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RESEARCH ARTICLE

The construction of connotative meaning in east Javanese batik product descriptions on *e-commerce*: Persuasion strategies and cultural representation

Itznaniyah Umie Murniatie[1]*, Khoirul Muttaqin[2], Alma Mufida Rosmeida[3]
[1,2,3] Universitas Islam Malang, Malang, Indonesia

***Corresponding Author**
itznaniyahmurniatie@unisma.ac.id

ABSTRACT
Product descriptions on e-commerce platforms serve as a primary reference for consumers who cannot physically interact with products; thus, language plays a crucial role in shaping trust and purchasing decisions. Batik a cultural heritage recognized by UNESCO is now widely marketed online as both a cultural artifact and a commodity. However, existing linguistic studies on batik have largely focused on the names of motifs and their lexical or cultural meanings, rather than on commercial digital discourse. Consequently, little is known about how sellers integrate cultural significance with marketing language an aspect essential to understanding how linguistic choices construct the image of batik for online consumers. This study aims to analyze the construction of connotative meanings within product descriptions of East Javanese batik, while also examining their persuasive functions and cultural representations through specific lexical choices. Employing a semantic, pragmatic, and discourse-analytic approach within an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design this research analyzes 100 product descriptions from 20 online stores across two platforms. The findings reveal nine categories of connotative meaning, most notably "uniqueness" (70%) and "traditionalism" (54%), conveyed through terms such as "distinctive", "authentic", and "elegant." The dominant persuasion strategies involve cultural appeal (72%) and identity (50%), while cultural representation is manifested through the philosophy behind motifs, markers of regional identity, and traditional craftsmanship processes. Lexical choices generate connotative meanings that serve both a persuasive function and a role in cultural representation. This study proposes an analytical model that bridges semantics with digital discourse analysis, demonstrating that the diction used in descriptions of cultural products carries multi-layered meanings that extend well beyond mere transactional information
Keywords: *connotative meaning; semantics; persuasion strategies; cultural representation; e-commerce product descriptions*.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has given rise to increasingly diverse forms of language use in everyday life (Dian Maharani et al., 2025) (I. U. Pratama et al., 2026). One space that illustrates this change is *e-commerce*, which functions not only as a place for transactions but also as a communication space between sellers and prospective consumers (Aminuddin et al., 2026) (Ikhsan et al., 2026). Because consumers cannot directly observe and experience products, product descriptions become the main source of information as well as a means of building perceptions, appeal, and product credibility. Accordingly, product descriptions can be viewed as a form of digital discourse that is important to examine from a linguistic perspective (Qoriah, Muhammad Akbar, et al., 2025).

From a linguistic perspective, product descriptions cannot be understood solely on the basis of the denotative information they convey (Agustia et al., 2025) . Particular words, phrases, and expressions can bring additional meanings that are not directly contained in the referent they designate (Al Fajr et al., 2025). Words such as premium, exclusive, authentic, distinctive (*khas*), heritage, traditional, graceful, or philosophical, for example, not only provide information about product characteristics but also build particular associations in the reader (Chen, 2024). Such language use shows that meaning in commercial texts is formed through the relationship among lexical meaning, context of use, and the knowledge held by readers. Therefore, studies of product descriptions need to attend not only to what is said but also to what meanings are built through such language choices.

The question of meaning becomes even more interesting when language is used to describe products with a cultural dimension, such as batik (Ekawati & Rachma, 2026) (Ramdani & Nirwana, 2026). Motif names, regions of origin, traditional terms, and words that refer to history and cultural values can bring layers of meaning that go beyond literal meaning. Linguistic studies of batik have so far shown that linguistic elements in motif naming can represent the environment, history, social values, local wisdom, and community identity.

These findings show that batik is a linguistically rich object because the language surrounding it functions not only as a product marker but also carries cultural knowledge and values (Herlinawati & Firdaus, 2025) (Ekawati & Rachma, 2026). However, most linguistic research on batik still focuses on motif names, lexicons, lexical meaning, cultural meaning, and philosophical values. The research focus lies in the relationship between linguistic forms and the cultural background that gave rise to the motifs or terms. Such an approach is important for understanding the relationship between language and culture, but it has not fully explained how those meanings are reused when batik is placed in a commercial digital communication context.

