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From Local Wisdom to Classroom Practice: The Transformation of Gorontalo Oral Literature in Language Teaching Management

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ABSTRACT

Background: Islamic education in madrasahs is often disconnected from local cultural contexts, rendering Islamic values emotionally and culturally irrelevant to students. In Gorontalo, oral literary forms such as tuja'i, taleningo, and tinilo embody Islamic values aligned with the principle of rahmatan lil-'alamin (mercy for all creation); however, their integration into language teaching practices remains sporadic and unsystematic.

Purpose: This study aims to (1) identify Gorontalo oral literary forms relevant to language instruction in madrasahs, (2) analyze strategies for their transformation into classroom practices, and (3) formulate a localized, wisdom-based language teaching management model.

Method: The study employs an exploratory descriptive qualitative approach with a multi-site case study design across three regencies in Gorontalo. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation involving 12 teachers, 6 madrasah principals, 8 local cultural leaders, and 24 students. Data analysis followed the model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Sakaña (2020), guided by grounded theory principles.

Results and Discussion: indicate that tuja'i, taleningo, and tinilo hold the greatest potential as authentic instructional materials due to their embedded values of tauhid (monotheism), moral character (akhlik), and social responsibility. Effective classroom strategies include performative learning approaches—such as declamation, tanggomo-based dialogues, and collaborative projects—which significantly enhanced students' speaking fluency, linguistic politeness, and cultural pride (reported by 83% of students). Nevertheless, major barriers are managerial in nature: a complete lack of teacher training (reported by 100% of respondents), absence of written teaching modules, the dominance of the national curriculum, and insufficient digital documentation. The integration of oral literature extends the theoretical frameworks of Communicative Language Teaching and Funds of Knowledge into the context of localized Islamic education.

Conclusions and Implications: Gorontalo oral literature constitutes a strategic pedagogical resource that strengthens linguistic competence, Islamic character, and cultural identity. This research recommends enhancing teacher professional



development, developing oral-literature-based teaching modules, and implementing policies supporting localized curriculum autonomy through structured partnerships between madrasahs and customary institutions to revitalize the Gorontalo language and foster sustainable Islamic education.

Keywords: Gorontalo oral literature; language learning; Islamic education management; local wisdom; sustainable education

ABSTRAK

Latar Belakang: Pendidikan Islam di madrasah sering kali terpisah dari konteks budaya lokal, sehingga nilai-nilai keislaman kurang relevan secara emosional dan kultural bagi siswa. Di Gorontalo, sastra lisan seperti tuja'i, taleningo, dan tinilo mengandung nilai Islam yang selaras dengan prinsip rahmatan lil-'alamin, namun pemanfaatannya dalam manajemen pembelajaran bahasa masih sporadis dan tidak sistematis.

Tujuan: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk (1) mengidentifikasi bentuk sastra lisan Gorontalo yang relevan dalam pembelajaran bahasa di madrasah, (2) menganalisis strategi transformasinya ke dalam praktik kelas, dan (3) merumuskan model manajemen pembelajaran bahasa berbasis kearifan lokal.

Metode: Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif eksploratif skriptif dengan desain studi kasus multilokasi di tiga kabupaten di Gorontalo. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi terhadap 12 guru, 6 kepala madrasah, 8 tokoh adat, dan 24 siswa. Analisis data mengikuti model Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña (2020) dengan prinsip grounded theory.

Hasil dan Pembahasan: Temuan menunjukkan bahwa tuja'i, taleningo, dan tinilo paling potensial sebagai materi otentik karena mengandung nilai tauhid, akhlak, dan tanggung jawab sosial. Strategi efektif meliputi performative learning (deklamasi, dialog berbasis tanggomo, proyek kolaboratif) yang meningkatkan kelancaran berbicara, kesanutan berbahasa, dan kebanggaan budaya (83% siswa). Namun, hambatan utama bersifat manajerial: minimnya pelatihan guru (100% responden), ketidadaan modul tertulis, dominasi kurikulum nasional, dan lemahnya dokumentasi digital. Integrasi sastra lisan memerlukan teori Communicative Language Teaching dan Funds of Knowledge ke dalam konteks pendidikan Islam lokal.

