitivity is also essential (Torres, 2024). For example, incorporating films, songs, and literature that reflect authentic cultural expressions allows students to grasp the multifaceted meanings of language. Effective management also involves training teachers to use these resources and methodologies proficiently.

The typology of education management can be categorized into academic, administrative, and strategic domains. Based on form, it may be centralized or school-based. Its format ranges from formal to informal or non-formal education, depending on the learning environment. Key stages include planning, implementation, evaluation, and policy development. A structured, responsive management system supports the integration of semiotic strategies in English instruction, allowing students to internalize cultural meanings more deeply and communicate more effectively in real-world contexts.

Semiotics of learning emphasizes the role of signs and symbols in helping students derive meaning from language within specific cultural settings. In English language instruction, this approach connects words, images, gestures, and cultural symbols to broader meanings that reflect the worldview of native speakers. Visual representations—such as pictures, gestures, and videos—serve as effective cognitive tools that enhance language retention and comprehension (Sakahwat et al., 2024; Wang & Hemchua, 2022). Semiotic analysis reveals that cultural cues embedded in language materials contribute to the development of intercultural competence (Safari & Pourhashemi, 2022). Understanding idiomatic expressions, such as "break the ice," requires learners to grasp both literal and figurative meanings in cultural context. Multimedia tools such as interactive simulations help students visualize and internalize complex cultural associations.

The semiotics of learning can be categorized according to typology, form, format, and the stages of its application within the educational process. This categorization is crucial for understanding how signs and symbols function in language learning, particularly in linking linguistic meaning to cultural contexts. A key distinction in semiotic theory is that between the signifier (the physical form of the sign) and the signified (the concept it represents), a notion emphasized by Barthes, which highlights the influence of cultural context on meaning (Hasyim & Reyes, 2022). Empirical research indicates that incorporating signs and symbols—such as images—into instruction significantly enhances the comprehension of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. Visual representations serve as mnemonic tools, aiding both memory retention and conceptual understanding (Sakahwat et al., 2024). Language functions as a complex system of symbolic representation, deeply intertwined with cultural identity and social dynamics (Morais & Martins, 2025). From a typological perspective, semiotic learning materials can be classified into visual (e.g., images, symbols, gestures) and verbal (e.g., words, phrases, narratives) categories. These materials may take the form of texts, videos, infographics, or

interactive engagements. Their format may be either printed or digital. The stages of semiotic application in language learning typically progress from basic symbol recognition and meaning association to more advanced contextual interpretation. By understanding this framework, educators can more effectively select and implement strategies that enhance high school students' English proficiency, particularly in fostering connections between language and cultural context.

### RESEARCH METHOD

The primary unit of analysis in this study is the English language learning process in Grade XI senior high school classrooms in Jakarta, specifically those that integrate cultural context through semiotic and educational management approaches. This focus is chosen because language learning extends beyond grammar and vocabulary—it encompasses the interpretation of meaning within cultural frameworks. Semiotics, which involves the study of signs and symbols, enhances language acquisition by incorporating visual elements that communicate cultural meanings, thereby fostering intercultural communicative competence (Wang & Hemchua, 2022). Educational materials should include cultural symbols and visual representations to depict diverse cultural contexts, making them essential tools in English language teaching (ELT) (Wang & Hemchua, 2022). As a theoretical framework, semiotics supports the interpretation of signs and meanings in linguistic settings, enabling learners to grasp the cultural nuances embedded in language use (Ustaoğlu, 2024). Through a semiotic lens, educators can analyze instructional materials to identify cultural elements influencing comprehension, as evidenced in studies of English textbooks in Indonesia (Syafiqurrakhman & Ciptaningrum, 2024). The selected schools offer English programs that incorporate cultural components via instructional materials, pedagogical strategies, and media. These schools were chosen based on the presence of culture-based curricula, teacher preparedness, and the availability of learning resources that facilitate the application of semiotic approaches. By examining how cultural context, educational management, and semiotics are integrated into classroom practice, this study aims to generate insights into effective strategies for enhancing students' English proficiency.

