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Manadonese Culture-Based English Teaching Materials for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Students: A Needs Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Background: In order to provide contextual, relevant, and culturally responsive learning, especially in primary school, it has become more crucial to incorporate local culture into English language instruction. The incorporation of Manadonese culture into English teaching materials, especially at the elementary madrasah level, has been the subject of little empirical research. As a result, it emphasizes the necessity of examining the needs of both teachers and students in order to provide pertinent instructional resources.

Aims: The purpose of this study is to examine how teachers and students need to integrate Manadonese local culture into English language learning resources, and to identify cultural components that can help Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri (MIN) in Manado City, Indonesia creates contextual English teaching materials for fifth-grade pupils.

Methods: This preliminary study represents the Analysis phase of the ADDIE instructional design model, selected because needs analysis provides essential information about learners' characteristics, difficulties, and cultural resources as the foundation for developing relevant teaching materials. The participants were 51 students and two English teachers from MIN I and MIN II Manado. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews and analyzed descriptively.

Results: The results indicate that students need additional contextualized learning materials since they have trouble understanding fundamental English items, especially nouns and adjectives. The creation of English resources based on local culture was endorsed by 95% of pupils. Concrete cultural content, such as customary games, regional cuisine, and tourism destinations, was preferred by the students. Teachers likewise had positive opinions on incorporating Manadonese culture, but they also mentioned difficulties with a lack of instructional resources and implementation support.

Implications: This study contributes to the development of culturally responsive English teaching materials by providing empirical evidence of learners' and teachers' needs and identifying relevant cultural elements for contextual learning resources.

Keywords: *Culturally responsive teaching; English teaching materials; Manadonese culture; young learners*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching materials serve as instructional resources that support the accomplishment of educational goals and transmit learning content. The development of meaningful learning experiences is greatly influenced by their quality and relevance ([Muharom Albantani & Madkur, 2018](#)). However, contextual materials that take into account learners' local cultural backgrounds are still scarce in Indonesian English language instruction, with many teaching materials still emphasizing linguistic elements like grammar, sentence structures, and vocabulary mastery ([Yeganeh & Raeesi, 2015](#); [Yektingtyas & Br. Ginting, 2020](#)). Particularly in culturally rich areas like Manado, North Sulawesi, this situation causes a gap between students' cultural experiences and their English language instruction.

Culture is a type of legacy that is passed down through the generations and includes both tangible and intangible aspects. Shrestha ([2016](#)) divides culture into three categories: concepts (beliefs, values, customs, and institutions); behaviors (language use, gestures, customs, habits, and culinary practices); and goods (literature, folklore, arts, music, and cultural artefacts). In a similar vein, Butarbutar et al. ([2019](#)) divide culture into two categories: non-material culture, which includes beliefs, practices, traditions, meanings, and purposes, and material culture, which includes knowledge and technology. These viewpoints show that culture encompasses everything from abstract ideas to tangible expressions and is crucial in forming students' identities, viewpoints, and worldviews.

In modern language instruction, the connection between culture and language acquisition has been highlighted. Learning English involves more than just becoming proficient in the language; it also involves comprehending meanings that are influenced by cultural situations. Cultural integration in English instruction, according to Bensalah and Gueroudj ([2020](#)) and Saud and Rahman ([2019](#)), allows students to comprehend the purpose and significance of their own culture through the medium of a foreign language. Without such integration, exposure to target cultures may obscure local values, causing learners to lose touch with their cultural roots ([Hicham et al., 2025](#); [Putri, 2023](#)). In order to preserve cultural identity while improving language proficiency, it is crucial to incorporate local culture into English language instruction.

This viewpoint is consistent with culturally responsive teaching, which highlights the significance of integrating students' identities, experiences, and cultural backgrounds into classroom procedures ([Vavrus, 2008](#)). By encouraging teachers to use students' cultural knowledge as a meaningful basis for instruction, culturally responsive teaching raises learning achievement, engagement, and relevance ([Gay, 2015](#); [Wallace & Brand, 2012](#)). Incorporating local culture into instructional materials in the context of teaching English enables students to acquire the language through familiar circumstances while also cultivating cultural knowledge and respect.

