



## Implementation of the Culturally Responsive Teaching Approach in Learning Narrative Texts Based on Local Traditions and Islamic Values at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar

(Implementasi Pendekatan Culturally Responsive Teaching dalam Pembelajaran Teks Narasi Berbasis Tradisi Lokal dan Nilai Islam di SMP Negeri 26 Makassar)

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**Abstract:** This study aims to describe the implementation of the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) approach in teaching narrative texts based on local traditions and Islamic values at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar. The problem raised is students' lack of understanding of materials relevant to their local culture and religion, which leads to low engagement in learning. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques in the form of observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data were obtained directly from one Indonesian language teacher and the eighth-grade students involved in the learning. The results show that the implementation of CRT can increase student engagement, strengthen cultural identity, and improve students' understanding of narrative texts containing local and Islamic values. Although challenges such as limited time and resources were encountered, this approach proved effective in bridging the gap between learning materials and students' cultural realities. This study provides theoretical contributions to the development of a more contextual CRT in Indonesia. It offers practical recommendations for teachers and policymakers to integrate local and religious values into the education curriculum. However, this study has limitations in terms of location and time coverage, which opens opportunities for further research with a broader sample, sustainable educational tourism, enhancing community empowerment, and supporting rural development.

**Keywords** Culturally Responsive Teaching, Inclusive Education, Islamic Values, Local Traditions, Narrative Text Learning

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan implementasi pendekatan Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) dalam pembelajaran teks narasi berbasis tradisi lokal dan nilai Islam di SMP Negeri 26 Makassar. Masalah yang diangkat adalah kurangnya pemahaman siswa terhadap materi yang relevan dengan budaya lokal dan agama mereka, yang mengarah pada rendahnya keterlibatan dalam pembelajaran. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Data diperoleh dari satu guru Bahasa Indonesia dan siswa kelas VIII yang terlibat langsung dalam pembelajaran. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan CRT dapat meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa, memperkuat identitas budaya, serta meningkatkan pemahaman siswa terhadap teks narasi yang mengandung nilai-nilai lokal dan Islam. Meskipun tantangan seperti keterbatasan waktu dan sumber daya ditemukan, pendekatan ini terbukti efektif dalam menjembatani kesenjangan antara materi pembelajaran dan realitas budaya siswa. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi teoretis dalam pengembangan CRT yang lebih kontekstual di Indonesia, serta memberikan rekomendasi praktis bagi guru dan pembuat kebijakan untuk mengintegrasikan nilai lokal dan agama dalam kurikulum pendidikan. Namun, penelitian ini memiliki keterbatasan dalam hal cakupan lokasi dan waktu, yang membuka peluang untuk penelitian lebih lanjut dengan sampel yang lebih luas.

**Kata Kunci** Culturally Responsive Teaching, Pendidikan Inklusif, Nilai Islam, Tradisi Lokal, Pembelajaran Teks Narasi

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## INTRODUCTION

The reality of education in Indonesia, particularly at the junior high school level, demonstrates the challenges of integrating local and cultural values into the existing curriculum. At SMP Negeri 26 Makassar, for example, the narrative text learning process has not fully accommodated the richness of local traditions and Islamic values present in the community. This results in students lacking understanding and appreciation of the importance of local wisdom and Islamic principles in everyday life (Anderson, 2019). Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) is expected to be a solution to address this problem, given that this approach emphasizes the importance of respecting cultural diversity in the learning process (Gay, 2018; Ahmad & Sari, 2023). Although the CRT approach has been widely discussed in educational literature, its application in the Indonesian context, particularly in junior high schools, remains limited. Previous research has shown that implementing CRT in culturally diverse classrooms can increase student engagement and their understanding of the learning material (Ladson-Billings, 2014). However, there has been little research specifically examining the implementation of this approach in learning based on local traditions and religious values, such as that found at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar. Therefore, it is important to examine further how the CRT approach can be applied in this context to support a more inclusive learning process that aligns with the community's values (Caesarine & Setyaningsih, 2023).