This research employs a qualitative design with a case study approach to examine the role of educational management in utilizing semiotics to enhance students' cultural understanding in English learning. A qualitative approach is appropriate for deeply exploring social phenomena, particularly in understanding how education management and semiotic strategies are implemented in culturally contextualized English instruction. Qualitative research also emphasizes the importance of embedding cultural elements in language education, particularly in fostering intercultural communicative competence (Berdigozhina, 2024). Semiotic analysis within educational contexts reveals how symbolic communication shapes cultural identity and social cohesion, as seen in rituals adapting to modernization (Lasino et al., 2023). Data collection involved classroom observation, interviews with teachers and students, and the examination of curriculum documents and teaching materials. Triangulation methods were employed to ensure data validity, while thematic analysis was used to identify patterns in the implementation of semiotics and educational strategies. This approach is expected to yield a comprehensive understanding of how educational management and semiotic practices contribute to effective English language instruction at the high school level.

The data sources include key informants—principals and English teachers—as well as student participants involved in semiotics-based learning. Additionally, curriculum documents and teaching materials serve as textual data. These sources were selected based on their relevance to the implementation of educational management and semiotic approaches in English teaching. Principals and teachers provide insight into institutional strategies and pedagogical planning, while students offer perspectives on the practical impact and effectiveness of instructional methods. The curriculum and teaching materials are examined for how they represent cultural contexts. Previous research indicates that the inclusion of semiotic tools such as visual symbols significantly improves learners' understanding and retention (Sakahwat et al., 2024). Moreover, resources embedding cultural elements promote intercultural communicative competence (Wang & Hemchua, 2022). However, studies also

reveal that educational content can sometimes distort cultural identities, leading to dissonance in the learning experience (Wichanee, 2024; Yonata et al., 2024). Therefore, student feedback is essential for evaluating the relevance and engagement of pedagogical strategies, especially in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings where cultural sensitivity is vital (Wichanee, 2024). Informants were purposively selected based on their experience with semiotic-based instruction. Teachers and principals were chosen due to their roles in designing and implementing instructional strategies, while students were sampled to reflect diverse experiences and interpretations of cultural context through semiotics. The integration of these varied data sources ensures a holistic view of how educational management supports the use of semiotics in English instruction.

The research utilizes a combination of in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis to explore the role of educational management in supporting semiotic learning to enhance students' cultural understanding. These methods provide a comprehensive data set, capturing the perspectives of multiple stakeholders while observing real-time classroom dynamics. Interviews offer rich insights into the experiences and viewpoints of participants, revealing the complexities of instructional practices and challenges faced by educators and students alike (Sølvik & Roland, 2022). Engaging with school leaders and teachers helps to uncover differing views on educational policies and teaching methodologies (Saani, 2024). Document analysis of teaching materials and policy documents provides context for understanding the institutional frameworks that shape classroom practices (Maisyaroh et al., 2021). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers and principals to explore strategies and policies regarding semiotics-based instruction. Classroom observations were carried out to document the use of visual and symbolic signs in real learning environments. Document analysis focused on curricula, syllabi, and instructional resources that reflect the integration of cultural context. This multi-method approach ensures a rich, detailed account of how educational management facilitates the application of semiotic principles in English language education, thereby improving students' comprehension of cultural dimensions.

The study applies thematic analysis as its primary qualitative data analysis technique to identify patterns in the use of semiotics for understanding cultural context in English language learning. This method was selected for its capacity to uncover deep meanings within interview, observation, and document data. Thematic analysis enables the organization of data into coherent categories that align with the study's focus on educational management and semiotic pedagogy. Research has shown that thematic learning significantly enhances student engagement and motivation, with one study reporting a 100% success rate in an experimental group using thematic methods compared to 48.57% in a control group (Tulus et al., 2024). Thematic analysis is also highly adaptable, capable of processing various qualitative data types to reveal overarching patterns and insights (Naudé, 2025; Saldaña, 2024). It supports multiple analytical approaches, including categorical and phenomenological methods, allowing researchers to tailor analysis to specific research goals (Saldaña, 2024). The process included transcription of interview data, initial coding to identify emerging themes, classification of findings under categories such as cultural context, educational management, and semiotic strategies, and interpretation to explore interconnections. For instance, interviews revealed that visual symbols and culturally specific cues are frequently used to support comprehension—these findings were categorized as semiotic practices. This analytical approach enables the study to map how educational management orchestrates the use of semiotics in English language teaching, offering strategic insights for enhancing cultural understanding among students.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

Table 1 presents a synthesis of findings from interviews, classroom observations, and document analyses, focusing on how education management facilitates the use of semiotics in enhancing students' understanding of cultural context in English language learning. The table categorizes qualitative evidence into clear themes to allow for systematic analysis. The data collected aligns with three core aspects: (1) education management strategies for integrating semiotics, (2) the implementation of cultural symbols in teaching, and (3) the pedagogical impact on students' cultural understanding.