This change in the context of language use deserves attention. Language used in naming or talking about batik within a cultural environment does not always serve the same function when it is used in *e-commerce* product descriptions. This change of context allows the function of language to shift from a mere cultural marker to a persuasive element in commercial discourse (Dian Maharani et al., 2025). In linguistic studies, this phenomenon can be examined through the concept of connotative meaning. Connotative meaning refers to additional meaning that arises through particular associations attached to a linguistic form on the basis of the social, emotional, or cultural context, or the experience, of language users (Rahmawati et al., 2024) (Islami & Fitriyani, 2025). This concept is important because *e-commerce* texts make extensive use of words that appear simple literally but have strong associative power (Wang et al., 2026). Therefore, analyzing connotative meaning enables research to reveal layers of meaning that remain invisible if product descriptions are analyzed only on the basis of their explicit information (Wang et al., 2026).

Studies on persuasive aspects of *e-commerce* language have also begun to develop. Research conducted by (Braca & Dondio, 2023) (Luo et al., 2021) (Khedri et al., 2022) (Nawas et al., 2023) shows that rational and emotional language appeals used in *live streaming e-commerce* influence consumers' purchase intention through the mediation of self-referencing and self-brand congruity, with emotional appeals proving more dominant. In line with this, (Luo et al., 2021) classify the persuasive language styles of *live streaming* hosts into five types: *appealing to personality, logic, emotion, reward, exaggeration*, and find that the personal (credibility) style has the greatest positive effect on sales volume, while the effectiveness of each style varies by product category. (Braca & Dondio, 2023) also reveal that persuasion techniques such as rhetorical devices, *flattery*, and *appeal to logic* can have their effectiveness predicted on the basis of individuals' personality profiles and

psychological attitudes, underscoring the importance of tailoring persuasive messages to audience characteristics. Meanwhile, from a linguistic-cultural perspective, (Nawas et al., 2023) reveals the phenomenon of the commodification of Arabic as an Islamic branding strategy in Indonesian e-commerce (Shopee), where theological terms such as *sunnah*, *syar'i*, and *halal* are used as store labels and product brand names to build Muslim consumers' trust through the representation of religious-symbolic meaning. Taken together, these five studies affirm that language in the *e-commerce* domain functions not only as an information tool but also as a strategic instrument of persuasion and of constructing connotative-cultural meaning.

Nevertheless, a research gap remains regarding the relationship between connotative meaning and persuasive function in product description texts that carry cultural content. Research on *e-commerce* language tends to identify linguistic characteristics, text quality, word choice, or persuasive strategies in general (Qoriah, Akbar, et al., 2025), whereas linguistic research on batik more often discusses lexical and cultural meanings in motif names (Nuradita & Nurhayati, 2024a). These two domains have rarely been brought together in a single analytical framework. Yet, when cultural products are marketed digitally, language becomes the medium that connects linguistic meaning, cultural values, and persuasive aims. This gap is the starting point of this study.

East Javanese batik was selected as the research object because it has a diversity of forms, motifs, terms, and cultural backgrounds that allows variation in language choices to emerge in product descriptions. Place names, motif names, traditional terms, and expressions related to history and cultural values can be used by sellers to explain a product and, at the same time, build its image. In this context, the study does not treat batik primarily as a cultural artifact but takes the language used to describe batik as its main object. This shift of focus is important for positioning the study within linguistics: batik serves as the data context, while the construction of meaning through language is the research problem.

Previous research shows three tendencies relevant to this study. First, linguistic studies of batik generally examine lexicons and motif names, whether in terms of cultural meaning, philosophy, or ecolinguistics, for example on Pekalongan batik motifs (Nuradita & Nurhayati, 2024b) (Devina & Atrinawati, 2022) (Hayati, 2012). These studies affirm the richness of batik meaning but have not placed that meaning in a commercial communication context. Second, studies of language in *e-commerce* product descriptions have shown that language choices influence appeal, credibility, and consumers'

perceptions (Afifah Luqman Sadida et al., 2025) (Nuradita & Nurhayati, 2024b), but they generally take general or fashion products rather than products that carry cultural values. Thus, no study has yet integrated connotative meaning, persuasion strategies, and cultural representation in East Javanese batik product descriptions. This study fills that gap by offering a tiered analytical model that links lexical choice, connotative meaning, persuasion strategies, and cultural representation.

Theoretically, this study rests primarily on semantic studies, particularly of connotative meaning, and then links it to pragmatic perspectives and discourse analysis to explain the function of language use in commercial communication contexts. Connotative meaning is used to identify the associations that arise from particular linguistic units (Fuadi et al., 2026) (Fakhrunnisa & Nurpadillah, 2026) (Gracella et al., 2026) (Diyaulhaq et al., 2026), while the pragmatic perspective helps explain the function of using those linguistic units to achieve communicative goals (Biber et al., 2021) (Mardiana, 2024). Furthermore, the concept of persuasion is used to identify how language choices can be directed to create particular appeal for a product (Baan, 2022) (Morady Moghaddam & Esmaeilpour, 2023) . Cultural representation is positioned as an analytical consequence of language choice when the connotations built relate to identity, tradition, history, values, and locality (Wachid Bambang Suharto et al., 2026).

