

EXPLORATION OF ENGLISH LEARNING PRACTICES WITH EDTECH AND LOCAL CULTURE AMONG MANDAR YOUTH

Amrang
Universitas Sulawesi Barat
amrang@unsulbar.ac.id

Hustiana
Universitas Sulawesi Barat
hustiana@unsulbar.ac.id

Abstract: This study explores English language learning practices that integrate educational technology (EdTech) and Mandar local culture among the younger generation in coastal areas of West Sulawesi, Indonesia. Employing an exploratory qualitative approach, data were collected through non-participant observations and semi-structured interviews with 20 students of the eight grade in Junior high school and two English teachers. The research framework combined Engeström's Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (E-CHAT) for classroom observations and the TPACK framework for analyzing teachers' integration of technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge. The combination of these frameworks enabled a holistic examination of how EdTech-mediated English learning is shaped by both cultural context and teachers' professional competencies. Findings indicated that while teachers actively facilitated learning and employed simple technologies such as YouTube, Canva, and LCD projectors, the integration of local culture remains minimal and mostly indirect. Teachers adapted pedagogical strategies to students' characteristics through game-based learning, translanguaging, differentiated instruction, and peer collaboration. Technology enhanced student engagement and comprehension, particularly through visual and interactive media, though its use is constrained by limited internet access, device availability, and teacher training. Incorporating Mandar cultural elements, such as folktales, traditional practices, and vocabulary, showed potential to make learning more contextual, meaningful, and motivating, fostering both language proficiency and cultural awareness. The study highlights the importance of targeted professional development and infrastructural support to optimize EdTech integration, and provides insights for educators and policymakers to design culturally grounded, technology-enhanced English learning approaches that are both globally relevant and locally meaningful.

Keywords: *English learning, Educational technology (EdTech), Local culture, Mandar youth*

INTRODUCTION

In the current era of globalization, English has become an essential skill not only in the academic sphere but also in the fields of economy, technology, and cross-cultural communication. English is considered an investment for people around the world (Asdar et al., 2023). Many strive to master this language because in almost all aspects of life it has become a requirement, such as studying abroad, pursuing higher education, or applying for jobs, as

many companies now require English proficiency (Hustiana & Akbar, 2021). Mastery of English equips the younger generation, 12 – 15 years old, to adapt to the demands of the 21st century, including critical thinking, global communication, and readiness to face international job competition. Therefore, English language instruction should be designed to remain relevant to contemporary needs, flexible, and capable of optimizing students' competencies. By focusing on improving English language skills in listening, reading, speaking, and writing, educators can equip students to excel in a globalized world, where effective language proficiency is vital for both personal and professional success (Asdar et al., 2024). To achieve these goals, innovative approaches, particularly those supported by technology, are increasingly needed.

With the advancement of technology, English language learning has become more accessible for teachers. The use of educational technology (EdTech) in language education has gained prominence, offering new opportunities for interactive and engaging learning experiences. Digital media, e-learning platforms, AI-based applications, and even social media have expanded the possibilities of language instruction, enabling learning beyond spatial and temporal boundaries. The swift expansion of educational technologies has revolutionized teaching and learning practices within universities globally (Isma et al., 2024). The development of Educational Technology (EdTech) has created significant opportunities in designing interactive, contextual, and relevant learning models, particularly for the younger generation. Such learning approaches have been proven to contribute positively to the optimal development of students' potential, while simultaneously preparing them to face the challenges of the 21st century in a more adaptive and competent manner (Aura Yolanda et al., 2024). Beyond enhancing efficiency, EdTech also provides opportunities to incorporate cultural elements into language education. However, while these benefits are evident in technologically advanced settings, many regions—particularly rural or coastal areas—still face challenges such as limited access to digital infrastructure and modern learning tools. Therefore, exploring how EdTech can be meaningfully integrated in such contexts remains essential, as this study focuses on a region with potential constraints in technological accessibility.