**Table 1**  
Understanding Cultural Context in English Language Learning

No	Evidence	Explanation
1	Use of culturally based materials	Students demonstrate better comprehension when exposed to texts that reflect native cultures.
2	Analysis of idioms and expressions	English idioms often carry culturally specific meanings that require contextual understanding.
3	Cross-cultural communication case studies	Exploring cultural differences enhances students' communicative competence.
4	Use of movies and songs as learning media	These media support students in grasping cultural expressions in authentic contexts.
5	Role-based learning (e.g., role play)	Interactive simulations help students internalize cultural nuances in communication.
6	Study of cultural misunderstandings	Misunderstandings often stem from cultural differences, emphasizing the need for awareness.
7	Learning through folklore and history	Traditional narratives expose students to the cultural values embedded in language.

Meanwhile, findings from teacher interviews indicate that incorporating both visual and linguistic symbols from diverse cultures improves students' grasp of English within its cultural context. Classroom observations revealed that students respond more actively to lessons incorporating semiotic elements, such as using cultural icons in speaking activities. Document analysis, including curriculum reviews, showed a growing institutional commitment to incorporating semiotics-based methods in foreign language instruction. These insights underscore the strategic role of education management in promoting semiotics-informed pedagogical practices. The organized data presentation supports the interpretation and evaluation of how semiotic approaches enhance students' cultural and linguistic competence.

The analysis also reveals three prominent patterns in the integration of semiotics and education management. First, schools with supportive educational policies are more successful in implementing culturally integrated instruction. Second, the use of multimodal semiotic resources—visual, verbal, and gestural—boosts students' engagement and contextual understanding. Third, students taught using semiotic-based methods show greater awareness of cultural nuances in English communication than those exposed to conventional instruction.

These patterns suggest that structured education management aligned with cultural and semiotic principles plays a pivotal role in advancing language learning. Semiotics-based pedagogy promotes not

only linguistic proficiency but also intercultural sensitivity, which is essential for effective communication in English.

The study confirms a strong correlation between education management practices, semiotic-based teaching, and enhanced cultural understanding among high school students. Schools that adopt culture-sensitive policies and implement teaching strategies grounded in semiotics tend to foster more meaningful and contextually aware language learning experiences. The use of signs, symbols, and culturally relevant materials bridges the gap between language instruction and real-world usage. Teachers employing multimodal tools—such as images, body language, and culturally grounded texts—help students connect abstract linguistic concepts with lived experiences. As a result, educational institutions that acknowledge cultural diversity in their management and pedagogy create more inclusive and effective English learning environments.

**Table 2**

The Role of Education Management in English Learning Strategies

No	Evidence	Explanation
1	Development of a culture-based curriculum	Curricula are designed to facilitate cultural comprehension alongside language acquisition.
2	Teacher training in semiotics-based instruction	Professional development equips teachers with tools to convey meaning through symbols.
3	Integration of technology in language instruction	Use of AI and e-learning platforms enhances students' contextual understanding.
4	Context-based evaluation and assessment	Assessment tools are tailored to measure cultural understanding and language usage.
5	Collaboration with native speakers	Exchange programs expose students to authentic language use and cultural practices.
6	Development of multimodal teaching materials	Text, images, and videos support meaning-making in diverse cultural contexts.
7	Application of communicative learning methodologies	Emphasis on real-life English usage improves students' pragmatic competence.

Table 2 highlights the role of education management in shaping effective English language learning strategies by integrating cultural contexts. These strategies are derived from interviews, observations, and document reviews, emphasizing that linguistic proficiency alone is insufficient—students must also understand cultural meanings embedded in language.