Accordingly, this study does not position connotative meaning, persuasion, and cultural representation as three independent objects. The three are positioned in a tiered linguistic relationship: the choice of linguistic form produces connotative meaning; connotative meaning performs a particular communicative function; and when that meaning refers to local elements, its use also helps form cultural representation. This relationship enables the study to explain how a word or expression in a product description can have a more complex function than merely providing information about the product.

This perspective also distinguishes the present study from previous research. Anthropolinguistic studies of batik generally start from linguistic elements to reveal the culture that underlies them, whereas this study starts from digital texts produced by sellers to examine how language constructs meaning about cultural products. Previous *e-commerce* research has shown the importance of word choice and product description quality in sales communication, but such research generally does not specifically examine connotative meaning related to local cultural products. Accordingly, this study seeks to bring semantic studies together with studies of digital discourse and the language of

cultural products. This study aims to analyze the construction of connotative meaning in East Javanese batik product descriptions on e-commerce and to explain the persuasive functions and cultural representations built through such language use. Based on this aim, the research questions are formulated as follows: (1) what forms and categories of connotative meaning are found in East Javanese batik product descriptions on e-commerce; (2) how is this connotative meaning used to build persuasion strategies; (3) how does this language use form the cultural representation of East Java; and (4) what is the relationship among connotative meaning, persuasion strategies, and cultural representation in East Javanese batik product description discourse?

METHOD

This study uses *mixed methods* with a *sequential explanatory* design. This design was chosen because the study aims not only to identify and map tendencies in the use of connotative meaning in product descriptions but also to explain in depth how that meaning is constructed and functions as a persuasion strategy and forms cultural representation (Khasanah et al., 2026). The quantitative stage is used to map the frequency and distribution of data categories, while the qualitative stage is used to interpret the construction of meaning on the basis of linguistic and cultural context. The two stages are integrated at the interpretation stage to obtain a complete explanation of the relationship among connotative meaning, persuasion strategies, and cultural representation.

The research data are the texts of East Javanese batik product descriptions published on *e-commerce* platforms. The population comprises all East Javanese batik product descriptions publicly available on the selected *e-commerce* platforms during the data collection period. The study uses two *e-commerce* platforms on the grounds that both have a relatively diverse range of batik products and provide product descriptions in textual form that can be analyzed.

The sample was determined using *purposive sampling* with the following criteria: (1) the product is batik or a batik-based product; (2) the product is related to East Javanese batik on the basis of region of origin, motif name, local identity, or cultural information stated in the description; (3) the product page provides a textual description that can be analyzed; (4) the description contains at least one linguistic unit that potentially carries connotative meaning; (5) product information and store identity can be identified; and (6) the data can be documented at the time of the study.

Based on these criteria, the study targeted approximately 100 product descriptions

from at least 20 stores on two *e-commerce platforms*. This number serves as the research corpus, not as a statistical representation of all East Javanese batik products. If, after screening, data that did not meet the analytical criteria were found, those data were excluded from the corpus so that the final sample size was determined by the relevance and suitability of the data. The main research instrument is the researcher, who determines, codes, and interprets the data. To maintain analytical consistency, the study uses a coding sheet (*coding sheet*) developed on the basis of the research focus and theoretical framework.

The instrument consists of four main parts. First, a data identification sheet that records the data code, platform, store, product name, region or motif, and collection date. Second, a connotative meaning analysis sheet that records the linguistic unit, denotative meaning, connotative meaning, connotation category, and context of use. Third, a persuasion strategy analysis sheet that records the linguistic form, persuasion strategy category, linguistic indicators, and communicative function. Fourth, a cultural representation analysis sheet that records cultural markers, forms of representation, cultural meaning, and comparison sources.

The initial categories of connotative meaning include authenticity, traditionalism, beauty, uniqueness, prestige, philosophical value, identity, pride, and emotional association (Sederevičiūtė-Pačiauskienė & Kamašauskė, 2025) (Anido Freire, 2014) (Mick et al., 2004). These categories are *sensitizing concepts* and may be revised during the analysis if data patterns not yet accommodated are found. Persuasion strategies are categorized on the basis of the linguistic functions that appear in the data, such as cultural appeal, emotional appeal, authenticity, identity, prestige, quality, and product value (Alsalloum & Gainous, 2025) (Kim et al., 2016) (Septianto et al., 2020) (Septianto et al., 2020).

