



Development of Mandar Language Teaching Materials for Language and Cultural Preservation among High School Students in West Sulawesi

Liliana Muliastuti¹, Eva Leiliyanti², Reni Nur Eriyani³, Ratna Friyandini⁴, Ajeng Rahmadania Ariestiara⁵, Besse Darmawati⁶

Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Jakarta

Email: liliana.muliastuti@unj.ac.id1, eleiliyanti@unj.aci.id2, reni_eryani@unj.ac.id3

ABSTRACT

Mandar, a regional language in Indonesia, is classified as "stable but threatened" according to the Language Development and Cultivation Agency (2019). This study aims to analyze the learning needs for Mandar language and develop culture-based teaching materials for high school students in West Sulawesi. Employing the Research and Development (R&D) method by Borg and Gall, this study involved 596 students, three teachers, and two school principals from 13 high schools. Results indicate that 55.8% of students exhibited high interest in learning Mandar, with preferences for listening (45.1%) and reading (37.3%) activities. Teaching materials developed through communicative and contextual approaches demonstrated effectiveness in improving vocabulary comprehension (85%), conversational skills (78%), and learning motivation (82%) during trials conducted from July 26 to August 16, 2025. Sustainable implementation requires curriculum integration, teacher training, and digital media development to ensure the preservation of Mandar language and culture.

Keywords: teaching materials; Mandar language; language preservation; research and development

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as an archipelagic nation, possesses more than 700 regional languages representing significant cultural assets. However, according to the Language Development and Cultivation Agency (2019), 52% of regional languages in Indonesia face endangerment. Mandar, spoken in West Sulawesi, is categorized as "stable but threatened," with only 19 languages in Indonesia sharing this status.



Figure 1. Map of the Distribution of the Number of Regional Languages in Each Province until 2019

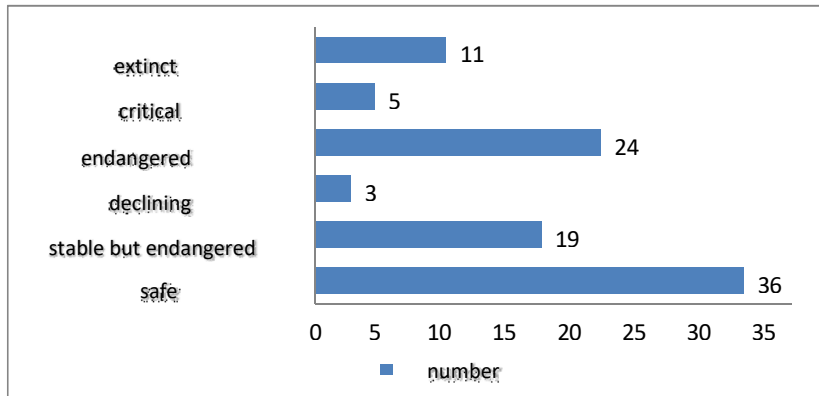


Figure 2. Graph of 2019 Language Vitality Validation Results Based on Status

Table 1. List of languages with stable but endangered status

No	Province	Local Language	Jml
1	Jambi	Bahasa Kerinci	1
2	Maluku	Bahasa Buru, Bahasa Lisabata, Bahasa Luhu	3
3	Nusa Tenggara Timur	Bahasa Rongga	1
4	Papua	Bahasa Aframa/ Usku, Bahasa Gresi, Bahasa Kuri/ Nabi, Bahasa Meoswar, Bahasa Ormu, Bahasa Senggi, Bahasa Senggi (Find) / Viid, Bahasa Somu/ Toro	8
5	Papua Barat	Bahasa Mansim Borai	1
6	Sulawesi Barat	Bahasa Mandar	1
7	Sulawesi Selatan	Bahasa Mandar	1
8	Sulawesi Tengah	Bahasa Pamona, Bahasa Wolio	2
9	Sulawesi Utara	Bahasa Minahasa	1
			19

Several previous studies have examined Mandar from various perspectives. Makkawaru (2021) conducted historical-comparative linguistic research on Mandar, while Hasrullah (2018) developed a digital application for Mandar language preservation. Research by Sari (2023) demonstrated that integrating local culture into learning enhances student motivation. However, no comprehensive study has developed structured and contextual Mandar language teaching materials specifically for high school students.

This study aims to: (1) analyze the need for Mandar language learning among high school students in West Sulawesi, and (2) develop an effective design for regional language teaching materials to preserve both the language and traditional culture.

METHOD

This study employed the Research and Development (R&D) method by Borg and Gall (2003), implemented through four main stages. The initial stage involved identifying problems and needs through surveys of 596 students, three language teachers, and two school principals



from 13 high schools across three regencies (Polewali Mandar, Majene, and Mamuju). Research instruments included questionnaires and interview guidelines validated by experts. The second stage comprised a comprehensive literature review to establish a conceptual framework for teaching material development. The third stage focused on planning the teaching materials, including setting learning objectives, selecting appropriate content, and determining evaluation models. The final stage involved developing the initial draft of teaching materials, which underwent limited testing.