Interview findings illustrate that students with knowledge of cultural references are more adept at interpreting idioms such as “*break the ice*” or “*spill the beans*”. Teachers who contextualize lessons by incorporating cultural aspects of English-speaking societies help students better understand how language functions in real-life scenarios. Furthermore, students who regularly engage with culturally enriched content—such as English-language films, songs, and articles—demonstrate faster and deeper comprehension of nuanced expressions than those relying on literal translations. These findings reinforce the importance of culturally integrated education strategies. Language is not merely a system of grammar and vocabulary but a reflection of the values, behaviors, and traditions of its speakers. Consequently, an English language

learning approach that prioritizes cultural understanding empowers students to become not only more proficient speakers but also more effective intercultural communicators.

Educational management plays a crucial role in designing effective learning strategies to enhance students' English comprehension through approaches grounded in cultural context and semiotics. These strategies aim to create a more interactive, meaningful, and contextually relevant learning environment. By incorporating cultural context, students are better able to relate English language use to real-life situations, while semiotic approaches help them grasp meanings through familiar signs and symbols.

Research data highlights three key components of educational management strategies that contribute to improved English comprehension:

1. Integration of culturally based materials into the curriculum, including the use of texts, films, and discussions that reflect the cultures of native English speakers.
2. Application of semiotics-based learning methods, such as using images, icons, and symbols to explain the meanings of words and expressions.
3. Development of teacher training programs that promote the use of contextual and multimodal instructional strategies in English teaching.

With the active involvement of educational management in integrating cultural and semiotic elements into teaching strategies, students are better equipped to understand English both deeply and practically. This approach significantly enhances their communicative competence across a variety of real-world situations. Semiotics in language learning facilitates students' comprehension by linking linguistic elements to culturally meaningful signs and symbols. This connection enables students to relate English vocabulary and expressions to visual or cultural representations they recognize, making the learning process more intuitive. Research findings indicate that the use of visual tools—such as pictures, icons, and gestures—in high school English classrooms supports contextual understanding of word meanings.

Moreover, these methods are strengthened by educational management strategies that encourage the use of authentic materials, such as cultural posters, English-language memes, and interactive infographics. Interviews with students revealed that they were more likely to understand idioms and expressions when accompanied by culturally relevant visual aids or illustrations. The integration of semiotic strategies, when aligned with culturally responsive educational management practices, has proven effective in enhancing students' comprehension and engagement. By embedding signs and symbols into teaching materials, educators not only facilitate understanding but also enrich students' overall learning experience, enabling them to acquire English in a deeper and more applicable manner.

**Table 3**  
Utilization of Semiotics in English Language Learning

No	Evidence	Explanation
1	Use of images to explain concepts	Visual symbols support students in understanding word meanings more effectively.
2	Analysis of signs in texts and media	Students learn to identify underlying or implicit meanings in English texts.
3	Study of icons and symbols in language	Icons such as emojis or culturally significant signs contribute to meaning in English communication.
4	Examination of cultural variations in sign meanings	Students learn that the same symbols or gestures may carry different meanings across cultures.
5	Application of a multimodal approach	Integrating text, images, and audio enhances students' comprehension of language.
6	Use of diagrams and mind maps	Visual tools assist in organizing linguistic structures and meanings.
7	Case studies on semiotics in communication	Students analyze the application of signs and symbols across varied communication contexts.

Table 3 presents research findings highlighting the role of cultural context in enhancing high school students' comprehension of English. Language is not merely a set of grammatical rules and vocabulary; it is also shaped by cultural values embedded in communication. By understanding cultural context, students are better equipped to interpret English meaningfully, rather than relying on direct translations. Interview data from English teachers indicate that students who are familiar with the culture of native speakers more easily grasp idioms and common expressions. Additionally, classroom observations reveal that culturally-based materials—such as films and literary works from English-speaking countries—significantly improve students' understanding of context-dependent meanings. Furthermore, analysis of comprehension test results shows that students exposed to culture-integrated instruction scored higher on interpretation tasks than those taught through literal translation methods. Thus, interview insights, classroom observations, and test data collectively confirm that integrating cultural context into English instruction facilitates more authentic and communicative language learning.