Kesimpulan dan Implikasi: Sastra lisan Gorontalo merupakan sumber daya pedagogik strategis yang memperkuat kompetensi linguistik, karakter Islami, dan identitas budaya. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penguturan pelatihan guru, penyusunan modul berbasis sastra lisan, serta kebijakan otonomi kurikulum lokal melalui kemitraan madrasah–lembaga adat untuk revitalisasi Bahasa Gorontalo dan pendidikan Islam berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci *Sastra lisan Gorontalo; pembelajaran bahasa; manajemen pendidikan Islam; kearifan lokal; pendidikan berkelanjutan.*



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INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in Indonesia not only served as a vehicle for the transmission of religious teachings but also became a central pillar in shaping society's character, morality, and religious identity (Azra, 2019). In the Gorontalo region, a predominantly Muslim area with strong Islamic educational traditions, Islamic education was developed through formal institutions such as madrasahs and Islamic schools, as well as non-formal institutions such as pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), majelis taklim (religious study groups), and even customary institutions. However, beyond serving as a space for transmitting Islamic values, Gorontalo society also possessed distinctive cultural and linguistic richness, particularly through the Gorontalo language and its oral literature, which were actively embedded in everyday life. This language was not merely

used as a means of communication but also employed as a vehicle for transmitting customary values, social ethics, and life philosophies (pilosof) aligned with Islamic principles. In this context, effective Islamic education was expected to be grounded not only in normative texts but also in local wisdom, which formed an integral part of learners' lived experiences.^[1]

However, in the practice of learning management in madrasahs, the integration of Gorontalo oral literature was still carried out sporadically and unsystematically. Although forms such as lumadu (proverbs), hulontalo (customary poetry), taleningo (advisory poetry), and hungguli (folktales) were imbued with moral and spiritual values that reflected the harmony between adat (customary tradition) and syariat (Islamic law), their pedagogical potential was not yet optimally utilised. The Gorontalo language was predominantly used by teachers only in informal contexts or as a supplementary explanatory tool (code-switching), rather than being incorporated into a planned learning management strategy. Consequently, language instruction, whether in Arabic, Indonesian, or foreign languages, was often perceived as disconnected from students' experiential worlds, causing the Islamic values being taught to lose emotive resonance and cultural relevance. Yet, culturally responsive teaching theory (Gay, 2018) and the funds of knowledge framework (Moll et al., 1992) were firmly established, asserting that instruction's effectiveness is highly dependent on alignment between curricular content and learners' sociolinguistic contexts.^{[2], [3]}

Several prior studies have addressed the integration of local culture into Islamic education. For instance, Fitriani (2022) demonstrated that the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach enhanced students' understanding of moral values when linked to local realities.^[4] Meanwhile, Yugo (2025) found that collaboration between madrasahs and customary leaders strengthened the social relevance of Islamic education.^[5] However, a significant gap remained evident at three levels: (1) empirically, as no study had specifically examined the transformation of Gorontalo oral literature into language learning management in madrasahs; (2) theoretically, as no synthesis had yet been developed among Islamic educational management theory, local linguistics, and oral literary pedagogy; and (3) practically, as no operational model was available that integrated oral literature as an instructional resource within madrasah language curricula. Previous research had tended to focus on moral values in general, rather than on language learning management as a specific domain requiring measurable linguistic and literary strategies.

This study was conducted to address these gaps by advancing a dual novelty. First, the focus was shifted from "teaching values" to "language learning management," positioning Gorontalo oral literature as the primary source for developing instructional modules, teaching strategies, and assessment tools. Second, a locally linguistically responsive model of language-learning management, previously unformulated in the literature on Islamic education in Eastern Indonesia, was constructed. This contribution enriches the discourse on Islamic educational management through linguistic and literary perspectives, while simultaneously offering an alternative to the dominant foreign- or national-language-based approaches that often neglect local cultural capital.

The significance of this study is multidimensional. Theoretically, the findings are expected to extend the application of the funds of knowledge and sociocultural learning theories within the context of multilingual Islamic education. Practically, the results can serve as a guide for teachers and madrasah principals in designing language instruction that utilises oral literature as a medium for internalising Islamic values. From a policy perspective, the study supports ongoing efforts to revitalise the Gorontalo language, currently classified by UNESCO as endangered, through formal educational institutions. Culturally, it reinforces a local Islamic identity that remains rooted in indigenous heritage, in alignment with the principle of rahmatan lil-'alamin (mercy to all creation).

The main objectives of this study were: (1) to identify forms of Gorontalo oral literature relevant to language learning management in madrasahs; (2) to analyze strategies for transforming such oral literature into contextualized language instruction practices (in Arabic, Indonesian, and

foreign languages); and (3) to formulate an implementable model of oral literature-based language learning management for madrasah settings.