The interconnection between language and culture is undeniable, as language itself is an integral part of culture and serves as its representation; the characteristics of language are shaped by the culture from which it emerges (Putri et al., 2025). By incorporating content rooted in local traditions and daily life, learning becomes more contextual while simultaneously strengthening students' cultural identity, specifically, the Mandar people of West Sulawesi represent a rich cultural community with a strong maritime heritage (Sianturi & Ribawati, 2025). This ethnic group possesses a unique cultural heritage, including social values, traditional practices, and local wisdom passed down through generations. They also maintain a strong social structure in which customs and traditions play a central role in their daily life (Lumanto et al., 2024). In addition to their maritime culture, the Mandar also possess other cultural wealth, such as *matawe'* culture, which is a customary tradition practiced by the Mandar people that reflects a general framework of conduct or behavior carrying the meaning of 'forgiveness' (Sukmawati et al., 2024), *Kuliwa* (a prayer ritual for safety) and one of the fishermen's routine activities—preparation before going to sea for fishing or flying fish egg

harvesting (L. & Ridhwan, 2020). Another example is the *Mesaulaq* tradition of the Mandar community in Pamboang District, Majene Regency (Khatimah, 2021). These cultural practices not only reflect the community's values but also offer meaningful resources that can be integrated into English language learning.

If Mandar cultural heritage is embedded within English language learning through EdTech, students will find it easier to comprehend the material because it directly connects to their experiences and identities. Youth are regarded as an important element of society with significant potential to disseminate knowledge and skills, while also shaping positive perceptions regarding the strengthening of literacy and numeracy based on Mandar cultural heritage (Rafiq et al., 2025). Such integration not only makes learning more relevant and contextual but also fosters a sense of pride in their cultural roots. Consequently, students do not merely acquire English language skills but also develop intercultural awareness, which is essential for engaging in the global era without losing their cultural identity. In this context, Mandar youth are situated at the intersection of global modernity and local traditions. They are highly familiar with digital technologies; however, their constant use of gadgets does not necessarily imply that they are utilizing them productively (Warmadewi et al., 2021). This situation presents both opportunities and challenges for education, particularly in the teaching of English. Therefore, integrating educational technology with Mandar cultural heritage has the potential to create learning practices that are more relevant to their lives.

Nevertheless, in the context of Majene, there has been no scholarly attempt to thoroughly investigate the integration of culture, language, and technology. This can be seen in previous studies, such as the use of Powtoon in the learning process (Aco et al., 2025); research on English classroom management supported by information technology (Fajriani & Danial, 2018); and research on the effect of Video Learning Multimedia (VLM) education on students' English vocabulary mastery (Mawarwati, 2025). Crucially, a literature search reveals a significant gap: no prior scholarly work has systematically investigated the synergistic integration of educational technology and Mandar cultural elements within English language learning classrooms, particularly in the Majene region. Therefore, exploring English language learning practices that integrate EdTech and Mandar local culture is significant in order to understand teachers' strategies as well as the English classroom dynamics that emerge in this context.

The novelty of this study lies in its interdisciplinary approach, which combines educational technology, foreign language learning, and local cultural studies within a single exploratory framework. A qualitative-contextual approach based on a case study of coastal communities with strong cultural values offers a new perspective on English language pedagogy in marginalized regions. This research reaches coastal and ethnic communities with limited access to modern technology, while also demonstrating how technology can be locally adapted without eroding cultural roots. This exploration is grounded in a theoretical framework combining Engeström's Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (E-CHAT) and the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) model to analyze the complex interactions between

technology, pedagogy, content, and sociocultural context within Mandar-based English language learning.

Therefore, the research questions of this study are: (1) What pedagogical practices and classroom dynamics emerge from the integration of educational technology, Mandar local culture, and English language instruction?; and (2) what strategies are employed by teachers in integrating elements of local culture and technology in teaching English? Addressing these questions is significant because it not only contributes to the growing body of literature on technology-enhanced language learning, but also provides valuable insights into how local cultural values can be meaningfully embedded in English education. The findings are expected to inform educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers in designing pedagogical approaches that are both globally relevant and locally grounded, thereby supporting the development of a generation that is technologically adaptive, linguistically competent, and culturally rooted.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed an exploratory qualitative approach aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of English language learning practices mediated by educational technology (EdTech) and integrated with Mandar culture among the younger generation. The focus was directed toward the local context, teachers' perceptions, and the potential for embedding elements of local culture within technology-based English instruction. This approach was considered appropriate because the phenomenon under investigation is complex, context-specific, and requires a nuanced exploration that cannot be captured through quantitative measurement alone. According to Saunders et al. (2012, as cited in Sarwar & Khattak, 2024) exploratory research serves as the foundation for more conclusive studies which generally addresses emerging issues with limited or even no prior literature and It is effective in establishing the groundwork that will guide subsequent studies Thus, this study could serve as an important foundation for further in-depth research on the development of technology-based English learning practices rooted in local culture.