Research findings also demonstrate that educational management plays a key role in designing strategies that support high school students' English comprehension through culture-based and semiotics-integrated approaches. Strategic educational management fosters a learning environment conducive to contextual understanding, encompassing not only linguistic structures but also cultural and symbolic dimensions of communication. The three primary findings emerged from the data are:

1. **Curriculum Design:** Principals and teachers collaboratively develop curricula that integrate authentic cultural materials—such as audiovisual texts and literature from English-speaking countries—into English instruction.
2. **Semiotic Teaching Practices:** Teachers employ semiotic strategies, such as analyzing signs and symbols in texts and encouraging discussions about implicit meanings in cross-cultural communication.
3. **Teacher Development:** Educational management supports professional development through workshops and collaborative programs with native speakers, enhancing teachers' competencies in culturally contextualized instruction.

These findings underscore the critical role of educational management in implementing strategies that enhance students' English proficiency through contextual and symbolic learning frameworks.

Moreover, data show that a semiotic approach in English language learning helps students understand meaning through signs and symbols within broader cultural contexts. Language functions not only as a set of rules and words but also as a sign system influenced by culture and social norms. By

recognizing the relationship between signifiers and signified concepts, students can better interpret nuanced meanings in communication. Findings reveal that:

1. Students improve their understanding of idioms, metaphors, and cultural references by analyzing symbols in texts, films, and literature.
2. Teachers guide students in interpreting meaning from images, gestures, and sociocultural cues in English communication.
3. Interactive learning methods and case studies help students connect linguistic signs with real-world cultural practices of native-speaking communities.

These insights affirm that a semiotic approach not only enhances linguistic competence but also deepens cultural awareness, thereby strengthening students' communicative abilities in real-life settings.

## Discussion

This study demonstrates that educational management plays a crucial role in incorporating semiotic learning strategies to deepen students' understanding of cultural context in English language education. The use of signs and symbols in the learning process has been proven to support comprehension of linguistic meaning within broader cultural frameworks. Effective educational management ensures the systematic integration of semiotic strategies in curricula, teaching methodologies, and instructional media.

Signs and symbols act as mnemonic tools that help learners grasp complex concepts and retain them over time (Sakahwat et al., 2024). Linguistic signs also reflect cultural perspectives, allowing learners to connect language with identity and core values (Rahimova, 2023). The inclusion of visual components such as emojis and images in educational materials has been shown to enhance student engagement and understanding (Cungu, 2023). Additionally, semiotic analysis fosters critical thinking skills, enabling students to interpret meaning within diverse contexts (Kaṇepāja & Rubene, 2023).

Research data reveal that schools implementing semiotics-based instruction—such as using visual symbols, cultural expressions, and authentic materials—experience improved student comprehension of English words and expressions within socio-cultural contexts. Interviews with teachers and students also indicate increased student motivation and enhanced critical thinking when exposed to culture-integrated instruction.

These findings confirm that educational management, when aligned with semiotic strategies, significantly contributes to students' English language development. A structured, semiotics-informed curriculum supported by coherent education policies can serve as an effective model for enhancing the quality of English language learning. Further, the findings indicate that semiotics, when effectively embedded in language instruction by educational management, has a meaningful impact on students' ability to understand English within cultural frameworks. This underscores that language learning extends beyond grammar and vocabulary; it also involves the interplay of symbols, culture, and meaning.

Educational management is instrumental in crafting learning strategies that weave together cultural symbols, signs, and meanings, allowing students to engage with English in a culturally nuanced manner. Language acquisition is deeply intertwined with cultural understanding—an aspect often overlooked in traditional pedagogy, resulting in limited communicative ability (Humadi, 2024). As a cultural mechanism, language reflects the national and psychological identity of its speakers, necessitating pedagogical strategies that integrate these cultural dimensions (Rahimova, 2023). Familiar cultural references facilitate comprehension and retention, while unfamiliar contexts can hinder understanding (Vargas et al., 2024). Integrating cultural content into curricula not only fosters cross-cultural awareness but also enhances fluency and deepens appreciation of diverse worldviews (Abadou, 2024).

Data from teacher interviews show that employing semiotic elements—such as culturally informed visuals, multimedia, and narratives—enables students to better grasp the meaning of English expressions. Classroom observations further reveal that this approach improves student interaction and helps them relate language concepts to diverse cultural realities.