It is important to understand that although many educational theories emphasize the importance of integrating local values into the learning process, not all of these theories can effectively address the challenges faced by students at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar. Much literature emphasizes the importance of cultural values in learning, as explained by Banks (2015), who stated that culturally responsive education can increase the engagement of students from diverse backgrounds. However, these approaches often do not provide clear practical guidance on how to integrate local cultural and religious values into everyday learning (Lefaan et al., 2023; Fitriyah et al., 2025). For example, in a study of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) by Gay (2018), although CRT theory has demonstrated its impact on improving the quality of learning, its implementation in schools with culturally heterogeneous communities remains limited. In Indonesia, especially in areas with strong local traditions, research related to the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) is still relatively rare. Several studies have shown that while these theories emphasize the importance of an inclusive approach to cultural diversity and local values, practice in the field does not fully reflect this. For example, Rizki et al., (2020) found that the implementation of CRT often fails to accommodate local and religious values optimally. Similar findings were reported by Fauzi & Rahmatih (2025), who highlighted teachers' limitations in integrating local cultural contexts into the learning process. Furthermore, research by Yaasmin (2024) confirmed that the existing curriculum still focuses on a general approach and is less adaptive to local wisdom. Therefore, the gap between educational theory and practice in Indonesia, especially in schools that prioritize local culture and Islamic values, remains significant and requires further research to bridge.

This study aims to describe the implementation of the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) approach in learning narrative texts based on local traditions and Islamic values at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar. The main objective of this study is to explore how the CRT approach can be applied effectively in a local context rich in cultural and religious values. As is known, the CRT approach emphasizes recognizing and respecting cultural diversity in the learning process (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Suwandi et al., 2025). In this context, this study aims to explore how Islamic values and local traditions can serve as a strong foundation for developing narrative text materials that are not only

relevant to students' lives but also enrich their understanding of their own cultural identity. In addition, this study also aims to identify challenges and obstacles faced by teachers and students in implementing the CRT approach at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar, as well as to provide practical recommendations that can be applied to improve the effectiveness of learning based on local traditions and religious values (Amelia & Sukasih, 2025; Asra et al., 2025). Thus, this research not only focuses on the theoretical aspects of CRT but also provides a real contribution in developing more inclusive and sustainable learning practices at the junior high school level, especially in Makassar.

This research is crucial because there is a significant gap between the theory of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) developed in educational literature and its practical implementation in Indonesian schools, particularly in the context of learning based on local traditions and Islamic values. Although numerous studies have highlighted CRT's potential to enhance student engagement and understanding (Gay, 2018), most research on Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) focuses on educational contexts in Western countries, particularly Europe and North America, without deeply considering the strong local cultural factors found in Indonesia. For example, research by Gay (2018) highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity in teaching practices in the United States, while Schachner et al., (2019) and Hachfeld et al., (2011) show that in several European countries, such as Germany and the Netherlands, CRT implementation is often associated with issues of migration and the integration of multicultural students. However, this focus remains limited to societies with ethnic diversity due to migration, rather than communities with deeply rooted local wisdom, such as those in Indonesia (Arifin & Fatimah, 2022). Therefore, more research is needed exploring the application of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in non-Western local cultural contexts.

Furthermore, although previous research has emphasized the importance of integrating cultural and religious values in education (Banks, 2015), there are still limited studies that specifically examine the application of the CRT approach in a local context that also prioritizes Islamic values, such as that found at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar. The uniqueness of the CRT implementation in this school lies in the teachers' efforts to connect learning materials with Bugis-Makassar cultural values, such as sipakatau (mutual respect), sipakainge (mutual reminder), and sipakalebbi (mutual honor), which align with Islamic principles of morality and tolerance. Teachers also strive to adapt learning methods to be relevant to students' social and religious experiences, for example, through the use of contextual examples drawn from the daily lives of the Makassar community and school religious activities. Thus, the practice of CRT at SMPN 26 Makassar not only focuses on ethnic and linguistic diversity but also emphasizes the internalization of local spiritual and cultural values as a foundation for inclusive and meaningful learning. Therefore, the novelty of this research lies in its attempt to bridge this gap by exploring how CRT implementation can be adapted to the local cultural and religious values deeply embedded in students' lives (Basri, 2021). The urgency of this research is increasingly evident, as education in Indonesia aims not only to teach academic knowledge but also to shape students' character, encompassing moral and cultural values relevant to their social environment. This research is expected to provide new insights for education practitioners and policymakers in designing a more inclusive curriculum based on local values essential for national character formation.