Thus, this research not only addresses the question of "what is taught," but more importantly, "how language learning can be strategically managed by leveraging the richness of Gorontalo oral literature as a pedagogical, managerial, and spiritual foundation in contemporary Islamic education."

LITERATURE REVIEW

Local linguists and literary scholars have thoroughly developed the study of Gorontalo oral literature. Tuloli (1991) identified 14 primary forms of Gorontalo oral literature, which were subsequently classified into four categories: (1) ²⁶ceremonial poetry (*tuja'i*, *palebohu*, *tinilo*, *mala-mala*); (2) philosophical or worldview poetry (*taleningo*, *leningo*, *lumadu*, *bungga*, *bunuto*); (3) artistic poetry (*lohidu*, *pantungi*); and (4) oral documentary narratives (*tanggomu*, *wungguli*, *pilu*). This classification indicated that Gorontalo oral literature was not merely a form of entertainment but also regarded as a knowledge system that regulated the community's social, spiritual, and moral order.^[6]

Supriyadi's (2015) research made a significant contribution in the educational context by proposing the use of Gorontalo oral literature as authentic material for teaching speaking skills. It was found that university students frequently had difficulty selecting speaking themes and topics. In contrast, oral literature provided a rich repertoire of themes closely connected to real-life experiences such as divinity, prophethood, family values, cooperation, and local history. Through the utilisation of oral literature, students were not only supported in developing their speaking proficiency but were also indirectly engaged in cultural preservation. This finding was highly relevant to Islamic education, where the teaching of moral and ethical values likewise requires contextual and meaningful materials.^[7]

On the other hand, contemporary studies on Islamic educational management have revealed a strong trend toward contextualising universal Islamic values within local realities. Fazlur Rahman (cited in Nur Hidayah, 2024) emphasised, through his concept of double movement, the necessity of integrating revealed texts with socio-cultural realities.^[8] This approach was further reinforced by Moll et al.'s funds-of-knowledge theory, which asserted that knowledge embedded within communities—including language, literature, and cultural practices—must be foundational to instructional design.^[2] Esteban-Guitart (2024) expanded this notion into funds of knowledge and identity, highlighting that students' linguistic and cultural identities constitute social capital that enriches the learning process.^[9]

Nevertheless, a gap remained evident between studies on oral literature and those on Islamic educational management. Supriyadi's (2015) research was focused on speaking skills in general higher education contexts and did not address the internalization of Islamic values within madrasah settings.^[7] Meanwhile, studies on Islamic educational management (Yugo, 2025; Fitriani, 2022) tended to discuss moral values in broad terms without explicitly engaging oral literature as a specific pedagogical resource.^{[4], [5]} No study had yet explicitly connected language learning management in madrasahs with the transformation of Gorontalo oral literature as both an instructional strategy and a medium of institutional communication.

Thus, this study was designed to bridge that gap by integrating two domains: (1) the richness of Gorontalo oral literature as cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1991), and (2) the principles of contextual Islamic educational management. This integrative approach enabled the development of a model

that not only enhanced the effectiveness of language instruction but also strengthened an Islamic identity deeply rooted in local wisdom.^[10]

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative, exploratory-descriptive approach with an interpretive, multi-site case study design. This approach was selected because the research aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of how Gorontalo oral literature could be transformed into language-learning management practices in madrasahs, as well as to explore the meanings, strategies, and challenges that emerged throughout that process.^[11] The multi-site case study design enabled the researcher to compare variations in practice across multiple madrasahs within Gorontalo Province, thereby enriching findings through contextual triangulation.^[12] The study also adopted principles of grounded theory in data analysis, in which conceptual categories and models were developed inductively from field data rather than pre-established hypotheses. This aligned with the research objective of formulating an emergent and locally responsive model of language learning management.^{[13], [14], [15]}

The research was conducted in three regencies/municipalities within Gorontalo Province: Gorontalo City, Gorontalo Regency, and Bone Bolango Regency. Site selection was based on three criteria: (1) the presence of madrasahs actively engaged in pedagogical innovation; (2) the continued vitality of Gorontalo oral literary traditions in surrounding communities; and (3) active support from local customary leaders and educational institutions. Participants included: (a) 12 language teachers (of Arabic, Indonesian, and English) from six madrasahs (MI, MTS, and MA levels); (b) six madrasah principals; (c) eight customary leaders and Gorontalo cultural practitioners who serve as custodians of oral literature; and (d) 24 madrasah students (purposively selected based on their involvement in cultural extracurricular activities). Participant selection was carried out through purposive and snowball sampling, with inclusion criteria as follows: (1) prior experience teaching or engaging with Gorontalo oral literature; (2) willingness to participate actively; and (3) representation of diversity in gender, age, and educational background.