Data were collected through documentation and observation-note-taking (*simak-catat*) techniques. The researcher searched *e-commerce platforms* using keywords related to East Javanese batik, including Malang batik, Mojokerto batik, Madura batik, Banyuwangi batik, Tuban batik, Pacitan batik, and Kediri batik. The search was conducted during the established period, and every datum that met the inclusion criteria was documented. The data found were copied in full from the product description section and coded to maintain data traceability. Each product was given a unique code, for example BJTM-001, BJTM-002, and so on. Supporting information in the form of product name, store, platform, region or motif, and data collection date was recorded as metadata. Product page links were also saved as documentation of the data source.

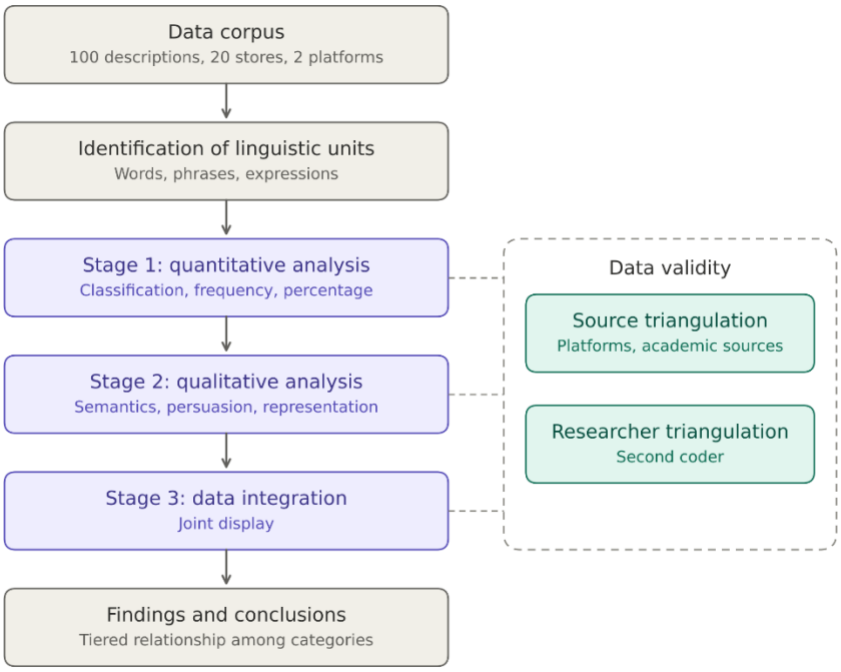


Figure 1: Research Stages

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forms and Categories of Connotative Meaning in Product Descriptions

The data of this study consist of 100 East Javanese batik product descriptions gathered from two *e-commerce* platforms (Shopee and TikTok Shop) through 20 online stores, covering 12 regions of origin, with the largest shares coming from Banyuwangi (20%), Madura (17%), and Lamongan, Tuban, Tulungagung, and Pacitan (10% each). From these 100 descriptions, linguistic units potentially carrying connotative meaning were identified and then coded into nine categories of connotative meaning and seven categories of persuasion strategy, as formulated in the research coding sheet. The discussion below is organized according to the four research questions: the forms and categories of connotative meaning, the persuasive function, cultural representation, and the structural relationship among the three.

The analysis of the 100 product descriptions shows that connotative meaning appears consistently in most of the data, with the distribution of categories presented in Table 1.

No	Connotative Meaning Category	f	%
1	Uniqueness	70	70%

No	Connotative Meaning Category	f	%
2	Traditionalism	54	54%
3	Emotional Association	47	47%
4	Authenticity	42	42%
5	Prestige	36	36%
6	Beauty	33	33%
7	Identity	26	26%
8	Philosophical Value	13	13%
9	Pride	3	3%

Table 1. Distribution of Connotative Meaning Categories in East Javanese Batik Product Descriptions (N = 100 descriptions)

Table 1 shows that the uniqueness category is the most dominant connotation, appearing in 70% of descriptions. This finding indicates that lexical choices such as "distinctive", "unique", and "different" do not merely provide information about product characteristics but also build particular associations about the product's distinguishing value (Bergh et al., 1987). In semantic studies, connotative meaning relates to the associations attached to a linguistic form beyond its referential or literal information (Gabrovšek, 2007). Thus, when the expression "typical of Blitar" is used in a product description, the form not only points to a geographic connection but can also activate associations of distinctiveness, locality, and product uniqueness.