Local culture-based learning encompasses educational practices that integrate the customs, traditions, arts, and values of local communities. Examples of these practices include traditional games, regional music, dances, and folktales ([Oktariyani & Juwita, 2020](#)). The integration of local culture into English language learning has become a significant theme in contemporary educational discourse. Huda et al. ([2025](#)), Khairiyah et al. ([2021](#)), and Tian ([2025](#)) emphasize that creating instructional materials based on local culture can improve educational quality and relevance while also fortifying students' character. Additionally, this method helps educators carry out their duty of passing on local cultural information to the next generation ([Rahman et al., 2024](#); [Ratri et al., 2024](#)).

Manado culture is an important cultural resource with great potential for incorporation into English language learning resources. *Torang Samua Basudara* (we are all brothers), interreligious tolerance, gender equality, and *Mapalus*, a type of communal solidarity, are only a few of the social ideals and humanistic traditions that characterise Manado

culture ([Pangalila & Mantiri, 2020](#); [Polak & Ilat, 2022](#)). These cultural values are a reflection of local knowledge that can enhance students' cultural identities and facilitate effective language acquisition. Despite their importance, these cultural components have not been thoroughly investigated and incorporated into English teaching resources, especially in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri (MIN) settings.

1.1 Research Gap and Novelty

The potential of integrating local culture into English language instruction has been shown in earlier research. Local knowledge was incorporated into instructional materials for pupils attending vocational schools ([Sukun et al., 2026](#)). Alwasilah (2024) examined the demands of elementary school pupils for English-language resources based on Sundanese culture and found cultural elements such as goods, viewpoints, customs, groups, and personalities. Jelita (2020) discovered that teachers used literature, art, and cultural items in English education even though they hardly ever overtly integrated target culture. Prayati et al. (2020) created culture-based English resources that used traditional games, literature, and local arts to enhance students' critical thinking, learning outcomes, and classroom engagement. Similarly, Butarbutar et al. (2019) found that a puzzle-based approach to local culture improved the motivation and comprehension of young learners. Laili (2017) showed that character education and local knowledge combined with English teaching materials provide a workable way to foster cultural values and character development. These studies indicate that local culture-based materials have been widely explored in several cultural contexts, such as Sundanese and Javanese cultures; however, empirical studies focusing on the exploration and integration of Manadonese culture in English teaching materials, especially at MIN institutions, remain limited. This limitation highlights an important research gap that requires further investigation.

This study fills this gap by providing a preliminary mapping of Manadonese cultural potential that can be included into English language learning resources. Five dimensions, products, practices, attitudes, communities, and individuals, are used to examine the cultural components. Cultural artefacts, foods, artwork, and traditional creations are included in the products dimension; customs, traditions, and everyday cultural activities are referred to as practices; values, beliefs, and philosophies, such as *Torang Samua Basudara*, are represented by perspectives; social relationships and collective practices are reflected in communities; and local knowledge is represented by cultural figures and community members. For the purpose of creating contextual and culturally sensitive English teaching resources for younger students, this mapping offers a cultural basis.

The integration of local culture into English language teaching offers several pedagogical benefits, including fostering intercultural awareness, developing sensitivity toward local culture, cultivating pride in local identity, promoting local wisdom, enhancing understanding of low-context cultures, and encouraging experiential-based language learning ([Margana & Sugesti, 2013](#)). Because learning a foreign language is inextricably linked to learners' cultural backgrounds, incorporating local culture into instructional materials and curricula is regarded as a strategic method. Therefore, it is the duty of English teachers to help pupils comprehend cultural values while also enhancing their English language skills and cultural awareness.

Scholarly interest in local culture-based learning is increasing, according to empirical research done between 2020 and 2026. Incorporating local knowledge into education improves the relevance and sustainability of educational methods ([Fadli & Irwanto, 2020](#); [Fuad et al., 2022](#)), in addition to helping to preserve culture ([Asmayawati & Yetti, 2024](#); [Sukun et al., 2026](#)). Additionally, local wisdom is becoming more widely acknowledged in educational policy as a crucial element of inclusive education and character development initiatives ([Bulkani et al., 2022](#); [Damopolii et al., 2024](#); [Gularso et al., 2023](#); [Pratiwi et al., 2022](#)).

This study's importance stems from its role as a foundational study for creating context-specific and pertinent English teaching resources based on Manadonese culture. By identifying learners' needs and mapping cultural elements, this study provides empirical evidence that can support the development of textbooks or supplementary English learning resources. The findings are expected to contribute to the formulation of a systematic curriculum design or course plan that integrates Manadonese local wisdom into English language learning for young learners.