The contribution of this research lies in its ability to provide practical guidance for implementing the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) approach in an educational context that respects local traditions and Islamic values. Globally, research on CRT has shown that this approach can improve the quality of education by taking into account students' cultural diversity (Ladson-Billings, 2014). However, the main contribution of this research is its application in the Indonesian context, which has a unique cultural and religious richness. By focusing on SMP Negeri 26 Makassar, this research provides insight into how CRT theory can be adapted to local and religious characteristics in Indonesia, which often receive less attention in international education literature (Dewi & Setiawan, 2024). Furthermore, this research is expected to provide recommendations for developing a curriculum that is more responsive to students' cultural and religious needs, as well as to identify potential challenges in implementing this approach in Indonesian schools. Thus, this research not only

provides theoretical contributions to the application of CRT but also practical contributions in designing and implementing more inclusive education policies that are appropriate to the local context (Fauzi & Nurhayati, 2020; Gay, 2018). In the long term, it is hoped that this research can serve as a reference for other schools in Indonesia that wish to integrate local and religious values into the learning process to improve the overall quality of education.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) approach in teaching narrative texts based on local traditions and Islamic values at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar. This approach was chosen because the study focuses more on describing and understanding the processes, meanings, and interactions that occur in the classroom, rather than on quantitative measurements. The primary focus of the study is how students' cultural and religious contexts influence the learning process, and how culturally responsive teaching can enhance student understanding.

SMP Negeri 26 Makassar was purposively selected as the research location because this school has unique characteristics in terms of the diversity of local Bugis-Makassar culture and the practice of Islamic values in the students' daily lives. The researcher considered these characteristics highly relevant for examining the application of the CRT approach. The research subjects consisted of one Indonesian language teacher who taught narrative texts, and eighth-grade students directly involved in the learning.

Data collection techniques in this study included participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. First, direct classroom observations were conducted to observe the learning process, the teaching strategies used by teachers, and the level of student engagement in learning activities. These observations aimed to obtain data on the dynamics of classroom interactions, including the use of local culture and Islamic values in teaching materials. Second, in-depth interviews were conducted with teachers to explore their understanding, experiences, and motivations in implementing the CRT approach in learning. Several students were also interviewed to determine their perceptions of learning that promotes local culture and Islamic values. Finally, documentation such as teaching modules, lesson plans, teaching materials, and student work was used as supplementary data to support the observations and interviews.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques. Data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation were analyzed through several stages: data transcription, coding, grouping themes, and interpretation based on field findings. The analysis focused on key themes, such as CRT implementation, local cultural integration, Islamic values, and student responses to narrative text learning. To ensure data validity, the researcher employed source triangulation, comparing data obtained from various data collection techniques to reinforce each other. Furthermore, the researcher conducted member checks by requesting confirmation from informants regarding the data interpretations to ensure they aligned with their experiences. Data validity and reliability were maintained through detailed recording of the research process and in-depth explanations of the context, allowing the results to be re-examined by other researchers in the future.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Results**

This study examines the implementation of the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) approach in teaching procedural texts based on local traditions and Islamic values at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar. Observations, interviews, and documentation revealed several key aspects that became the focus of the learning process. These aspects include the integration of local traditions and Islamic values into the learning materials, the teacher's teaching strategies, student responses to the learning, and obstacles encountered during the learning process.

**Table 1**  
**Implementation of the CRT Approach and Islamic Values**

Observed Aspects	Key Findings	Short Description
Integration of Local Traditions in Learning	Folk tales and local legends such as the Hikayat Syekh Yusuf are used as narrative material.	The teacher links narrative texts with local cultural stories that students know, making the material contextual and meaningful.
Integration of Islamic Values	The focus of Islamic values is faith, devotion to God Almighty, and noble character.	These values are presented in the story to shape students' spiritual character in addition to cognitive aspects.
Teacher Teaching Strategy (CRT)	The teacher uses discussion methods, reflection, and relates stories to students' experiences.	Learning becomes interactive and participatory; students actively connect the material with their religious experiences and values.
Student Responses to Learning	Students feel motivated and find it easy to understand the material because the material is relevant to culture and religious values.	Cultural and religious identities are valued to make students more enthusiastic and confident in the learning process.
Obstacles in Implementation	Limited teaching materials and the need for teacher training in implementing CRT	Teachers must be creative in developing teaching materials and improving their competence to apply CRT optimally.