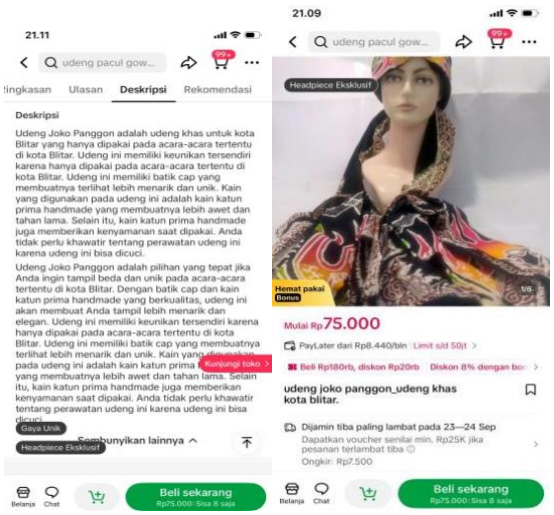


Figure 2: BJTM 58

As an illustration, the description of product BJTM-58 states that Udeng Joko Panggon is a distinctive *udeng* for the city of Blitar that is worn only at certain events in the city of Blitar. Denotatively, this expression provides information about the origin and context of use of the product. Connotatively, however, the word *khas* and the construction "only worn

at certain events" build associations of exclusivity and local attachment. Accordingly, connotative meaning in the research data resides not only at the level of individual word meaning but is also formed through relationships among linguistic units within the context of the product description (Nikolic, 2008). The distinction between literal meaning and meaning that arises through such associations is important in the analysis of meaning, especially when signs are used to generate additional layers of meaning in social and cultural contexts.

The traditionalism category occupies second place (54%), largely realized through references to region of origin as well as traditional production processes hand-drawn batik, done manually by skilled hands. This finding shows that traditionalism in product descriptions is represented not only through place names but also through the foregrounding of production processes and skills (Nurul & Purnama, 2026). In this context, terms that refer to traditional techniques work as markers connecting the material characteristics of the product with broader cultural values; the words "authentic" do not merely describe origin but become persuasive units that build product credibility (Moulard et al., 2021) (Bakr et al., 2025) .

This relationship becomes even clearer in the authenticity category (42%), largely realized through the construction "genuine hand-drawn batik" and mentions of manual production. Denotatively, this phrase provides information about the production technique. At the connotative level, however, the words "genuine", *manual*, and "skilled hands" build associations of genuineness, skill, and the product's closeness to traditional batik-making practice, so that connotative words function to build associations toward a product (Motoki et al., 2022).

The emotional association category (47%) mostly relates to the physical comfort of wearing batik cloth "cool, "comfortable to wear", "not hot", "sweat-absorbing", as seen in the description of BJTM-07: "The fabric is smooth cotton, absorbs sweat, is not hot, and is comfortable to wear". Although it appears to be functional information, this linguistic unit carries a connotation of comfort that can influence perceptions of the experience of using the product. Thus, material attributes are translated into experiences that users may feel. Studies of online product descriptions show that language that activates sensory experience can help consumers form mental images of the experience of using the product before they actually use it directly (Nofiyanti et al., 2026).

The authenticity (42%) and prestige (36%) categories also appear with fairly high frequency. Authenticity is generally realized through implicit and explicit opposition

between “genuine hand-drawn batik” and “stamped/printed batik”, as in BJTM-52: “Genuine hand-drawn batik made manually by skilled hands, using a batik *canting* tool.” Meanwhile, prestige is largely built through strings of adjectives such as “elegant”, “exclusive”, and “classy”, for example in BJTM-03: “The gradated purple base color gives an impression of elegance, exclusivity, and class.” This pattern shows that evaluative lexical choices can form the symbolic image of a product, not merely convey its physical attribute (A. Pratama et al., 2026)

The philosophical value category (13%), although not dominant quantitatively, has high semantic density qualitatively, especially in products with the Gajah Oling motif typical of Banyuwangi. BJTM-02 describes the motif as a “symbol of strength and wisdom”, while BJTM-05 calls it “an invitation to always remember the Creator”. Such philosophical connotation cannot be reduced to a mere selling strategy because it refers to a broader system of cultural meaning outside the description text itself. Studies of Gajah Oling also document philosophical, historical, and spiritual interpretations of the motif (Zahro et al., 2025).

The explicit pride category (3%) is the least frequent, generally present only in products from stores that explicitly position themselves as representatives of a region, as in BJTM-54: “Tanjung Bumi batik of Bangkalan, the pride of Madura island.” This finding shows that expressions of pride need not be explicit to build cultural identity; in much of the data, a similar function is instead built through markers of locality, traditionalism, and authenticity(Wijaya et al., 2025). .

Connotative Meaning as a Persuasion Strategy

The second research question concerns how this connotative meaning functions as a persuasion strategy. Table 2 presents the distribution of persuasion strategy categories in the data corpus.