1.2 Research Questions

This study aims to conduct a needs analysis for developing Manadonese culture-based English teaching materials by examining three key aspects: students' English language understanding and expectations, teachers' needs and challenges in integrating local cultural content, and the potential of Manadonese cultural elements to serve as meaningful teaching resources. To achieve these objectives, the study addresses the following research questions. In response to these issues, this study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How are students' English language understanding and expectations toward Manadonese culture-based learning?
2. How are teachers' needs towards the integration of Manadonese culture-based English teaching materials?
3. What are Manadonese cultural potentials in English teaching materials?

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This study constitutes a preliminary investigation conducted within the framework of the Analysis phase of the ADDIE model, which serves as the initial stage of a broader Research and Development (R&D) endeavor. As such, this research is exclusively confined to the Analysis phase and does not extend to the Design, Development, Implementation, or Evaluation stages. The primary purpose of this analytical phase is to generate empirical data that will inform the subsequent design and development of Manadonese culture-based English teaching materials. Accordingly, this study is directed toward assessing the needs of teachers and students, identifying culturally relevant content, and exploring potential cultural elements suitable for integration into English instruction for fifth-grade students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri (MIN) in Manado.

2.2 Research Subjects

Two EFL teachers and fifty-one students from MIN I and MIN II Manado City participated in the study. Purposive sampling was used to choose the participants based on particular factors pertaining to the study's goals. These two schools were chosen because they are examples of Islamic primary schools in Manado City that use English language instruction at the elementary level and offer pertinent settings for investigating the incorporation of local culture into English teaching resources. Additionally, the purpose of choosing MIN I and MIN II Manado was to gather a variety of viewpoints from educators and learners on their requirements, experiences, and expectations with regard to Manadonese culture-based English learning resources.

The objects of investigation in this study include: (1) students' understanding, experiences, and expectations regarding Manadonese culture-based English learning materials; (2) teachers' needs and perspectives toward the integration of Manadonese culture into English teaching materials; and (3) the potential cultural elements of Manado that can be incorporated into textbooks or supplementary learning resources.

2.3 Research Procedures

This study used the ADDIE instructional design model's Analysis phase as a starting point for creating English teaching materials based on Manadonese culture. Research preparation, data gathering, data analysis, and cultural content mapping were among the methodical processes that made up the research process. The process was created to determine the needs of both teachers and students as well as possible Manadonese cultural components that could be incorporated into English learning resources.

Preparing the research was the first step. At this point, the researchers defined the participants based on the research objectives, established the research topic, and created the needs analysis tools. In order to investigate students' learning challenges, preferences, expectations, and teachers' viewpoints regarding the incorporation of Manadonese culture into English learning resources, a questionnaire and interview protocols were created. The instruments were examined to make sure they matched the needs analysis indicators.

Data collecting for requirements analysis was the second step. English teachers and fifth-graders at MIN I and MIN II Manado provided the data. Students' opinions of the current teaching resources, their choices for learning materials based on Manadonese culture, and their challenges in learning English were all gathered through the direct distribution of questionnaires. In the meantime, semi-structured interviews with instructors were used to gather information on their experiences, opinions, difficulties, and recommendations for incorporating local culture into English instruction.

Data analysis and interpretation constituted the third phase. High need, moderate need, and low need levels were determined by analyzing quantitative data from the student questionnaires using percentage calculations. Priority areas for material development were determined using the results. In the meantime, developing themes pertaining to the significance of local culture integration, cultural identity, and implementation difficulties were found through thematic analysis of qualitative data from teacher interviews.

Manadonese cultural content mapping was the fourth step. Potential cultural components, such as goods, practices, viewpoints, communities, and individuals, were found and categorized in accordance with the cultural dimensions suggested by Mayangsari et al. (2018) based on the results of the requirements analysis. The goal of this mapping approach was to identify the cultural elements that could be converted into English language learning resources.

Developing the basis for material development was the last phase. The ADDIE model's later stages, especially the Design and Development phases, were based on a synthesis of the findings from students' needs, teachers' views, and cultural mapping. As a result, this study offers the empirical data needed to create contextual and culturally sensitive English teaching materials based on Manadonese culture rather than creating or testing the instructional materials.