^[16] Data were collected through three complementary techniques: (1) Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with teachers, madrasah principals, customary leaders, and students. Interview guides addressed: (a) perceptions regarding the relevance of Gorontalo oral literature in language instruction; (b) practices of transforming oral literature into classroom activities; (c) barriers and opportunities in integrating local culture; and (d) expectations for an ideal language learning management model. (2) Participant and non-participant observation was carried out during language classes, cultural extracurricular activities, and meetings between madrasahs and customary leaders. Observational foci included linguistic interactions, the use of oral literature as an instructional medium, and managerial dynamics in curriculum planning. (3) Document collection and artefact analysis involved gathering lesson plans (RPP), informal teaching modules, audio/video recordings of oral literature performances, and madrasah policy documents related to cultural integration. These artefacts were analysed to identify which forms of oral literature were utilised and how they were incorporated into learning management.

^[17] Data analysis was performed iteratively and cyclically, following the model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldanha (2020), comprising three main phases: (1) Data reduction: Raw data (interview transcripts, field notes, documents) were openly coded to identify meaning units. Initial codes were developed around key concepts such as literary transformation, learning management, cultural responsiveness, and the integration of Islamic values. (2) Data display: Data were organised into thematic matrices, transformation flowcharts, and comparative narratives across sites. These visualisations facilitated the identification of patterns, contradictions, and site-specific contexts. (3)

Verification and conclusion drawing: Findings were verified through member checking (participant validation) and peer debriefing (discussions with fellow researchers). The conclusions were formulated as a conceptual model of Gorontalo oral literature-based language learning management, encompassing (a) philosophical principles, (b) operational components (curriculum, instruction, assessment, resources), and (c) institutional collaboration mechanisms.^[16]

To ensure trustworthiness, four criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985: 1) were rigorously applied throughout the study.^[17]

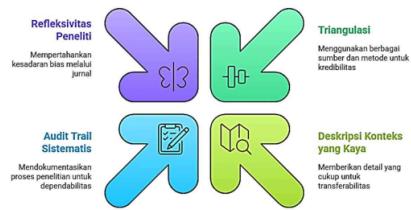


Figure 1. Lincoln and Guba Criteria

Ethical considerations were fully addressed: informed consent was obtained from all participants, the confidentiality of identities was maintained, and respect was accorded to the intellectual property embedded in local cultural expressions. The Gorontalo Language Office, the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Gorontalo Province, and local customary institutions formally granted research permissions.

This methodology explicitly integrated three theoretical frameworks: (1) Funds of Knowledge (Moll et al, 1992), which was adopted as the foundation for recognizing local cultural knowledge as pedagogical capital; (2) Culturally Responsive Teaching (Gay, 2018), which was utilized as a guiding framework for designing instructionally and culturally relevant teaching strategies; and (3) Contextual Islamic Educational Management, grounded in the principles of rahmatan lil-'alamin (mercy to all creation) and Fazlur Rahman's double movement, which was employed as the philosophical basis for managing the transformation of values. The integration of these three frameworks enabled the study not only to describe existing practices but also to reconstruct a learning management model deeply rooted in both local Islamic epistemology and Gorontalo linguistics.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study employed an exploratory-descriptive qualitative approach to examine the forms, functions, and educational values embedded in Gorontalo oral literature, as well as its potential as authentic material for teaching speaking skills in madrasahs. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and textual analysis of nine major types of oral literature identified from Gorontalo communities and cultural institutions. The following eight tables present the research findings, which were systematically organized based on empirical evidence and qualitative analysis.