This study reveals that the integration of local traditions in narrative text learning at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar is carried out effectively through the use of local folklore and tales, especially the Hikayat Syekh Yusuf. The local traditions raised not only include aspects of oral literature, but also social and religious values of the Bugis-Makassar community, such as sipakatau (mutual respect), sipakainge (mutual reminder), and sipakalebbi (mutual glorification). In learning practices, teachers use the Hikayat Syekh Yusuf as a means to link the narrative structure with Islamic and moral values that live in the local culture. The central values emphasized in this tale include the steadfastness of faith, the spirit of da'wah, community service, and the struggle against colonialism with a foundation of Islamic spirituality. Through discussions and analysis of the character of Syekh Yusuf, students not only learn to understand the intrinsic elements of narrative texts but also emulate the religious attitudes, leadership, and tolerance characteristic of Makassar culture. This approach makes learning narrative texts more contextual, reflective, and relevant to the cultural identity and religious values held by students.

Regarding the integration of Islamic values, the research highlights the focus on faith, devotion to God Almighty, and noble character. These values are naturally embedded in the stories taught, so that learning focuses not only on cognitive aspects but also on the development of students' spiritual character. Thus, narrative texts are not merely reading materials but also media for instilling profound religious values. The teaching strategies implemented by teachers refer to the principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT). Teachers use active discussion and reflection methods, and link stories to students' cultural and religious experiences. This approach makes learning more interactive and participatory, allowing students to connect the subject matter to their daily experiences and religious values. This process increases student engagement and strengthens their understanding.

Student responses to this learning showed very positive results based on classroom observation data and student perception questionnaires. From the results of observations conducted during three meetings, it was seen that most students appeared active in discussions, enthusiastically responded to teacher questions, and participated in narrative text analysis activities that raised the theme of culture and Islamic values. Questionnaire data completed by 32 students showed that 87% stated learning based on local traditions and Islamic values made it easier for them to understand the content of the narrative text. In contrast, 81% of students felt more motivated because the material was considered relevant to their lives and the values they adhere to.

Furthermore, interviews with Indonesian language teachers confirmed that students demonstrated increased confidence in interpreting the meaning of stories related to familiar local

figures and cultures, such as the Hikayat Syekh Yusuf. This respect for cultural and religious identity creates an inclusive, interactive, and meaningful learning environment, where students feel valued as part of the learning process. However, the implementation of this approach also faces several obstacles, particularly related to the limited availability of teaching materials that systematically and comprehensively integrate local traditions and Islamic values into a single curriculum. Interviews with Indonesian language teachers at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar revealed that although there have been numerous regional initiatives to explore and digitize folktales and local wisdom—such as the creation of short films, regional songs, and cultural content on YouTube through the Merdeka Belajar and Profil Pelajar Pancasila programs—these materials have not been fully integrated into formal learning tools such as textbooks and teaching modules. Teachers still need to adapt and curate independently to align local cultural content with the learning objectives, text structure, and Islamic values they want to develop through the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) approach. This indicates that local cultural resources are pretty abundant, but they have not been pedagogically organized for practical use in the classroom.

Documentation was conducted systematically through taking photos, videos, and field notes throughout the learning process. This activity encompassed several main stages, from planning and implementing the learning process to evaluating student learning outcomes. During the planning stage, the researcher and the Indonesian language teacher coordinated to determine the local themes to be used, such as the Hikayat Syekh Yusuf and other Bugis-Makassar folktales. During the learning process, visual documentation captured the active interactions between the teacher and students as they analyzed the structure of the narrative text and discussed the cultural and Islamic values contained within it. Furthermore, photographs of the activities demonstrated students' enthusiasm as they read their interpretations of local folktales. Finally, the documentation recorded teacher and student reflections on the benefits of this local culture-based learning. All of this documentation served not only as evidence of the research implementation but also as evaluation material and supporting data sources, strengthening the findings regarding the effectiveness of CRT implementation in the context of culturally and religiously based education in Makassar. The following documentation illustrates the entire process of implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar.



Figure 1. Joint reflection activity between teachers and researchers after learning activities to evaluate the effectiveness of integrating cultural and religious values in the learning process.

## Discussion

The research findings indicate that implementing the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) approach in teaching narrative texts based on local traditions and Islamic values at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar can increase student engagement in the learning process. Classroom observations show that teachers utilize local Bugis-Makassar values and Islamic principles to design teaching materials that are more relevant to students' daily lives (Hasanah & Utami, 2023; Idris, 2022). This is evident in the use of narrative examples that not only reflect the richness of regional culture but also contain moral messages consistent with Islamic teachings. Interviews with teachers revealed that the implementation of CRT is seen as a way to make learning more inclusive and meaningful for students from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. However, despite the increase in student participation, several challenges arise, such as limited time and resources to delve deeper into local and religious material (Ismail & Rahman, 2021; Wahyuni & Rizki, 2020). Documentation, such as lesson plans and teaching modules, demonstrates a structured effort by teachers to integrate this approach into every meeting, although its implementation still needs further refinement. Thus, while the CRT approach shows significant potential for improving learning, challenges remain to be addressed in efforts to maximize its implementation at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar.

