

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON INTEGRATING LOCAL WISDOM INTO ENGLISH TEACHING MATERIALS

THESIS

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INTO ENGLISH TEACHING MATERIALS

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Hereby declare that in writing this thesis, I:

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This statement is made truthfully and without coercion from any party.

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Banda Aceh, July 18, 2025

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ABSTRACT

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In this globalization era, teenagers' love for local wisdom is gradually fading as social media increasingly exposes them to other cultures. This study explores teachers' perception regarding the integration of local wisdom into English teaching materials. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with four English teachers at MAN 3 Banda Aceh, selected purposely based on their experiences of teaching and designing lesson materials. The study explores teacher's perception in defining local wisdom, teacher perception on integrating local wisdom, teacher perception of challenges on integrating local wisdom. The findings revealed that the teachers generally have a positive-perceptions on integrating local wisdoms into English teaching material. The integrating of local wisdom is important regarded for enhancing students' cultural identity, preserving local wisdom and contextual language learning. However, the integration of these local wisdom still incidental and unsystematic. The study recommends, increased policy support, the systematic development of local wisdom content-based teaching resources, specialized teacher training, and enhanced collaboration among educators to effectively implement local wisdom into English language education.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

In this era of globalization, English education should be a required subject because it is both a necessity and a valuable skill. It acts as a bridge to access higher education, better career opportunities, and global information and knowledge. As stated by Isadaud et al. (2022), English contributes to developing globally competitive human resources by enabling the adoption of international knowledge and applying it in Indonesian schools, especially through advancements in science and technology. Therefore, English plays an important role as one of the key factors in improving human resources, which in turn supports national development, progress, and inspires the younger generation. The youth, as potential agents of change, are expected to lead transformation and bring about fresh, creative innovations for the future of the nation.

The Indonesian government encourages all sectors of the nation, including educational institutions, to help preserve local wisdom values. One way to do this is by integrating local wisdom into the school curriculum, including in English language learning. Since learning a foreign language is closely tied to the learner's cultural background, English teachers have the responsibility to not only improve students' language skills but also to introduce and strengthen their understanding of cultural values (Suharto, 2020). Integrating local wisdom and context into the English curriculum is important because a curriculum that reflects local wisdom

can boost student engagement and support more effective language learning by making lessons more meaningful and relevant (Lestari & Rahman, 2021).

English teaching materials need to be designed not only to meet national education standards but also to accommodate the specific needs of local communities. Local wisdom refers to the values, norms, customs, and traditions that emerge within a society through its experiences, insights, and reflections on everyday life and the surrounding environment (Andiani, 2021). The values contained in local wisdom often teach a way of life that is in harmony with nature, foster a sense of togetherness, respect for parents and ancestors, and uphold honesty (Mazid et al., 2020). These cultural values of local wisdom are the basis of a society's identity and play an important role in maintaining its survival. These values help to preserve traditions and culture from generation to generation. Therefore, learning English should also include cultural elements in learning activities to better suit the context of students (Butarbutar et al., 2019).

Acehnese local wisdom enriches culture while also fostering strength and social solidarity. However, as society evolves through economic, environmental, and social changes, culture must be continually adapted to stay relevant and practical in everyday life. Just like in many other regions of Indonesia, the appreciation of local wisdom among Acehnese youth is currently declining. This can be seen from the decline in the participation of Acehnese youth in the formation of local wisdom and culture. Studies have shown that teenagers' love for their own local wisdom has decreased. This issue is caused by the abundance

of ideas about a borderless nation and the influence of social media on the modern era.

Teenagers' love for local wisdom is gradually fading as social media increasingly exposes them to other cultures. To address this issue, the Ministry of Education and Culture has issued Regulation No. 262/M/2022, which aims to prevent the decline of appreciation for local wisdom across Indonesia. This regulation also supports the effective implementation of the independent curriculum. It proposes three forms of internalization: first, integrating local wisdom values through local content in learning; second, embedding these values within subject matter; and third, instilling them through activities in the Strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile Project.

To support Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and promote contextualized education, English requires content that integrating elements of local wisdom. As one of the key subjects for embedding these values, English plays a vital role in their internalization (Fadhilah et al., 2017; Utami et al., 2023). Numerous previous studies have shown that applying CTL in English instruction can significantly enhance students' language skills. Nevertheless, a major challenge in implementing CTL in English is the limited availability and difficulty in accessing local wisdom-based content, which is an essential part of local culture (Fadhilah et al., 2023).

From the entire picture of the situation above, one of the challenges for English teachers in Aceh today is to address the issue of internalizing the values of local wisdom in Aceh within the context of teaching and learning through

Contextual Teaching and Learning that must be considered in the classroom. Therefore, by integrating local wisdom into English teaching materials, students will be interested in learning about the culture integrated in their English learning.

Teaching materials that integrating local wisdom have been proven to be effective in improving foreign language learning while helping teachers in introducing local cultural values to students. When this material is well structured, especially in the form of textbooks. They create a more organized and synergistic approach to learning English and local wisdom. In the context of a decentralized English curriculum, textbooks can serve as an important resource, offering guidance on the content to be taught and the appropriate methods for teaching it (Hawanti, 2014).