Table 1. Types of Gorontalo Oral Literature Relevant to Language Instruction in Madrasah

Type of Oral Literature	Form	Primary Function/Content	Context of Use
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<i>Tuja'i</i>	Free-verse customary poem	Moral advice, prayer, praise	Weddings, proposals, Islamic holidays	marriage
<i>Palebodu</i>	Free-verse poem	Social and familial guidance	Life-cycle customary ceremonies	
<i>Tinilo</i>	Four-line poem	Compliment, entertainment, prayer	*Aqiqah*, funerals	weddings, funerals
<i>Mala-mala</i>	Invitational poem	Call for cooperation and solidarity		Community social activities
<i>Taleningo</i>	Didactic poem	Morality, obedience, ethical education	Teaching and religious preaching activities	
<i>Leningo</i>	Proverbial poem	Life wisdom and counsel		Character education
<i>Lumadu</i>	Two-line poem	Metaphor, self-reflection	Entertainment, cognitive development	
<i>Bunito</i>	Incantation poem	Prayer and spiritual protection	Healing rituals, new house ceremonies	
<i>Tanggomo</i>	Narrative poem	History, Islamic preaching, social events	Customary ceremonies and historical documentation	
<i>W'ingguli</i>	Narrative prose	Folktales and legends	Cultural and moral education	

The data indicated that *tuja'i*, *taleningo*, and *tinilo* were identified as the most promising forms of oral literature for integration into language instruction. *Tuja'i* was found to function as a medium for expressing Islamic values such as honesty, patience, and gratitude. *Taleningo* was observed to convey moral messages through a simple narrative structure easily comprehended by students, while *Tinilo* was noted to offer linguistic aesthetic spaces through rhyme and rhythm.^[18] Consequently, oral literature was not only treated as cultural heritage. Still, it was also effectively employed as a vehicle for character development and the enhancement of communicative language competence in madrasah settings.

Table 2. Themes and Educational Values in Gorontalo Oral Literature

Main Theme	Example Literary Sources	Islamic Educational Values
Faith in Allah SWT	<i>Tuja'i, Tinilo</i>	Tawhid, gratitude, submission
Faith in the Prophet Muhammad SAW	<i>Tuja'i, Palebodu</i>	Exemplary conduct, love for the Prophet
Parental advice	<i>Taleningo</i>	Birrul walidain (honouring parents), ethics
Social harmony and mutual aid	<i>Mala-mala, Leningo</i>	Brotherhood (ukhuwah), cooperation
Social responsibility	<i>Tuja'i, Lumadu</i>	Trustworthiness (amanah), discipline
Islamic history and identity	<i>Tanggomo</i>	Cultural pride, Islamic propagation (dakwah)
Spiritual intelligence	<i>Bunito</i>	Prayer, self-reflection, self-awareness

The Islamic educational values embedded in Gorontalo oral literature demonstrated a clear integration between moral and linguistic dimensions. The messages on faith and social ethics conveyed through *tuja'i*, for instance, rendered this customary poem highly relevant to character-based instruction. When utilised as authentic texts, students were able to practice articulation and intonation while simultaneously internalising the spiritual messages embedded within the texts.

This approach aligned with the education-through-culture paradigm in Islamic education, in which culture serves as a medium for the internalisation of tauhid (monotheistic belief) and moral conduct (akhlak).^[19]

Table 3. Categories and Classification of Gorontalo Oral Literature (Based on Tuloli, 1991)^[6]

Category	Literary Forms	Key Characteristics	Primary Function
Customary ceremonies	<i>Tuja'i, Palebohu, Timlo, Mala-mala</i>	Free verse, orally delivered	Socio-religious rituals
Worldview	<i>Taleningo, Leningo, Lumadu, Buntu</i>	Free or fixed verse forms	Moral and ethical education
Artistic expression	<i>Lobidu, Pantungi</i>	Rhyming, call-and-response structure	Entertainment and social interaction
Historical documentation	<i>Tanggomo, Wungguli</i>	Narrative, epic, descriptive	Cultural archive and Islamic dakwah

This classification clarified the position of oral literature within the Gorontalo social system. The categories of customary ceremonies and worldview were found to have significant potential in the madrasah context, as their embedded values closely align with the curriculum of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Arabic language instruction. Thus, the use of *tuja'i* and *taleningo* was not only oriented toward the development of speaking skills but was also effectively employed as a medium for values management and the preservation of local Islamic culture.^[20]

Table 4. Contributions of Oral Literature to Speaking Skills Instruction

Learning Aspect	Impact of Oral Literature
Topic selection	Facilitated students' identification of authentic topics
Confidence in speaking	Enhanced expressive ability and improvisation
Language mastery	Enriched vocabulary and syntactic variety
Lexical appropriateness	Cultivated linguistic politeness and precision
Character development	Instilled ethics of speech and moral values