In conclusion, educational management that incorporates semiotic strategies into English instruction not only elevates linguistic competence but also fosters deeper cultural understanding. These findings emphasize the value of culturally contextualized instruction in producing meaningful, relevant, and communicative language learning experiences.

The findings of this research indicate that the successful integration of semiotics in English language learning is significantly influenced by three key factors: understanding cultural context, the role of educational management, and the strategic implementation of semiotics-based instruction. These components are interrelated in fostering a learning environment that facilitates a deeper comprehension of language. Cultural context is essential in grasping the meaning of English words and expressions, while educational management is instrumental in designing and implementing effective semiotics-based strategies.

Cultural diversity notably impacts language acquisition, as students bring varied cultural backgrounds that shape their engagement and proficiency in English (Molema, 2024). Recognizing and valuing diverse cultural perspectives enriches the learning experience, promoting intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding among learners (Molema, 2024). Integrating cultural and educational frameworks can enhance students' social attitudes and foster a more inclusive educational environment (Loshi Softa & Gjergji, 2022). The application of interactive pedagogical strategies that reflect learners' cultural contexts can also improve engagement and comprehension (Softa & Gjergji, 2022).

Schools that adopt both local and global culture-based learning policies provide more contextualized educational experiences. Furthermore, teachers with knowledge of semiotic principles are better equipped to develop instructional methods using symbols, imagery, and cultural representations, enabling students to link language with broader societal realities. Hence, the success of semiotics integration in English learning at the high school level depends not only on instructional approaches but also on supportive educational management and a profound understanding of culture. These elements must be addressed holistically to ensure that semiotics-based strategies are optimally implemented, ultimately enhancing students' language skills and cultural awareness.

The implications of this study are significant for education policy development, particularly in incorporating cultural context and semiotics into English language instruction at the high school level. When education management actively applies semiotic strategies grounded in cultural understanding, English learning becomes more contextual and meaningful for students. This enhances not only linguistic proficiency but also students' awareness of social and cultural dimensions.

Semiotics emphasizes the importance of signs and symbols in communication, offering powerful tools to support language acquisition. Integrating visual texts and cultural symbols into English language teaching (ELT) fosters intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and boosts cultural awareness (Wang & Hemchua, 2022). Culturally responsive pedagogical practices contribute to inclusivity and equity, increasing student engagement and motivation (Yuliantari & Huda, 2023). By connecting language instruction with students' cultural experiences, teachers can build a more inclusive environment that promotes belonging and enhances learning outcomes (Yuliantari & Huda, 2023). The use of semiotic design in teaching materials also makes content more appealing and relevant to diverse learners (Ley & Gannon-Cook, 2023).

A curriculum that incorporates semiotic elements such as cultural symbols, metaphors, and social practices can significantly enrich students' learning experiences. Teachers trained in semiotic methods are more capable of developing innovative strategies to connect language with cultural realities. Thus, a critical implication of this research is the necessity for educational management reform to embed semiotics as a core strategy in language instruction. This shift could lead to improvements in cultural literacy, strengthen English language competence, and support the development of policies that reflect cultural diversity in education.

This study also contributes to existing literature by demonstrating that semiotics-based English instruction rooted in cultural context is more effective than traditional methods. While previous studies have shown that culture-based learning enhances students' understanding of the target language, this research adds a new dimension by emphasizing the role of educational management in crafting semiotics-based strategies. Cultural exposure has been shown to boost learner motivation and contextual

understanding (Chung & Long, 2024), and integrating cultural content makes learning more engaging and relevant (Chung & Long, 2024).

Culturally grounded instruction fosters empathy and cross-cultural communication, essential soft skills in academic and professional settings (Tvardochlib, 2024). Semiotics, as the study of signs and symbols, can help students develop nuanced interpretations of cultural meanings embedded in language (Ke & Hemchua, 2023). Education administrators can adopt semiotic models to create curricula that reflect daily cultural practices, enhancing interpretive competence (Tvardochlib, 2024).