No	Persuasion Strategy Category	f	%
1	Cultural Appeal	72	72%
2	Identity Appeal	50	50%
3	Emotional Appeal	43	43%

No	Persuasion Strategy Category	f	%
4	Quality	42	42%
5	Authenticity	37	37%
6	Prestige	26	26%
7	Product Value	12	12%

Table 2. Distribution of Persuasion Strategy Categories in East Javanese Batik Product Descriptions (N = 100 descriptions)

The cultural appeal category is the most frequently found persuasion strategy (72%), followed by identity appeal (50%) and emotional appeal (43%). This pattern shows that East Javanese batik sellers on *e-commerce* tend to rely on cultural capital as the basis of persuasive arguments, rather than merely highlighting price or functional advantages (product value appears in only 12% of the data). This finding is relevant to (Sun et al., 2024), who show that online product descriptions use linguistic choices to attract attention, build interest, and encourage purchase decisions. In the context of East Javanese batik, this "attention" and "interest" are built specifically through references to the authenticity of local culture, not through generic appeals such as discounts or fashion trends.

The relationship between connotative meaning and persuasion strategy is clearest in the category pairs authenticity–authenticity and traditionalism, such as identity–cultural appeal, which shows that in many cases a single linguistic unit performs a dual function: building a particular connotative meaning while carrying out a corresponding persuasive function (A. Pratama et al., 2026). For example, the phrase "genuine hand-drawn batik" in various Madura data denotatively merely states the production technique, but connotatively builds authenticity, and persuasively functions to convince prospective consumers that the product is more valuable than stamped or printed batik, which is cheaper.

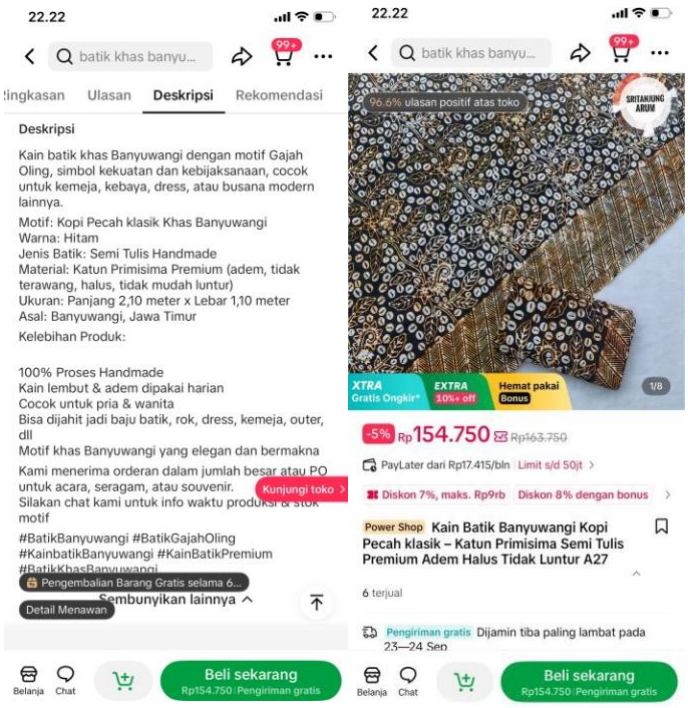


Figure 3: BJTM 67

Interestingly, the quality category (42%) is often interwoven with emotional connotation elements to produce layered persuasion. Descriptions such as “soft, cool cloth for daily wear” (BJTM-67) combine functional information (material quality) with a connotation of emotional comfort, so that the appeal is not only cognitive (this product is of good quality) but also affective (this product will make its wearer feel comfortable).

Cultural Representation of East Java in Product Descriptions

The third research question concerns how language use in product descriptions forms the cultural representation of East Java. The results show that cultural representation in the data corpus is realized through at least three patterns.

First, representation through motif naming and philosophy, most prominent in the Gajah Oling motif typical of Banyuwangi. This motif is consistently described across stores as a symbol of strength, wisdom, and spiritual reminder, a pattern of narrative repetition that indicates a shared cultural narrative already established among sellers, rather than a single store's claim. This cross-source consistency gives an initial indication that the representation is rooted in broader cultural knowledge. This is in line with the findings of (Cahyadin et al., 2025) (Ranarsih & Tiani, 2025) (ila Rachma & Amrullah, 2024),

which show that the naming of Sasak *sesek* cloth is not arbitrary but serves as a medium of cultural communication representing the religious, social, and philosophical values and collective identity of the community, while other findings show that Tegalan batik motifs reflect the life, history, environment, beliefs, and moral and cultural values of the local community, so that batik motifs function as a medium for preserving and affirming local cultural identity.