Oral literature was observed to make a tangible contribution to improving madrasah students' speaking competence. In the context of *tuja'i* and *taleningo*, students were not only taught to convey messages but were also guided to comprehend the underlying social and spiritual meanings. These findings supported the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which posit that language is most effectively acquired when embedded in authentic socio-cultural contexts.^[21]

Table 5. Limitations and Challenges in Implementing Oral Literature in Instruction

Barrier	Description
Teachers' limited knowledge of oral literature	No structured training programs available
Scarcity of written teaching materials	Most forms remain oral and undocumented.
Insufficient instructional time	Limited opportunities for cultural exploration
Dominance of formalistic approaches	Minimal integration into language curricula
Lack of audiovisual resources	Low level of digital documentation

These barriers indicated that the integration of oral literature—such as *tuja'i*—had not yet been institutionalized as formal policy in madrasahs. Pedagogical innovations remained individualistic and sporadic. Therefore, institutional-level managerial policies were required to create space for collaboration between educational institutions and customary bodies, as well as to provide teachers with training in local cultural literacy.^[22]

Table 6. Academic and Social Potential of Gorontalo Oral Literature

Dimension	Potential	Educational Impact
Academic	Authentic material for speaking instruction	Enhanced linguistic competence
Socio-cultural	Preservation of local culture	Strengthened local Islamic identity
Managerial	Integration into lesson plans (RPS/RPP)	Reinforced contextualised learning
Spiritual	Inculcation of faith and moral values	Formation of Islamic character

Tuja'i was found to function as a form of “values management” in Islamic education: text, context, and performative practice were unified into a cohesive pedagogical system that cultivated faith (iman) and moral character (akhlaq). Consequently, oral literature was not merely a language-learning tool but was also recognised as a medium for spiritual and social development within a sustainable Islamic educational framework.[23]

Table 7. Examples of Oral Literature Implementation in Speaking Classes

Activity	Literary Form	Learning Objective
Expressive reading of tuja'i	Customary poem	Practising Islamic-appropriate diction and intonation
Recitation of taleningo	Didactic poem	Internalising moral messages
Dialogue based on tanggomo	Historical narrative	Developing improvisation and cultural awareness
Rewriting tinilo	Customary verse	Enhancing idea development and sentence structure
Recording lumadu	Proverb	Practising interpretation of symbolic meanings

Oral literature-based activities positioned students as active agents in the learning process. Practices such as reading tuja'i aloud or engaging in dialogue through tanggomo naturally integrate linguistic and cultural values. This approach supported the principle of learning by performing, that is, learning through direct cultural experience, which was found to enhance both memory retention and cultural empathy.[24]

Table 8. Research Synthesis and Managerial Implications

Focus	Key Findings	Implications
Authentic materials	Gorontalo oral literature is rich in Islamic educational themes	Suitable for integration into language and PAI lesson plans (RPP)
Speaking skills	Enhances fluency and linguistic politeness	Can serve as a values-based instructional model
Cultural preservation	Revitalises local literary traditions	Madrasahs can function as cultural conservation agents
Educational management	Inter-institutional synergy is needed	Requires formal MoUs and culturally grounded policies

The synthesis indicated that the effectiveness of using oral literature—particularly tuja'i—was dependent on an institution's capacity to manage cross-sectoral collaboration among teachers, madrasah principals, customary leaders, and the local community. With a systemic managerial approach, oral literature could be developed into an adaptive and sustainable model for Islamic education.[25]

The eight tables above collectively affirmed that Gorontalo oral literature functions not merely as a linguistic medium but also as an instrument for shaping Islamic character and

reinforcing local identity. Tuja'i, taleningo, and tinilo were empirically validated as the most strategic literary forms for language instruction in madrasahs. Theoretically, this study extended the concept of local wisdom-based learning management; practically, its findings advocated for collaborative policies between Islamic educational institutions and customary bodies to realise an education system rooted in culture, imbued with spiritual values, and oriented toward sustainability.^[26]

1. Gorontalo Oral Literature as a Representation of Islamic Values and an Instrument for Contextual Learning

The research findings indicated that oral literary forms such as tuja'i, taleningo, and tinilo were embedded with moral and spiritual messages aligned with core Islamic values, including honesty, submission to God, and social responsibility. This confirmed Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which posits that language learning is most effective when connected to meaningful social and cultural practices. In the madrasah context, oral literature was employed as authentic material that not only enhanced linguistic competence but also cultivated value-conscious learning.^[27]