Data analysis utilized quantitative descriptive methods for needs assessment and qualitative approaches for material development. Expert validation was conducted by two teaching material development specialists and one native Mandar speaker.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile and Learning Needs

The needs survey involved 601 respondents, comprising 65.2% female and 34.8% male participants. While 69.5% of respondents indicated their schools had implemented regional language curricula, only 21.4% reported actually learning Mandar in formal educational settings. Notably, 35% of students acquired Mandar language skills through home environment exposure, suggesting schools have not yet become primary channels for language preservation.

Based on Gender

601 responses

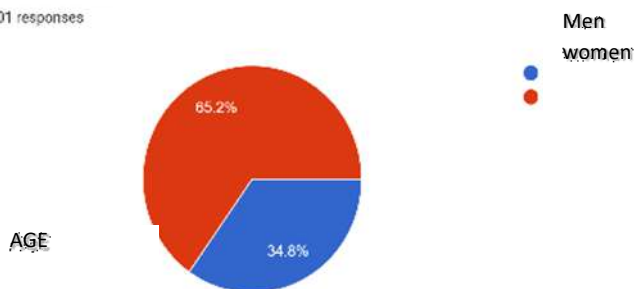
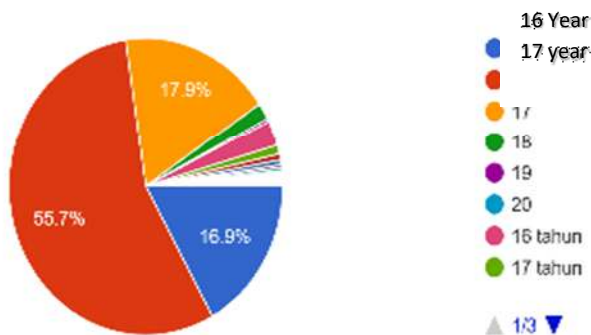


Figure 3. Respondent Graph Based on Gender

Graph Based on Age

3. Usia

603 responses



Student Interest and Perceptions Regarding Mandar

Data analysis revealed that 55.8% of students demonstrated substantial interest in learning Mandar, with 29.2% expressing interest and 26.6% indicating strong interest. Concerning perceived importance, 62.3% of students considered Mandar relevant for their future, with 33.8% rating it as very important and 28.5% as important.

Learning Method and Material Preferences

Analysis of learning preferences indicated student inclination toward audio-visual and interactive approaches. Specifically, 45.1% preferred listening activities, 37.3% favored reading, 28.6% chose writing, and 25.8% selected speaking activities. These findings suggest that teaching materials should emphasize engaging audio and textual content.

Table 2. Student Preferences for Language Skills

Skill	Percentage	Preferred Material Characteristics
Listening	45.1%	Dialogues, folktales, podcasts
Reading	37.3%	Short stories, comics, cultural texts
Writing	28.6%	Personal writing, traditional poetry
Speaking	25.8%	Role-play, presentations, discussions

Implementation and Teaching Material Trial

Based on needs analysis results, teaching materials titled "Self-Introduction in Mandar" were developed, integrating four language skills through communicative and contextual approaches with thematic organization. The trial phase, conducted from July 26 to August 16, 2025, involved 120 students across three schools.

Trial results demonstrated significant improvement in several domains:

Basic vocabulary comprehension: 85%

Formal conversational competence: 78%

Regional language learning motivation: 82%

Pronunciation accuracy: 75%

Understanding of Mandar culture: 88%

Discussion on Cultural Integration in Learning

These findings corroborate Sari's (2023) research indicating that cultural integration in learning environments can enhance student motivation by 30-40%. The implementation of audio-visual media and contextual approaches proved effective in addressing limited interest in reading and writing within regional language education.

The successful application of these teaching materials supports Fishman's (1991) theory emphasizing the crucial role of "family and community domains" in language revitalization. While formal educational institutions remain important, informal interactions within domestic and community settings continue to determine language preservation success.



The developed teaching materials employ an integrative approach combining language acquisition with Mandar cultural values. These resources address not only linguistic components but also facilitate preservation of local wisdom through folktales, oral traditions, and cultural values inherent in the Mandar language.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Mandar language teaching materials, developed through comprehensive needs analysis, effectively enhance language comprehension and learning motivation. The substantial student interest in regional languages necessitates corresponding availability of engaging and contextually appropriate teaching resources.

Implementation recommendations include: (1) integration into local curricula throughout West Sulawesi educational institutions, (2) professional development for teachers in material implementation and regional language pedagogy, (3) development of digital supplementary media to improve accessibility, and (4) collaborative efforts among educational institutions, families, and communities in preserving Mandar language.

These teaching materials function not merely as pedagogical tools but also as mechanisms for traditional culture preservation. This model's success offers potential adaptation for developing teaching materials addressing other endangered regional languages in Indonesia.

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