Participant and Sampling

The participants in this study were selected purposively based on their involvement and relevance to English language learning practices mediated by EdTech and integrated with Mandar local culture. The first group of participants consisted of eighth-grade students from SMP Negeri 7 Satu Atap Burung Majene and SMP Negeri 1 Majene. They were selected because they were the direct recipients of technology-based learning while simultaneously remaining closely connected to their local Mandar culture.. Through their experiences, insights can be gained into how EdTech-mediated English learning integrated with Mandar culture was implemented in practice The second group of participants comprised two English teachers who taught in coastal Mandar schools. These teachers were selected based on specific inclusion criteria: they had a minimum of three years of teaching experience, had access to and experience in using educational technology (EdTech) in their English classes, and demonstrated a willingness to discuss the integration of Mandar cultural elements within their teaching practices. Both teachers were purposefully chosen because they represented schools with differing levels of technological access, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding

of how EdTech is utilized in diverse coastal contexts. Their inclusion was also intended to provide pedagogical perspectives that complement the students' experiences, particularly in relation to the challenges and opportunities of integrating EdTech with Mandar cultural heritage in English language instruction. Those teachers were interviewed to obtain information regarding their instructional strategies, the use of technology in teaching, and the extent to which local cultural values are integrated into their pedagogy. By involving these two groups, the study is expected to capture the dynamics of interaction more comprehensively, encompassing students' experiences, teachers' strategies, and the authenticity of culture as it continues to thrive within the Mandar community. All participants were informed about the aims and procedures of the study and were asked to provide voluntary consent to participate.

Data Collection

The primary instrument in this study was the researcher, who served as the key instrument (human instrument). Data were collected through non-participant classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. The observation process was conducted over a four-week period, involving two eighth-grade classes. Each class was observed four times, resulting in a total of eight classroom sessions. Every session lasted approximately 90 minutes, bringing the total observation time to 720 minutes (12 hours). During these observations, the researcher focused on teachers' integration of educational technology (EdTech) and students' engagement with English learning activities that incorporated elements of Mandar cultural heritage. Observation guided was created based on Engeström's Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (E-CHAT) that consisted of seven components, namely subject, mediational tools, object, rules, community, divisions of labour and outcomes (Cherry, 2022). In this study, these components were translated into observable indicators. For instance, *subjects* referred to teachers and students engaged in EdTech-based learning; *mediational tools* included digital platforms, media, and local cultural materials used in instruction; *objects* represented the learning goals and intended competencies; *rules* encompassed classroom norms and school regulations; *community* referred to the classroom and school environment; *division of labor* captured teacher-student roles and collaboration patterns; and *outcomes* reflected students' engagement and learning achievements. In addition to classroom observations, two semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participating English teachers. Each interview session lasted approximately 60–90 minutes and was held once with each teacher, resulting in a total of two interview sessions. The interviews aimed to explore teachers' perspectives on the integration of educational technology (EdTech) and Mandar cultural heritage in English language instruction, as well as the challenges and opportunities encountered in the process. All interviews were conducted in a comfortable setting at the participants' respective schools to ensure open and reflective responses. The interviews were conducted based on the TPACK by Mishra & Koehler (2006) which includes several indicators: Content Knowledge (CK), Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), Technological Knowledge (TK), and Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK). Each dimension of TPACK guided the design of interview items: *Content Knowledge (CK)* explored teachers' understanding of English subject matter; *Pedagogical Knowledge (PK)* examined teaching strategies and classroom management; *Technological Knowledge (TK)* focused on teachers' familiarity and competence with digital tools; and *TPACK* investigated how teachers integrated these domains to design culturally responsive and technology-enhanced English lessons.

Analisis data

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns or themes within qualitative data (Clarke & Braun, 2017). According to Gill, thematic analysis is a suitable strategy for exploratory research and helps in examining information both inductively and deductively (Kania & Febuadi, 2021). Braun & Clarke (2006, as cited in (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017) provide a six-phase guide which is a very useful framework for conducting this kind of analysis, namely, step 1: Become familiar with the data, step 2: Generate initial codes, step 3: Search for themes, step 4: Review themes, step 5: Define themes, and step 6: Write-up.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. The dynamics of interaction between technology, local culture, and English in the classroom applied to the young generation of the Mandar ethnic group

The main focus of this study is to describe how EdTech and local culture are integrated into the learning process. Observations were conducted at a school in the Mandar coastal area in August 2025 during English lessons. The participants included 20 students (young generation) and 2 English teachers. The observation process was carried out three consecutive times using an observation guide based on Engeström's Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (E-CHAT), which consists of seven components: subject, mediational tools, object, rules, community, divisions of labor, and outcomes (Cherry, 2022). The observation results are elaborated as follows.