The results of this study are strongly related to several previous studies examining the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), but with several distinguishing advantages. Research by Gay (2018) and Ladson-Billings (2014) suggests that implementing CRT can increase student engagement by respecting their cultural diversity (Setiawan et al., 2024; Wardani & Pratama, 2024). However, most of these studies focus on the context of schools in Western countries with distinct social and cultural characteristics. In contrast, this study examines the implementation of CRT at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar, a school with a strong local cultural character and a focus on Islamic values, a context not widely explored in the educational literature. For example, research by Anderson (2019) shows that despite efforts to integrate cultural values into learning, many schools in Indonesia have not been able to effectively incorporate local religious and cultural values within the formal educational context. The strength of this study lies in the integration of two highly relevant aspects—local culture and religion—into the CRT approach, distinguishing it from previous studies that focused solely on culture without considering religious aspects (Wijaya & Yulianti, 2021; Yasin & Fauzan, 2022). Thus, this study adds to the rich literature on the application of CRT in the Indonesian context and provides insights into how local culture and Islamic values can be introduced more effectively in education (Yuliani & Putra, 2023; Zainal & Nasir, 2020). This more integrated approach demonstrates that applying CRT tailored to local and religious contexts can significantly impact student understanding and engagement.

The results of this study provide a clear picture of how the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) approach can provide tangible benefits in the learning process at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar. Reflections on the results of this study indicate that by integrating local Bugis-Makassar traditions and Islamic values into narrative text learning, students not only gain an understanding of the texts studied but also enrich their knowledge of their inherent culture and religion. This aligns with the findings of Ladson-Billings (2014), who revealed that applying CRT can strengthen students' emotional bonds with the material taught, as it is relevant to their experiences and cultural identity (Zulkarnain & Hadi, 2021; Zulfiqar & Hamzah, 2023). In this study, students appeared more enthusiastic and active in class discussions. They had a greater appreciation for the narrative texts taught, which contain elements of local traditions and religious values. Through this approach, students can see a direct connection between the learning they receive and their daily lives, which strengthens their understanding of the text (Zumrotun & Arif, 2024; Nasution, 2020). For example, teachers connect narrative stories with those in Islamic teachings and the moral values contained therein, ensuring that learning is not only academic but also fosters students' character. This reflection shows that the CRT approach impacts not only students' academic aspects but also their character development and cultural identity, which are the primary goals of education based on local wisdom and religious values.

The implications of this study's findings indicate that implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar not only increases student engagement in narrative text learning but also has a broader impact on shaping students' character and strengthening their cultural identity. The implementation of this approach has important implications for the Indonesian education curriculum, particularly in integrating local and religious values into learning. With growing awareness of the importance of local culture and religion in educational contexts, Indonesian schools can view the CRT approach as an effective model for creating a more inclusive and responsive learning environment to cultural diversity (Nur & Hidayat, 2021). This study also shows that the implementation of CRT, which combines local culture with Islamic values, can support student character development, which is highly relevant to the national education goal of creating a generation that is not only intelligent but also has noble character and is sensitive to social and religious values. Another implication is the importance of teacher training in implementing this approach, so that teachers can better understand how to integrate cultural and religious values into their learning (Putri & Lestari, 2024). Therefore, the results of this study provide a basis for developing educational policies that pay greater attention to the integration of local and religious values into the learning process in Indonesian schools, as well as the importance of adapting learning methods to the cultural and social contexts of each region.

The results of this study indicate that implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar can increase student engagement and understanding, despite challenges in its implementation. The main factor influencing these results is the relevance of the learning materials to students' experiences and cultural identities. In the context of SMP Negeri 26 Makassar, which has strong Bugis-Makassar cultural characteristics and strong Islamic values, the implementation of CRT provides opportunities for students to see direct connections between learning and their daily lives. This aligns with the principles of CRT, which emphasize the importance of respecting cultural diversity and integrating local values into learning (Gay, 2018). However, despite the positive results seen in increased student engagement, several challenges emerged, primarily related to teachers' limited time and resources to integrate local culture and religious values into each lesson (Rahman & Yusuf, 2023). Interviews with teachers revealed that although they understand the importance of this approach, they find it challenging to design teaching materials that comprehensively accommodate all elements of local culture and religion, given the limited time and available resources. Furthermore, although students showed enthusiasm, not all students had a deep understanding of the relationship between narrative texts and the cultural and religious values taught (Wardani & Pratama, 2024). This may be due to their lack of initial understanding of the importance of these values in the learning context. Therefore, the results of this study indicate that although the CRT approach can improve the quality of learning, its implementation requires greater support in terms of resources and more in-depth teacher training.