2.4 Research Instruments

Semi-structured interviews with English teachers and questionnaires given directly to students were used to gather data. The purpose of the student questionnaire was to ascertain the requirements, challenges, preferences, and expectations of learners with regard to English learning resources that incorporate local Manadonese culture. The questionnaire, which was adapted from a study by Oktariyani and Juwita (2020), consisted of several indicators, including: (1) students' difficulties in learning English, (2) students' perceptions of existing English teaching materials, (3) students' familiarity with Manadonese cultural elements, (4) students' preferences toward cultural content to be included in learning materials, and (5) students' agreement regarding the development of Manadonese culture-based English materials. The questionnaire items

were designed using a closed-ended format with a Likert scale and supported by several response options to capture students' opinions.

The teacher interview guide was designed to explore teachers' experiences, perceptions, challenges, and expectations regarding the integration of local culture into English instruction. The interview questions focused on: (1) the availability and use of English teaching materials, (2) teachers' understanding of culture-based learning, (3) opportunities and challenges in integrating Manadonese culture, and (4) suggestions for developing culturally relevant teaching materials. Before data collection, the research instruments were reviewed to ensure their alignment with the research objectives and indicators of needs analysis.

2.5 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed descriptively using quantitative and qualitative approaches. The students' questionnaire data were analyzed by calculating the percentage of responses for each item. The percentage scores were then interpreted using three levels of needs: high need, moderate need, and low need, as presented in Table 1. The categorization was used to determine the priority of cultural content and learning components to be included in the development of Manadonese culture-based English teaching materials.

Table 1 Categorization of Students' Need Level Based on Rating Score

Percentage of Response Score	Need Level	Interpretation
76% – 100%	High Need	Indicates that students strongly need the proposed learning materials/content. The identified aspect becomes a priority component to be included in the development of Manadonese culture-based English teaching materials.
56% – 75%	Moderate Need	Indicates that students need the proposed learning materials/content, but the aspect requires further consideration and adaptation based on learning objectives and students' characteristics.
0% – 55%	Low Need	Indicates that students show limited need toward the proposed learning materials/content; therefore, the aspect is considered a lower priority in material development.

The interview data from English teachers were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes related to teachers' perceptions, challenges, and recommendations regarding the integration of Manadonese culture into English learning materials. The findings from questionnaires and interviews were then interpreted together to provide a comprehensive description of students' and teachers' needs.

A needs analysis-based approach to teaching material development is considered essential for obtaining information about what should be taught and how it should be taught ([Menggo, et.al., 2017](#)). The cultural content framework for the future textbook development will be based on an inventory of cultural components adapted from Mayangsari et al. (2018), who classify cultural aspects into five cultural dimensions, namely products, practices, perspectives, communities, and persons. These dimensions

serve as a reference for identifying and selecting Manadonese cultural elements that are relevant to be transformed into contextual English learning materials.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

This section presents the findings and discussion of the study, organized to address the three research questions: (1) How are students' English language understanding and expectations toward Manadonese culture-based learning? (2) How are teachers' needs towards the integration of Manadonese culture-based English teaching materials? (3) What are Manadonese cultural potentials in English teaching materials?

English Language Understanding and Expectations toward Manadonese Culture-Based Learning

This section presents students' English language understanding and their expectations toward Manadonese culture-based learning. The analysis focuses on students' access to learning resources, perceived difficulties in learning English, particularly noun and adjective materials, and their needs for supportive and culturally contextualized teaching materials. Understanding these aspects is essential to identify gaps in existing instructional practices and to justify the integration of Manadonese cultural elements into English language learning. The results of the needs analysis are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Students' English Language Understanding on Noun and Adjective Learning Materials

Indicator	Percentage (%)
Students owning textbooks or reference books	84
Students seeking additional learning resources beyond textbooks	70
Students experiencing difficulties learning from textbooks	90
Students requiring supportive teaching materials	90
Students showing enthusiasm in noun and adjective lessons	60
Students perceiving noun and adjective materials as difficult	75
Students experiencing difficulties with current teaching materials and methods	35
Students needing local learning-based teaching materials	80
Students agreeing on the development of local learning-based teaching materials	95