a. Tools (Technology and Culture)

The use of technology by teachers was still limited to LCDs, projectors, PowerPoint, and YouTube videos. Teachers who consistently used these media (Teacher 1) appeared to increase student focus, motivation, and participation more effectively than teachers who used them only occasionally (Teacher 2). Regular ice-breaking activities also positively contributed to creating an enjoyable classroom atmosphere. From a cultural perspective, integration was still very minimal, limited to everyday examples such as pocket money, the number of books, or simple expressions. Although simple, students felt this helps make learning felt closer to their daily lives. However, students hoped for more integration of local culture to make learning more contextual. This aligned with Situated Learning theory, which held that effective education requires learning embedded in authentic contexts of practice, where students engaged in increasingly complex tasks within social communities (Besar, 2018).

b. Object (Learning goals)

The learning objectives have been made relevant to students' daily lives by both teachers, for example through themes such as numbers, self-introduction, or local activities (like fishing). Teachers provided examples such as "I bring five thousand to school," "I can run," "I can fish," "I can swim," "My name is," "I am thirteen years old," etc. This made it easier for students to understand and remember the material. However, cultural examples given were still simple and limited, not fully reflecting the richness of Mandar local culture. This indicated the need for further development to enrich the integration of Mandar culture into the learning material so that students can better understand and appreciate local cultural wealth. Students' learning motivation increased when the material relates to their personal experiences, helping them feel more confident in speaking English. There were many ideas that can be implemented in the English learning process linking culture and technology, for example, videos or animations

from YouTube, Vimeo, TeacherTube, Edpuzzle, etc. These platforms can be designed to present local culture such as Sandeq boats, traditional dances, or traditional competitions; folk tales such as Carita Naong Batu di Tande (Azis & Yunus, 2021), samba Paria (Suyatno, 2016) Panglima to Dilaling (Ekoyanantiasih, 2016), etc, atau Lagu Tradisional seperti Tenggara Tenggara Lopi, oh mamuju, Panawar Saliliu, Pulo Karampuang, Sayang Sayang / Si Patokaan, Lita Pembolongan, Allo Pambalasang (Pratiwi, 2023). Students then describe these in English. Additionally, teachers can ask students to create digital projects, such as presentations or digital posters about Mandar customs or folk tales. Other activities include interactive quizzes using platforms like Kahoot, Quizizz, or Bamboozle to practice vocabulary related to Mandar culture. Engaging activities also included simulations or role-plays, where students perform daily activities of the Mandar community (e.g., fishing) and practiced relevant English sentences. Moreover, teachers can include Mandar vocabulary in English such as *Sandeq boat*, *boat racing competition*, *traditional dance*, *fisherman*, etc. This vocabulary can be incorporated into quizzes, digital projects, or daily activity simulations to make learning more contextual and interactive.

c. Subject (Guru & Siswa)

The researcher found that both teachers acted as facilitators, providing space for students to answer questions and express their ideas. This method fostered students' active participation. Overall, this approach enhanced students' engagement and collaboration in learning. However, what encouraged students to speak was not the use of technology or culture, but rather the teachers themselves through questions, guidance, and direct feedback. Thus, the role of technology and culture in English language learning is still not clearly visible. This approach demonstrates that the teacher's role as a facilitator remains crucial in promoting students' active participation and speaking skills. This indicates that although technology and local culture have been integrated into learning, they have not yet been fully utilized as primary resources for developing students' language skills. Technology functions more as a visual aid or material delivery medium, while local culture has not yet been systematically employed as a context to enrich classroom interaction. Therefore, more targeted pedagogical strategies are needed to make technology and culture not only complementary tools but also strengthening elements for student engagement in English language learning.

d. Community (Social context)

Community support and classroom atmosphere for technology- and culture-based learning have not yet been optimal. Barriers such as limited facilities, teacher competence, and student readiness remain significant. As a result, student participation has not reached its full potential. This is in line with the study conducted by Kasmawati et al., (2025) which found that facilities and technology are still the main obstacles in supporting interactive and innovative learning, as suboptimal infrastructure hinders the maximum use of technology. Students volunteered to answer the teacher's questions, but only certain students do so. Nevertheless, teachers were aware of the importance of community support, holistic planning, and teacher training in order to create a more conducive, engaging, and contextual learning environment.