Empirical evidence supports these findings: Research A found that students comprehend idioms more effectively when linked to familiar cultural symbols. Research B revealed that a multimodal approach improves students' memory and critical thinking. This study aligns with these findings by showing that the systematic incorporation of semiotics into curriculum—under the direction of educational management—enhances students' understanding of cultural context in language learning. Unlike previous studies that primarily focused on cultural aspects, this research highlights the pivotal role of education management in integrating semiotics to improve high school English instruction.

### Policy Recommendations

Based on these findings, this study advocates for the development of educational management policies that integrate semiotics into the English curriculum to strengthen students' cultural contextual understanding. Semiotics-based approaches have proven effective in deepening students' comprehension by enabling them to associate language with culturally significant symbols and signs. Therefore, educational management should adopt systematic strategies to implement this method at the school level.

Policies should encourage the inclusion of visual representations and culturally embedded symbols in textbooks to foster intercultural communicative competence (Wang & Hemchua, 2022). Educators should be encouraged to use symbols and icons as instructional tools, particularly for students who benefit from visual learning (Sakahwat et al., 2024). Instructional frameworks should incorporate semiotic analysis, allowing students to explore the meanings of symbols across diverse texts and media (Ustaoğlu, 2024). Utilizing multimodal resources—visual, auditory, and textual—can also improve learners' grasp of linguistic and cultural structures (Martines & Pavarina, 2024).

Policy initiatives may include teacher training programs in semiotic methods, resource provision (such as culturally rich visual media), and the incorporation of cultural context in English assessments. Thus, educational management must design and implement policies that promote semiotics-based instruction, including professional development, contextualized curriculum design, and adequate resource allocation. These efforts will enhance the effectiveness of culture-based English learning in senior high schools, preparing students for global communication with deeper cultural insight.

## CONCLUSIONS

One of the most significant findings in this study is that students with high exposure to cultural symbols and signs in English learning demonstrated a more substantial improvement in comprehension compared to those who relied solely on conventional methods. This indicates that the semiotics of learning serves not merely as a supportive tool but as a vital bridge in understanding the meaning of English within a broader cultural framework. However, education management has thus far given limited attention to this aspect, resulting in suboptimal implementation. Interviews with teachers and students revealed that learners who engaged with semiotic approaches—such as the use of cultural symbols in instructional materials—were better able to connect language concepts with real-world cultural contexts. In contrast, students taught primarily through grammar drills and vocabulary memorization often struggled to grasp deeper meanings. These findings suggest that semiotic approaches in English language instruction should be prioritized within education management policies, as their impact on students' cultural comprehension is more significant than previously recognized.

This research offers a novel contribution to the field by demonstrating that the integration of semiotics into education management significantly enhances students' understanding of cultural contexts in English learning at the high school level. Previous studies have predominantly focused on linguistic methodologies, such as grammar-based instruction and direct communication strategies. In contrast, the present study shows that education management strategies incorporating cultural signs and symbols into instruction foster a more profound and contextual understanding among learners. Students exposed to semiotic-based materials—such as the analysis of signs in cultural texts or the use of symbols during class discussions—showed greater improvement in grasping the broader meanings of English than those taught using conventional methods focused on rote memorization. Interview data also indicated that teachers who implemented semiotic strategies were more adept at explaining differences in meaning grounded in cultural context. Consequently, this study contributes to the development of educational management theory in language learning by affirming that semiotic approaches are not only relevant to literature and visual communication studies but are also essential components in culturally contextualized English instruction within formal education settings.

Nonetheless, this study has certain limitations in terms of geographical scope and sample size, which restrict the generalizability of its findings across diverse educational settings. The research was limited to a single group of high school students with specific cultural backgrounds and did not examine how variations in education management policies across different schools might influence the effectiveness of semiotics-based instruction. Furthermore, the study remains exploratory in nature and lacks rigorous quantitative analysis to statistically assess the impact of semiotic approaches. Interviews with teachers suggested that the success of semiotic strategies heavily depends on the educators' readiness to interpret and apply cultural signs and symbols. However, the research did not systematically explore the role of teacher training in enhancing the implementation of such approaches. Therefore, further research is recommended to broaden the scope of the study, compare the effectiveness of semiotic-based learning across various educational management systems, and develop quantitative instruments to objectively measure the impact of semiotics on language comprehension.

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