Students' needs can be divided into three tiers based on the findings shown in Table 2. Given that 90% of students needed supportive learning materials and 95% thought that local culture-based teaching materials should be developed, indicators pertaining to students' demand for these resources show a high level of need. These results suggest that students need educational resources that are more relatable, accessible, and relevant to their everyday lives. Meanwhile, students' enthusiasm for noun and adjective classes (60%) indicates a moderate level of need, indicating that while students understand the value of studying English, their involvement has not been fully inspired by the available materials. It is still crucial to offer alternative learning resources to support a variety of learner characteristics, even though the difficulty encountered with current teaching materials and methods (35%) reflects a low level of reported need,

indicating that not all students experience the same degree of difficulty. The results of students' needs regarding Manadonese culture-based learning are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Students' Needs on Manadonese Culture-Based Learning

Statement	Percentage (%)
Students need English learning materials incorporating Manadonese cultural elements	96
Students need learning materials on traditional Manadonese games in English textbooks	97
Students need learning materials on Manadonese traditional foods in English textbooks	88
Students need learning materials on Manadonese traditional musical instruments in English textbooks	76
Students need learning materials on Manadonese traditional dances in English textbooks	78
Students need learning materials on tourist attractions in Manado in English textbooks	80
Students need learning materials on traditional Manadonese handicrafts in English textbooks	68
Students need learning materials on endemic animals of Manado in English textbooks	57
Students need learning materials on national heroes from Manado in English textbooks	53

Students' demand for culturally contextualized English learning resources is high, according to Table 3's data. Students' needs for learning resources based on Manadonese culture were determined to be high (96%). According to the need's classification, traditional activities (97%) and traditional cuisines (88%) reflect high need categories since they are tangible cultural elements that students regularly come across in their daily lives. While students may have varying degrees of knowledge with various cultural aspects, tourist attractions (80%), dances (78%), traditional musical instruments (76%), and handicrafts (68%) indicate areas of moderate need. Cultural information like national heroes (53%) and endemic animals (57%) is a relatively low need category, suggesting that more innovative educational approaches are needed to make these subjects engaging and significant for younger students.

Students strongly preferred educational materials based on local culture, according to the questionnaire answers. With teachers serving as facilitators, these resources are supposed to facilitate both individual and group learning activities. These results suggest that culturally relevant materials may boost students' engagement since the learning material is directly tied to their daily lives and identities.

Teachers' Needs towards the Integration of Manadonese Culture-Based English Teaching Materials

English teachers had favorable opinions of the incorporation of Manadonese culture into English language instruction, according to the interview analysis. The interview data revealed three primary themes: (1) relevance, (2) cultural identity, and (3) implementation barriers.

The first theme, relevance, relates to teachers' perceptions that learning can be made more meaningful by using English materials based on Manadonese culture because the material is related to students' everyday experiences. Teachers identified traditional

foods, games, songs, and attire as suitable local cultural elements for introducing English vocabulary and language expressions. This view was strongly articulated by Teacher 1, who explained that "Manadonese culture-based English learning would be very beneficial because it can make the learning process more engaging, especially since the materials used are aligned with the cultural context that is close to students' daily lives." The same informant further emphasized that culinary traditions and traditional clothing were particularly relevant, as food is encountered daily and traditional clothing is frequently worn during school parades or events. Similarly, Teacher 2 added that incorporating traditional games and songs would be appropriate for young learners, since children enjoy games and relaxed activities such as singing or dancing. These perspectives collectively underscore the teachers' belief that culturally grounded materials enhance both engagement and relevance in English language instruction.

The second element, cultural identity, emphasizes teachers' understanding that pupils' cultural backgrounds shouldn't be separated from their English language education. Instructors stressed that teaching Manadonese culture in English could improve pupils' comprehension and appreciation of their local identity at a young age. The utilization of students' cultural knowledge as a basis for meaningful learning is encouraged by culturally responsive teaching, which is supported by this viewpoint.

I believe that an English learning model incorporating Manadonese culture needs to be introduced to students because it is important to familiarize them with local culture so that they develop pride in and awareness of their cultural identity from an early age. (Interview, Teacher 2)

The third theme, implementation barriers, relates to challenges experienced by teachers in applying Manadonese culture-based English learning. The first and most significant challenge was the limited availability of teaching materials, as one teacher explained that finding English teaching resources incorporating Manadonese culture is challenging, requiring teachers to find alternative sources or create supplementary lessons on their own because the majority of the materials are not easily accessible (Interview, Teacher 1). This sentiment was echoed by another teacher, who noted that the majority of English-language textbooks used in schools include examples of Javanese culture, and since there are not many resources about Manadonese culture, educators must be resourceful in finding alternative materials that are appropriate for their pupils (Interview, Teacher 2). Both perspectives underscore the systemic gap in locally relevant instructional resources, compelling teachers to invest additional time and effort in developing their own culturally grounded materials.