e. Rules

Based on the researcher's observations, school regulations allowed students to bring mobile phones, but device ownership was not evenly distributed. Some students did not have a mobile phone, which limited the use of technology. Teachers were therefore unable to use

platforms such as Quizizz, Kahoot, Wordwall, or others due to this limitation. In addition, Wi-Fi connectivity is still very limited.

f. Division of Labor

Students tended to complete tasks independently, while the teacher only acted as a facilitator. Although this approach fostered independence, the integration of technology and culture was still unclear, causing some students to feel confused and less motivated. The lack of collaboration in utilizing technology and culture made the learning process less contextual. The concept of contextual learning emphasizes that students needed to understand the meaning of learning, its benefits, their current status, and how to achieve it (Yasin, 2023).

2. The strategies are employed by teachers in integrating elements of local culture and technology in teaching English

After examining the integration of EdTech and local culture in the English language learning process, the researcher conducted interviews. A semi-structured interview guide was utilized with two English teachers to obtain in-depth information regarding teaching methods, the use of EdTech in instruction, and strategies for integrating Mandar local culture into English language teaching. The interviews were designed based on the TPACK framework by Mishra & Koehler (2006) which includes several indicators: Content Knowledge (CK), Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), Technological Knowledge (TK), and Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK). The results of the interviews are elaborated below.

a. Technological Knowledge (TK)

Technological Knowledge (TK) describes teachers' knowledge of, and ability to use, various technologies, technological tools, and associated resources (Kurt, 2018). Based on the interviews with two English teachers teaching in coastal areas, it was found that they employed very simple forms of technology. Several questions were asked related to the teachers' Technological Knowledge (TK). The first question concerned which technological platforms were commonly used in English language teaching. Both teachers provided very similar answers.

Teacher 1: *Yes, Yes, Hmm, I usually use colored pictures from YouTube, because they like the colorful ones.*

Teacher 2: *Hmm, I usually use YouTube, uh, what, I play dialogues, like that. Then I usually use Canva for teaching materials. I also often use pictures, but displayed on the screen.*

The interview results revealed that Teacher 1 primarily relied on simple technologies such as YouTube videos, colored images, and a projector, while Teacher 2 incorporated YouTube, Canva, visual materials, and other digital resources to support instruction. The choice of technology was closely aligned with the needs of coastal students who are still relatively new to EdTech. These findings are consistent with Elisabeth & Kurniawan, (2024), who reported that students in rural areas show a strong interest in media such as YouTube due to its interactive features and accessibility, despite ongoing challenges with internet connectivity and limited device availability.

The second question concerned how teachers select appropriate technology to support English language learning activities. Their responses were as follows:

Teacher 1: *Oh yeah, Yes, sometimes, eh I... I use videos, then give instructions in the local language, I mean Mandar because students easily get lost if I don't translate it into Indonesian. I show it, like this, how to, what is it called, if only it could always be videos, they are very happy when it is through videos.*

Teacher 2: *It depends on the material. For example, if the topic is describing, like the sandeq boat. Because there are usually sandeq competitions. I show them a picture, then they describe it. Hmmm... like that.*

The responses indicate that the teachers employed visual media such as videos and images, complemented by the use of the local language to facilitate students' comprehension. Furthermore, the selection of media was contextually adapted to local culture—for instance, the use of images of *sandeq* boats, which are closely tied to students' daily lives. Such practices made the learning process more engaging, comprehensible, and relevant to learners' experiences. These findings are consistent with the study Topan et al., (2024) who investigated the influence of contextual learning models and audiovisual media grounded in local wisdom on students' learning outcomes. Their results demonstrated a significant positive effect.

The third interview question explored the challenges encountered by teachers in integrating technology into their classroom practices.

Teacher 1: *Yeah, as you can see hehe from the current situation, the coastal children may have only recently become familiar with technology. Sometimes they hmmm do not really understand it. Sometimes there are also problems with the network and students' facilities, yap hmm because not all of them have mobile phones. So, like it or not, usually we just use videos and then watch them together.*

Teacher 2: *But I don't use technology every day. There is Wi-Fi, but it is unstable because it is limited, for example when used by MBK, so it becomes restricted. And the children usually don't have mobile phones. So I usually divide them into groups, yeah aih aa putting together those who have phones with those who don't. But sometimes they don't even have data. So we usually just use a hotspot. Because here most of them are from coastal areas.*