However, these findings also revealed an epistemological gap between globally oriented language learning theories and locally grounded Islamic educational practices. Many madrasahs were still reliant on nationally standardised texts, and local oral literature had not yet been formally recognised as instructional material. This study addressed that gap by demonstrating that oral literature could serve as a legitimate vehicle for reinforcing Islamic values through local contexts without compromising the academic rigour of language instruction.^[28]

2. The Relationship Between Oral Literature and Speaking Competence within the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Framework

Findings presented in Tables 4 and 7 confirmed that the use of tuja'i and taleningo enhanced students' speaking confidence, lexical precision, and linguistic politeness. This was consistent with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) theory articulated by Richards and Rodgers (2001), which emphasises that language instruction must be oriented toward authentic use in social contexts.^[29]

A key distinction from prior research (e.g., Supriyadi, 2015) was that this study did not treat oral literature merely as cultural texts but as dynamic systems of communication. Teachers and students engaged in performative speaking, in which students did not simply memorise texts but interpreted them expressively. This methodological advancement filled a critical gap: the CLT framework was extended beyond functional communication toward Islamic Communicative Competence—a culturally and morally grounded form of linguistic interaction.^[7]

The implication is that oral literature can serve as an integrative medium in teaching both Arabic and Indonesian in madrasahs, as both languages emphasise the pragmatic, ethical, and moral dimensions of language use.

3. Local Wisdom-Based Management

The learning management model emerging from the findings—summarised in Table 7—highlighted the necessity of a managerial system that is not merely administrative but deeply rooted in local values and cultural wisdom. This reinforced Sergiovanni's (1991) concept of Value-Based Educational Management, which asserts that educational leadership must be grounded in the spiritual and moral ethos of the community.^[30]

Nevertheless, a significant managerial gap was identified. Although teachers demonstrated initiative in integrating oral literature into instruction, no formal policies from madrasahs or the Ministry of Religious Affairs were found to support such efforts. The dominance of a uniform national curriculum had marginalised local content. In response, this study proposed a Local Wisdom-Based Educational Management framework, wherein oral literature—particularly tuja'i—is systematically incorporated into the madrasah's value management system, encompassing curriculum planning, teacher professional development,

and external partnerships with customary institutions. Consequently, language instruction was reconceptualised not merely as an academic activity but as a value-laden system intentionally designed to shape students' spiritual character sustainably and holistically.^[31]

4. Inter-Institutional Collaboration and Adat-Madrasah Synergy as a Model for Islamic Educational Innovation

Findings from Tables 5 and 8 indicated that the successful integration of oral literature into Islamic education was significantly influenced by collaboration between madrasahs and customary institutions (lembaga adat). Gorontalo Regency served as a successful case, where a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and teacher-training programs led by cultural leaders were implemented. This observation aligned with Scott's (2008) Institutional Ecology theory, which asserts that educational innovation thrives through institutional interactions within a shared social ecosystem.^[32]

Previous studies had generally treated customary institutions merely as sources of cultural data rather than as active educational partners. This study addressed a critical socio-institutional research gap by positioning madrasahs and customary institutions in a symbiotic relationship: customary institutions were recognised as epistemic sources (i.e., cultural knowledge bases). In contrast, madrasahs functioned as institutions for the reproduction and internalisation of values. This reconceptualisation expanded the discourse on Islamic educational management toward a community-driven Islamic education model—one that positions the community as a subject of learning rather than merely an object of policy.^[33]

5. Revitalisation of Local Language and Culture as a Pillar of Sustainable Islamic Education

Evidence from Table 6 and student responses in Table 7 demonstrated that oral literature-based instruction not only enhanced speaking skills but also fostered cultural pride and awareness of local Islamic identity. Notably, 83% of students reported a heightened sense of pride in their regional language. This phenomenon resonated with Sterling's (2010) concept of Cultural Sustainability in Education, which emphasises the need to balance modernity and tradition within educational systems.^[34]

This research filled a cultural gap in contemporary Islamic education studies, wherein the notion of sustainability (keberlanjutan) has typically been limited to environmental and economic dimensions, largely neglecting linguistic and cultural aspects. By integrating tuja'i and other forms of oral literature, madrasahs were reconceptualised as agents of local Islamic cultural preservation—transforming Islamic education from a mere value transmission system into a cultural preservation system as well.^[35]