The second challenge was related to maintaining a balance between cultural content and English learning objectives. Teachers emphasized that local culture should be used as a learning context without reducing the focus on essential English components. As stated by one teacher:

While incorporating local culture is crucial, we still need to focus on English-related topics like grammar, vocabulary, and the four language skills. The language objectives might not get as much attention if we concentrate too much on culture. (Interview, Teacher 1)

The third challenge concerned to teachers' knowledge and understanding of local culture. Teachers highlighted that integrating Manadonese culture requires deeper cultural knowledge to ensure that cultural elements are presented appropriately. "Before utilizing Manadonese culture in English instruction, teachers must have a thorough understanding of it. To properly convey the culture to kids, we must be aware of its past, meaning, and values." (Interview, Teacher 2)

As a result, the findings demonstrate that although teachers recognize the need of integrating Manadonese culture into English language instruction, they still require helpful guidance and resources to effectively implement culture-based English teaching.

Manadonese Cultural Potential in ELT Teaching Materials

To support the development of culturally responsive English teaching materials, an analysis of Manadonese cultural potential was conducted. This analysis aimed to identify local cultural elements that can be integrated into English language learning to enhance students' engagement, contextual understanding, and cultural awareness. The cultural contents were categorized based on products, practices, perspectives, communities, and persons.

Table 4 Analysis of Manado Cultural Potential in Teaching Materials

Content	Aspect	Dimension	Potential English Learning Focus
Traditional Games (Cenge-cenge)	Art Forms	Products	Vocabulary, Speaking
Traditional Foods (Tinutuan, Cakalang Fufu, Klappertart, etc.)	Cultural Products	Products	Vocabulary, Writing
Traditional Musical Instruments (Kolintang)	Art forms	Products	Vocabulary, Reading
Traditional Dances (Maengket, O Ina Ni Keke)	Art forms	Practices	Speaking, Reading
Tourist Attractions (Bunaken Marine Park, Lake Linow)	Places	Communities	Reading, Writing
Handicrafts (Benten Fabric)	Cultural Products	Products	Vocabulary, Writing
Endemic Animals (Anoa, Tarsius)	Natural Heritage	Perspectives	Vocabulary, Reading
Traditional Costumes (Kabasaran)	Practices	Products	Speaking, Reading
National Heroes (Sam Ratulangi, Maria Walanda Maramis, etc.)	Personal Identity	Persons	Reading, Writing

The mapping in Table 4 shows that Manadonese culture provides diverse resources for English language learning. Concrete cultural elements such as traditional foods, games, and arts have strong potential for vocabulary development because they are familiar and observable for young learners. Meanwhile, cultural places, historical figures, and values can support reading comprehension, writing activities, and higher cultural awareness.

Thus, the integration of Manadonese culture into English teaching materials is not merely a cultural introduction but a contextual learning strategy that connects language acquisition with students' identity, experiences, and local wisdom.

3.2 Discussion

The results of this study highlight the pedagogical necessity of including Manadonese local culture into elementary English language instruction, especially for Madrasah

Ibtidaiyah students in Grade V. This study revealed findings for the following research discussion.

English Language Understanding and Expectations toward Manadonese Culture-Based Learning

Students have a strong demand for contextualized English learning materials that incorporate Manadonese cultural elements, especially for learning nouns and adjectives, according to the findings pertaining to students' comprehension of the English language and expectations toward Manadonese culture-based learning. Even though 84% of students said they owned English textbooks, 90% of them still had trouble using them and needed more resources. This disparity implies that meaningful learning experiences are not always ensured by the availability of textbooks. Rather, it indicates a discrepancy between the cognitive traits, language skills, and sociocultural backgrounds of students and the current teaching resources. Similarly, students actively try to overcome the shortcomings of current textbooks, as seen by the large percentage of students (70%) looking for other learning tools. Instead of depending on decontextualized vocabulary or grammar explanations, English for Young Learners (EYL) believes that effective language acquisition should offer tangible, recognizable, and meaningful experiences (Tian, 2025; Saud & Rahman, 2019). Therefore, the results suggest that enhancing the contextual relevance of educational resources is more important than just expanding their availability.