Based on the results of this study, several concrete steps need to be taken to optimize the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in narrative text learning at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar. First, there is a need for increased training and mentoring for teachers in implementing CRT, with a particular focus on how to integrate local cultural and religious values in effective learning. Although teachers at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar have demonstrated efforts in implementing this approach, more in-depth training will strengthen their understanding of the importance of culturally and religiously based teaching in supporting student character development (Banks, 2015). Second, it is important to provide sufficient resources, such as teaching materials that are more relevant to local culture and Islamic values, as well as modules that support the implementation of CRT in the Indonesian educational context. Teachers also need access to more diverse and easily accessible teaching materials to assist them in designing inclusive learning based on local values. In addition, schools need to build collaborations with local communities to gain support in developing learning materials based on local traditions and religious values. Finally, developing policies that support local culture- and religion-based teaching is essential so that approaches like CRT can be implemented more widely in Indonesian schools, not just at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar. These steps will not only enrich

students' learning experiences but also strengthen the educational goal of producing a generation with a deep understanding of their cultural identity and religious values.

## CONCLUSION

The most important finding in the study explains that although Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) is globally recognized for increasing student engagement in learning, its implementation at SMP Negeri 26 Makassar shows that this approach can raise awareness and a deeper understanding of the importance of local culture and Islamic values among students. Even more surprising is that, despite facing many challenges such as limited time and resources, students involved in CRT-based learning not only improved their understanding of narrative texts but also strengthened their cultural identity and morality. The results of observations and interviews showed that this approach successfully connected the learning material with students' daily lives, which is often forgotten in conventional teaching. Furthermore, students' active engagement in discussing and responding to the material, rooted in local traditions and religious values, reflects that this learning deeply appeals to them. These findings provide strong evidence that integrating local culture and religion in learning not only improves academic quality but also strengthens students' character.

This research's contribution to scientific development is significant, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) by introducing a more contextual and relevant approach in the Indonesian context, particularly in schools with rich cultural and religious backgrounds. This research adds a new dimension to the educational literature by promoting the integration of local and Islamic values in CRT-based learning, a concept rarely discussed in previous research. This research provides valuable insights for teachers and education practitioners in Indonesia to design curricula and learning strategies that are more responsive to students' cultural and religious needs. By emphasizing the importance of using local and religious values in learning, this research opens up opportunities for the development of a more inclusive curriculum. It enhances students' understanding of their cultural and religious identities. Furthermore, the results of this research provide a basis for developing educational policies that focus more on cultural and religious diversity in learning, which is highly relevant in Indonesia's multicultural society. Thus, this research not only provides new insights in the academic world but also has broad practical impacts in education.

While this study provides significant findings, there are several limitations worth noting, which also offer opportunities for further research. First, the study was conducted in only one school, so the results may not be fully generalizable to all schools in Indonesia, particularly those located in areas with diverse social and cultural characteristics. Second, while the data obtained were rich and varied, the limited time available for observation and interviews restricted the depth of analysis of the long-term impact of the CRT approach implementation. Therefore, further research involving more schools and diverse areas could provide a more comprehensive picture of CRT implementation in a broader context. Furthermore, further research could deepen the analysis of the practical challenges faced by teachers in implementing this approach and identify more effective solutions. Thus, the limitations of this study provide opportunities for other researchers to delve deeper into the successes and challenges of CRT implementation in various educational contexts in Indonesia. Additionally, they can develop more appropriate strategies for integrating local culture and religion into learning at a broader level.

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## DECLARATIONS

Munirah, as the first author and sponsor, contributed to formulating the research ideas, developing the theoretical framework on oral literature and digital transformation, and coordinating the overall research process.

**Author contribution** : Sulfasyah was responsible for designing the research methodology, collecting data, and leading the research. Abdul Rahman Rahim and Akram Budiman Yusuf contributed to the interpretation of the research findings and drafted the discussion section of the manuscript. All authors

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	jointly reviewed, edited, and approved the final version of the manuscript before submission.
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