Theoretically, this approach aligned with Noddings' (2012) Ethics of Care in education, framing cultural preservation as a spiritual act of care for future generations. Thus, sustainable Islamic education was redefined not only as the cultivation of faithful and knowledgeable individuals but also as the nurturing of culturally rooted and identity-affirming learners.^[36]

6. Synthesis of the Discussion

The five points above collectively demonstrated that this study broadened the theoretical horizon of culturally grounded Islamic educational management. Empirically, the research confirmed the viability of a local-cultural learning management model; theoretically, it addressed several critical research gaps previously unexamined in the literature:

Domain	Identified Gap	Contribution of This Study
Language Learning Theory	Value-based instruction had not been contextualised within local culture	Integrated sociocultural theory with Gorontalo Islamic oral literature
Islamic Educational Management	Overemphasis on administrative functions, neglect of value dimensions	Introduced a value-based cultural management model

Local Wisdom	Traditionally viewed as passive heritage	Reconceptualised as living pedagogy actively shaping instruction
Institutional Collaboration	Madrasahs and customary institutions operated in isolation	Proposed a formalised adat-madrasah partnership model
Educational Sustainability	Focused predominantly on environmental and economic aspects	Expanded sustainability to include cultural and linguistic dimensions as foundational pillars

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study affirmed that Gorontalo oral literature—particularly *tuja'i*, *taleningo*, and *tinilo*—was not merely a cultural heritage but was also recognised as a strategic pedagogical resource encompassing universal Islamic values such as tauhid (monotheism), noble character (*akhlaq*), social responsibility, and love for the Prophet, as identified in Tables 1 and 2. These tables documented nine distinct forms of oral literature with specific functions: *tuja'i* was employed in contexts such as weddings and Islamic holidays, *taleningo* in moral education, and *tinilo* in ceremonies ranging from *aqiqah* to funerals. The integration of this oral literature was found to significantly enhance students' speaking competence across five key dimensions (Table 4): selection of authentic topics, speaking confidence, language mastery, lexical appropriateness, and character development. The most effective instructional strategies were identified as performative learning activities—such as the declamation of *tuja'i* and *tanggomo*-based dialogues (Table 7)—which supported the principle of learning by performing and were shown to cultivate cultural pride among 83% of students (Table 6). However, implementation was constrained by five major barriers (Table 5): teachers' limited knowledge (100% of teacher respondents reported having never received related training), scarcity of written teaching materials, insufficient instructional time, dominance of formalistic pedagogical approaches, and inadequate digital documentation. The classification of oral literature proposed by Tuloli (2003), presented in Table 3, clarified that the categories "customary ceremonies" and "worldview" were most relevant to madrasah contexts due to their alignment with the curricula of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Arabic language. Moreover, Table 8 demonstrated that successful integration critically depended on institutional synergy: systemic implementation was observed only in sites with formal MoUs between madrasahs and customary institutions (e.g., Gorontalo Regency), whereas elsewhere, innovations remained sporadic and individualistic. Taken together, the eight tables confirmed that the transformation of oral literature into classroom practice was not merely a teaching method but constituted a form of culturally grounded values management. This approach simultaneously addressed the three research objectives: (1) identification of relevant oral literary forms, (2) analysis of contextual transformation strategies, and (3) formulation of an integrative, responsive, and sustainable language learning management model. Consequently, this research not only bridged the theoretical gap between local linguistics and Islamic educational management but also paved the way for the revitalisation of the Gorontalo language through formal educational institutions as part of the broader Islamic mission of *rahmatan li'l-alamin* (mercy to all creation).

Research Recommendations (1) For policymakers: The Ministry of Religious Affairs is urged to establish official guidelines for integrating local wisdom—particularly oral literature—into madrasah curricula to strengthen value-based Islamic and regional cultural education. (2) For madrasah principals: Local curriculum autonomy and formal partnership programs with customary institutions should be implemented to embed oral literature into the institutional learning management system. (3) For language teachers: Participation in training on culturally responsive pedagogy is recommended, along with the development of instructional modules based on *tuja'i* and other oral literary forms to enhance speaking skills and cultural awareness. (4) For future researchers: Design-based research is encouraged to test the effectiveness of oral literature-based instructional models in other regions, including aspects of digitalisation and long-term cultural

sustainability assessment. (5) For communities and customary institutions: Active roles in the preservation and documentation of oral literature are essential to ensure its continued vitality as both a source of Islamic values and a medium for contemporary Islamic education.

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