The disparity between students' reported difficulty in learning nouns and adjectives (75%) and the comparatively low percentage reporting difficulties with present teaching techniques (35%) is another significant finding. This implies that rather than attributing their learning difficulties to teaching strategies, students frequently blame the difficulty of the subject matter. However, since young students may not be able to critically assess instructional methods and may view teacher-centered instruction as typical, this interpretation should be handled with caution. In a similar vein, students' moderate excitement (60%) for noun and adjective classes suggests that motivation is influenced by both the perceived value of English and the appeal and applicability of learning activities. According to the contextual learning theory (Abdulrahman Bin Towairesh, 2021; Nambiar et al., 2020; Kanoksilapatham, 2015; Triani et al., 2022), meaningful learning occurs when instructional content is connected to learners' everyday experiences. This suggests that Manadonese cultural content could be a useful tactic for boosting motivation and engagement.

Culturally responsive language acquisition is empirically supported by the high demand for Manadonese culture-based English resources (96%) and the strong consensus on their development (95%). However, students' preferences differed across cultural themes; indigenous meals (88%) and games (97%) received much more replies than endemic animals (57%) and local heroes (53%). This variation implies that students' learning preferences are more influenced by familiarity and firsthand personal experience than by the cultural importance of the material itself. As a result, incorporating local culture into English instruction should focus on cultural themes that are significant, developmentally appropriate, and able to help students grasp language concepts rather than just preserving cultural heritage (Wahyuni et al., 2022).

Teachers' Needs towards the Integration of Manadonese Culture-Based English Teaching Materials

The interview findings indicate that teachers believe that incorporating Manadonese culture into English language instruction is pedagogically significant since it strengthens students' cultural identities and links language learning to their daily experiences. Teachers saw local culture as a meaningful setting for imparting English vocabulary and language expressions through recognizable cultural behaviors including traditional cuisines, games, songs, and attire, rather than as an extra subject. This result is

consistent with the tenets of culturally responsive teaching and English for Young Learners (EYL), which stress that meaningful learning happens when new information is connected to learners' past experiences and sociocultural backgrounds. Notably, teachers framed cultural integration as a way to promote students' pride and understanding of their local identity in addition to improving language proficiency ([Hawanti, 2014](#); [Khan & Iqbal, 2025](#); [Zhang & Nordin, 2025](#)). This shows that, especially in situations where globalization may lessen children's acquaintance with local customs, culture-based English training might serve a dual purpose by fostering both linguistic competency and cultural preservation.

Despite these favorable opinions, the results show that professional and practical obstacles limit instructors' desire to use culture-based learning. The lack of Manadonese culture-based English teaching materials forces teachers to rely on their own resources, which adds to their workload and produces inconsistent content quality. Teachers also stressed the need to strike a balance between linguistic objectives and cultural content, arguing that cultural integration should function as a framework for instruction rather than taking precedence over the development of vocabulary, grammar, and language ability. Another critical issue is teachers' personal cultural awareness, as a lack of knowledge about local norms may lead to inaccurate or superficial cultural representations in the classroom. These findings imply that the availability of professional development programs and carefully crafted teaching materials that improve teachers' pedagogical competence and cultural awareness are just as important to the successful implementation of culture-based English instruction as teachers' positive attitudes ([Cahyono, 2018](#)). Such support is required to ensure that cultural integration becomes more than just ornamental teaching materials and instead significantly aids in language learning.

Manadonese Cultural Potential in ELT Teaching Materials

The investigation shows that Manadonese culture offers a variety of pedagogically useful tools for teaching English, going beyond cultural preservation to aid language learning. Local culture can support the development of different language abilities instead of only vocabulary, according to the mapping of cultural aspects into the dimensions of products, activities, viewpoints, communities, and individuals. Due to their intimate connection to students' daily experiences, concrete cultural elements including traditional games, meals, musical instruments, and clothing are especially appropriate for younger pupils. According to contextual and culturally responsive learning theories ([Huda et al., 2025](#); [Khan & Iqbal, 2025](#)), learners are better able to build meaning when they are in familiar circumstances.