Second, representation through regional identity, evident in naming patterns that explicitly link the product with its region of origin ("*khas Madura*", "*khas Tuban*", "*khas Blitar*", "*khas Lamongan*"). This pattern affirms that in *e-commerce* discourse, East Javanese batik is not represented as a single, homogeneous category but as a mosaic of regional identities, each with its own distinctive markers: the Gajah Oling motif for Banyuwangi, the Tanjung Bumi motif for Madura, the Beji Cakrapala motif for Blitar, and so on. Such representation is in line with the findings of anthropolinguistic studies of batik showing that motif naming represents local wisdom and the identity of the local community (Ayu et al., 2026); this study shows that such representation does not disappear when moved into the digital space but is instead reproduced as a marker of market differentiation.

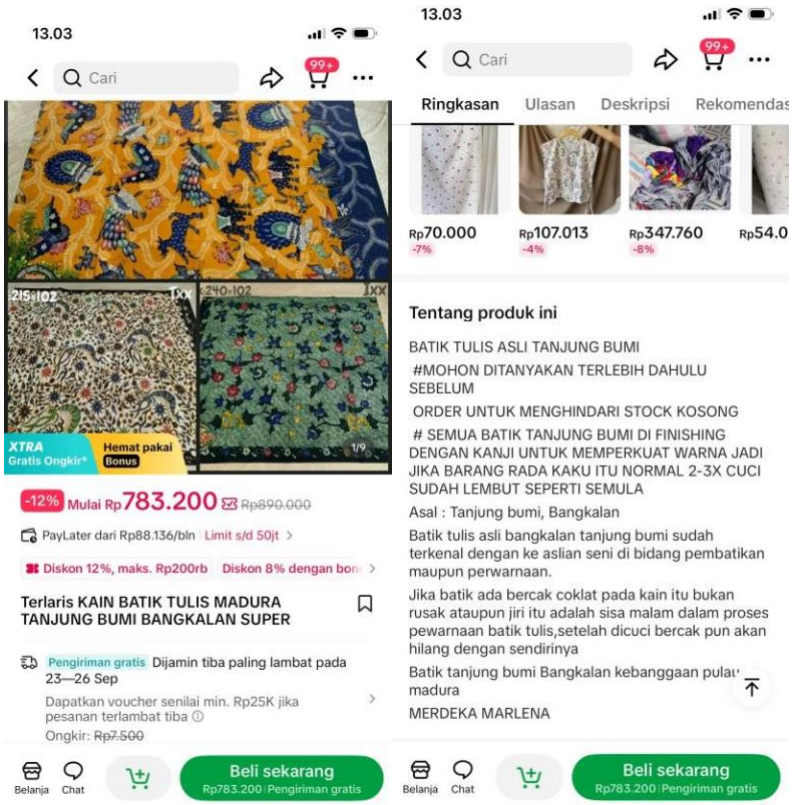


Figure 4: BJTM54

Third, representation through traditional processes and skills, realized through descriptions of manual production techniques (*canting*, wax, traditional dyeing). The description of BJTM-54, for example, explains that the brown spots on the cloth "are not damage or flaws; they are wax residue from the dyeing process of hand-drawn batik", an explanation that is not only informative but also represents the batik-making process as an authentic and valuable cultural practice, while at the same time educating prospective consumers about the characteristics of hand-drawn batik as a heritage of traditional skill. This is in line with the findings of (Haris, 2025) that cultural representation in the Pinisi is realized through spiritual, philosophical, and social values reflected in traditional rituals and the technical skills of its construction, particularly in customary ceremonies such as *maccera lopi* (the blessing/purification of the vessel) before it is launched to sea; the pinisi also represents the technical skill and excellence of the Bugis-Makassar people in seafaring, shown by a ship design with double-sail technology that enabled long-distance navigation even before modern technology existed.

In terms of its distribution, cultural representation in this data corpus tends to be affirmative and homogeneous. Almost all the data represent East Javanese batik positively, without critical variation or ambivalence. This tendency is understandable given the inherently persuasive nature of promotional discourse, but it is also an important note: cultural representation in the *e-commerce* domain tends to be simplified into a series of positive attributes (beautiful, sacred, exclusive, authentic) that facilitate sales strategies, and it potentially reduces the historical and social complexity behind the batik-making tradition itself.

The Relationship among Connotative Meaning, Persuasion Strategies, and Cultural Representation

The fourth research question concerns how these three aspects are related to one another. The integration of quantitative and qualitative results at the *joint display* stage shows a tiered relationship pattern consistent with this study's theoretical framework: choice of linguistic form, connotative meaning, persuasive function, cultural representation.