Various previous studies have discussed the integrating of local wisdom values in the learning process. The researchers (Kusuma, et al., 2023; Ranti, 2022; Rukiyati & Purwastuti, 2016; Sari & Yuliana, 2022; Setyawan et al., 2023) generally show that the use of teaching tools based on local wisdom is able to increase learning effectiveness, both in the context of English teaching and in the development of character and other competencies because Aceh has a high wealth of local values and the potential to be integrated into English language learning

This research seeks to improve the quality of English education by integrating the values of local wisdom contained in English language materials in schools. It is essential to explore teachers' perceptions in developing English teaching materials that integrate Acehese local wisdom within the framework of linguistic and pedagogical domains. This study seeks to understand how teachers

defining, interpret, implement, and evaluate the integration of selected aspects of local wisdom into English

In this study, the integration of English teaching materials can be adjusted to local wisdom as part of the existing local culture. This is very useful because including elements of local wisdom in the integration of English teaching materials can help students learn the language more easily, because the material presented is relevant to the context of their environment and then adds more love to their area. The idea of teaching local wisdom to students stemmed from the idea that they needed to understand their own culture first before trying to bridge their culture with a foreign one. So, it is necessary for English teachers to integrate English teaching materials in accordance with the needs of local wisdom.

B. Research Questions

Based on the background, the researcher formulated the research question as follows:

1. What are the perceptions of teachers on integrating local wisdom into English teaching materials?

C. Research Aim

About the previous research question, the aim of the study are as follows:

1. To explore and analyze the perceptions of teachers on integrating local wisdom into English teaching materials?

D. Significance of Study

This research is supposed to make a significant contribution both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the findings can be used as a reference or literature regarding the research study. This study addresses a gap in the existing literature on contextual English teaching by focusing specifically on how teachers perceive the integration of Acehnese local wisdom into teaching materials. While previous research has explored the use of local wisdom in general educational, limited attention has been given to the Acehnese context, where cultural values are deeply rooted in Islamic traditions. Moreover, earlier studies rarely examined the integration of local wisdom in relation to linguistic domains (genre text types, content & themes) and pedagogical domains (authenticity, value integration).

Practically, this study contributes by offering a clearer understanding of teacher perceptions within these specific domains, thereby strengthening the framework for developing contextual and culturally responsive ELT materials. Practically, it provides insights for teachers, curriculum developers, and policymakers in Aceh to design materials that incorporate selected aspects of local wisdom, such as religious values, cultural practices, historical figures, and traditional arts to make English learning more authentic, engaging, and culturally meaningful for students.

E. Research Terminologies

This research focuses on teachers' perceptions of integrating Acehnese local wisdom into English teaching materials, with the aim of understanding how they

define, implement, and evaluate this integration in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of English language teaching at MAN 3 Banda Aceh. To avoid an overly broad conceptualization, this study is limited to three main concepts, namely:

a. Perception of English Teachers'

According to Thoha (2010), perception is a cognitive process that everyone experiences when interacting with their environment. The information obtained from relevant circumstances involves the processes of seeing, hearing, appreciating, feeling, and smelling. Teachers' perception refers to the way teachers select, organize, and interpret various information and knowledge they possess in order to create a meaningful overall understanding.

b. Local Wisdom

Nawari Ismail, as cited in Wiratih (2022), defines local wisdom as the collective ideas, practices, and cultural expressions that originate from a specific community within a particular region. It encompasses the worldview, knowledge systems, and life strategies employed by local people to solve problems and fulfill their needs. Furthermore, local wisdom can be understood as a set of values that are formed, nurtured, and preserved over time, serving as a reflection of the community's identity and character.

Local wisdom represents the collective knowledge and practices that emerge and evolve within a community, shaped by its theological, cosmological, and sociological outlooks (Pingge, 2017). It is deeply rooted in traditional philosophies, moral values, ethical principles, and customary behaviors that

guide the way people manage both natural and human resources. Essentially, local wisdom reflects a community's enduring worldview, offering insights into how they understand and relate to their environment and society over time.

Local wisdom analysis, part of a local culture assessment, identifies community needs and guides strategies to localize social values. It helps build resilient communities and should be conducted before drafting a strategic project brief or prefeasibility study. Those involved in a local wisdom needs analysis may include community stakeholders, government officials, activists, and business owners. Local needs are decided by certain criteria set by the local government to ensure that development is in accordance with the local regional character and primarily benefits the local community.

c. English Teaching Materials

According to Tomlinson (2023), English teaching materials encompass any resources used to support the teaching of English, including books, audio recordings, videos, and various digital tools. These materials are intended to enhance the learning experience by offering relevant, engaging content and activities for students. The development and use of such materials fall under the academic discipline that focuses on the principles and methodologies involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of foreign language teaching resources.

In this study, English teaching materials are conceptualized as an integration of the linguistic domain (the content presented, such as genres and themes) and the pedagogical domain (the way the materials are delivered, with

an emphasis on authenticity and value integration). For example, a recount text (linguistic domain) about Laksamana Malahayati is presented through authentic sources and classroom activities (pedagogical domain) that highlight values of bravery and leadership. Through this integration, English materials become both contextual and culturally meaningful, aligning language learning with students' local identity.

In line with this, in the context of learning in Indonesia, it is important to develop teaching materials that are not only oriented towards linguistic skills, but also integrate local cultural values as part of the learning content. One of the approaches that is starting to get attention is the integration of local wisdom in English teaching materials. Local wisdom encompasses traditional knowledge, values, norms, and practices that live and thrive in local communities.

By integrating these elements into English teaching materials, teachers can create learning that is more contextual, meaningful, and close to students' lives. In addition, this approach contributes to cultural preservation and fosters a sense of pride in local identity in the midst of globalization. The integration of local wisdom is also in line with the principle of student-centered learning, as it involves their experiences and environment as a source of learning.