However, the mapping also implies that the educational value of local culture depends on how these resources are pedagogically transformed into learning activities rather than just whether they are readily available. Despite the fact that every identified cultural component has educational potential, not all of them contribute equally to language learning goals. While more abstract cultural matter, such as historical characters or local perspectives, calls for higher-order reading and writing assignments, concrete and recognizable topics are better suited for introducing fundamental vocabulary and speaking exercises. In order to ensure that culture serves as a meaningful context for language learning rather than merely as extra cultural information, the integration of Manadonese culture should be guided by curriculum objectives and learners' developmental characteristics ([Vuong et al., 2025](#); [Wahyuni et al., 2022](#)).

Nevertheless, this study is not without limitations. As a preliminary needs analysis, it focuses primarily on identifying cultural content, students' needs, and instructional challenges without empirically testing the effectiveness of culture-based materials on students' English proficiency or cultural literacy outcomes. Moreover, the research context is limited to only two Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in Manado, which may affect the broader applicability of the findings to other educational contexts. In addition, this study

has not involved other relevant stakeholders, such as curriculum developers, parents, cultural practitioners, or education policymakers, whose perspectives may provide broader insights into the development of culture-based materials. Therefore, in order to ensure the materials' relevance and sustainability, future study is advised to develop, implement, and assess English instructional materials based on Manadonese culture across wider educational contexts and engage many stakeholders.

Overall, this study supports the idea that incorporating local culture into English language instruction is a pedagogical approach that improves relevance, engagement, and meaning-making in young learners' language development rather than just a cultural preservation endeavor. In the context of 21st-century education, when cultural literacy is increasingly acknowledged as a key competency alongside linguistic skills, such integration is especially important.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that incorporating Manadonese culture into English language learning materials is a pertinent strategy for creating more contextual and meaningful learning experiences for fifth-grade students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri (MIN). This conclusion is based on the analysis of students' needs, teachers' perspectives, and the mapping of Manadonese cultural potential. According to the requirements analysis, students need English learning resources that are related to their daily cultural experiences, especially through tangible cultural components like customary games, regional cuisine, musical instruments, and tourism destinations. By identifying the cultural content and instructional concerns required for the creation of Manadonese culture-based English teaching materials, these findings address the research focus.

The study also shows that teachers have favorable opinions of incorporating Manadonese culture into English instruction; however, they encounter practical difficulties, such as the scarcity of English materials based on local culture, the absence of implementation guidelines, and the requirement to strike a balance between cultural content and fundamental English language objectives. Thus, this study's value is that it offers an empirical basis for creating English teaching materials that are culturally sensitive and take into account the requirements of learners as well as local cultural resources. A guide for choosing suitable cultural components to be converted into educational activities is provided by the cultural mapping based on goods, customs, viewpoints, communities, and individuals.

It is advised that curriculum designers and English material authors create Manadonese culture-based English resources that incorporate local cultural content with the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Instead of merely offering culture as supplementary information, the materials should emphasize well-known and tangible cultural contexts found in this study, such as customary games, cuisines, and regional customs, and turn them into vocabulary exercises, reading texts, speaking assignments, and writing assignments. It is advised that professional development activities for English teachers concentrate on useful methods for incorporating local cultural resources into English lessons. These strategies include developing culturally relevant lesson plans, selecting acceptable cultural allusions, and designing educational activities that balance language objectives with cultural content. These tools are necessary since teachers have expressed difficulty finding relevant materials and integrating local culture into the present English curriculum.

More research is recommended to move on with the Design and Development stages of the ADDIE model by developing English teaching materials based on Manadonese culture and evaluating their viability and usefulness through classroom implementation, as this study was restricted to the Analysis phase of the model. Future study may also involve broader educational contexts and other stakeholders, such as curriculum

developers, cultural practitioners, and parents, in order to collect more comprehensive perspectives on the sustainability of locally grounded English learning tools.

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Authors' Contribution

Indah Wardaty Saud was responsible for the research conception, study design, instrument development, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and manuscript writing. Moon Hidayati Otoluwa contributed by supervising the refinement of the research design, providing methodological guidance, and conducting critical revisions of the manuscript.

AI Generative Statement

The authors state that during the accomplishment of the study, artificial intelligence techniques were utilized in a limited capacity to enhance language refinement and clarity of expression. The authors carried out all conceptual formulation, data gathering, analysis, interpretation, and final academic judgements on their own. The originality, accuracy, and integrity of the information contained in this article are entirely the writers' responsibility.

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