This pattern can be illustrated in full through the case of the Gajah Oling motif. At the level of linguistic form, sellers choose linguistic units such as "symbol of strength", "wisdom", and "remembering the Creator". At the level of connotative meaning, these units produce philosophical and spiritual connotations that go beyond the denotative meaning of the motif as a visual pattern of an elephant and trunk (*oling*). At the level of persuasive

function, these connotations function as a cultural appeal that distinguishes the product from generic batik, while also building an emotional association of respect and solemnity in prospective consumers. At the level of cultural representation, this language use repeatedly constructs the Gajah Oling motif as an icon of Banyuwangi identity laden with values, a representation that in turn strengthens the bargaining position of Banyuwangi batik in the digital market compared with batik from other regions that lack such a strong philosophical narrative.

This tiered relationship also explains why categories with a high frequency of occurrence (uniqueness, traditionalism) are not always the categories with the highest density of philosophical meaning. Uniqueness and traditionalism operate as market-differentiation-based connotations that are relatively shallow, sufficing with the mention of "*khas* [region name]", whereas philosophical value requires longer, context-specific narrative elaboration. Accordingly, quantitative frequency and the depth of cultural representation need to be read as two different yet complementary dimensions: the first shows how widely a strategy is used across the data, while the second shows how deeply culture is represented in particular cases.

This accords with the findings of (Basri & Sari, 2019) (Piliang, 2004) that discussions of denotation and connotation in semiotics relate to how a sign can acquire broader layers of meaning in a cultural context. Strength is lexically a relatively general linguistic unit. However, when placed in the description of the Gajah Oling motif, the unit acquires connotative meaning through its relationship with the motif's form, history, and the cultural philosophy of Banyuwangi. Thus, the meaning that emerges no longer stops at the lexical sense but develops into a construction of strength, value, and cultural identity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of 100 product descriptions from two e-commerce platforms, this study answers the four research questions as follows. First, regarding the forms and categories of connotative meaning, East Javanese batik product descriptions contain connotative meanings patterned into nine categories rather than appearing randomly. The uniqueness (70%) and traditionalism (54%) categories are the most dominant and are realized through words such as "distinctive", "authentic", and "elegant". These categories are market-differentiation-based, widely distributed, but relatively shallow. By contrast, connotations based on philosophical value and cultural pride appear less often but are far denser in meaning, particularly in the narrative of the Gajah Oling motif. Thus, the

frequency of a category does not correlate proportionally with the depth of its cultural content.

Second, regarding persuasion strategies, this connotative meaning is systematically used as a persuasion strategy. Cultural appeal (72%) and identity appeal (50%) serve as the dominant argumentative basis, far surpassing appeals to price or functional advantages. This means that sellers persuade prospective consumers primarily by presenting cultural values and regional identity, not merely product information.

Third, regarding cultural representation, language use in product descriptions builds the cultural representation of East Java through motif philosophy, markers of regional identity, and traditional craft processes. The digital space does not eliminate the function of language as a marker of local identity but reproduces and renegotiates it into commercial aims. East Javanese batik is represented as a mosaic of diverse regional identities, although this representation tends to be affirmative-homogeneous as a consequence of the nature of promotional discourse.

Fourth, regarding the relationship among the three, this study identifies a tiered relationship: lexical choice produces connotative meaning, connotative meaning performs a persuasive function, and that persuasive function simultaneously forms cultural representation. A single linguistic unit can work on several layers of meaning at once, so batik product descriptions need to be understood as semantically dense texts rather than merely transactional information.

Theoretically, this study brings together semantic studies of connotative meaning and digital discourse studies of e-commerce language within a single analytical framework, and extends the study of connotative meaning from literary texts or conventional advertising to Indonesian-language digital commercial texts that carry local cultural content. This tiered-relationship model can serve as an alternative analytical approach for other cultural products in the digital space. Practically, persuasive lexical patterns such as the collocation "elegant–exclusive–classy" or the formula *khas* + region name can serve as a reference for business actors in composing effective descriptions without reducing the depth of cultural values. For language educators, these findings provide authentic material for teaching semantics and critical literacy based on digital texts.

This study has limitations. The data are limited to two e-commerce platforms and a particular collection period, so the findings reflect tendencies within the corpus and are not intended to be statistically generalized to the entire discourse of East Javanese batik marketing. Future research can expand the corpus to other platforms or social media and

add consumer perspectives.

DECLARATIONS

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

Authors must select one of the following statements:

"The authors declare that the generative artificial intelligence (AI) tool [name of the tool] was used exclusively for language editing and/or grammatical improvement. The use of AI did not influence the scientific content, study design, data analysis, data interpretation, results, or conclusions of the manuscript. Full responsibility for the content remains with the authors."

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