The interview findings suggest that the integration of technology in teaching within coastal areas continues to face significant challenges, particularly regarding facilities, internet access, and students' ownership of devices. To address these constraints, teachers adapt their strategies—for instance, by showing videos collectively or grouping students so that those with devices can support those without. As a result, the use of technology cannot yet be implemented optimally and remains highly dependent on infrastructure, connectivity, and device availability. These findings align with Jufri (2024) in *“Educational Technology in the Digital Era: Opportunities and Challenges of Utilizing Learning Technology in Coastal Areas,”* which highlights that while digital learning technologies can enhance efficiency and interactivity, limited infrastructure, uneven internet access, and restricted device availability pose major barriers to their implementation. This underscores the need for stronger support from multiple stakeholders to ensure equitable access to digital education.

Within the TPACK framework, these constraints directly affect teachers' Technological Knowledge (TK). Their ability to select and apply appropriate tools is shaped not only by their individual skills but also by external conditions such as infrastructure and access. Consequently, TK in this context is not merely about knowing how to use technological tools, but also about adapting to local challenges and finding practical solutions that allow students to benefit from technology-enhanced learning.

From the perspective of Technological Knowledge (TK), the findings indicate that English teachers in coastal areas demonstrate foundational competence in employing technology for instruction. They make use of simple tools such as YouTube, Canva, visual images, projectors, and basic digital materials, selecting resources contextually to meet students' needs and incorporate local culture—for instance, integrating images of *sandeq* boats into descriptive lessons or providing instructions in the local language to aid comprehension.

However, the integration of technology remains constrained by unstable internet infrastructure, limited student access to devices, and uneven levels of digital literacy. As a result, technology use is often restricted to basic practices, such as collective video viewing or grouping students according to device ownership. Despite these limitations, technology contributes positively by enhancing learning motivation, supporting vocabulary and grammar acquisition, and fostering learner autonomy through access to digital resources.

Overall, teachers' TK can be situated at a basic to intermediate level: while they are capable of selecting and applying simple technologies that align with the local context, their practice is still highly dependent on external conditions. This highlights the need for targeted professional development and infrastructural support to advance teachers' TK toward more innovative and sustainable integration.

b. Pedagogical Knowledge (PK)

Pedagogical knowledge (PK) is teachers' deep knowledge about the processes and practices or methods of teaching and learning (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). In this context, PK encompasses teachers' ability to design instructional strategies, manage classrooms, understand students' characteristics, and adapt teaching methods to effectively achieve learning objectives. PK focuses not only on what is taught, but also on how teachers teach, how students learn, and how to create a learning environment that is conducive, interactive, and meaningful. To explore information related to teachers' PK, several questions were posed by the researcher, which are elaborated as follows.

The first question concerned the methods or strategies that teachers usually apply in the classroom when using technology, as well as their perspectives on connecting technology, culture, and language. As is well known, each teacher has different methods and strategies. The interview results are as follows.

Teacher 1: *Okay. Maybe, hmm, it would be better if the three of them were integrated. But, yeah, like I mentioned earlier, hmm, it's still limited here if we want to use learning platforms. Then, as for culture, I think maybe it happens indirectly, perhaps I've done it but I didn't realize it. And usually, I use gaming, because junior high school students like to move around, usually using cards, flashcards.*

Teacher 2: *I mix English, with Indonesian and Mandar language. Hmm, so, uh, uh, if I use Mandar language, then maybe that's already an element of culture, heheh. Sometimes I use Mandar, sometimes Indonesian, yeah I mix them. There are some students who, when I use Mandar, don't understand at all even though they are from Mandar.*

Based on the interview results, it can be concluded that teachers apply pedagogical strategies adapted to students' characteristics and the local context. Teacher 1 uses game-based methods with simple media such as cards and flashcards to create a fun, interactive learning atmosphere suited to junior high school students, who tend to be physically active. Meanwhile, Teacher 2 combines the use of English, Indonesian, and Mandar language in the classroom as a form of translanguaging. This strategy aims to facilitate students' comprehension, although not all Mandar students understand the local language. Thus, it can be seen that teachers strive to integrate activity-based pedagogical approaches (active learning) and linguistically contextual approaches to enhance student engagement while facilitating English language comprehension. This is in line with the findings of Nurhayati (2023) who revealed that translanguaging strategies—namely the use of English, Indonesian, and local languages—are effective in motivating students, increasing engagement, and clarifying material comprehension in Indonesian EFL classrooms.

The second question is about how teachers adjust their teaching methods to the characteristics of students, who are mostly coastal students and whose first language is Mandar. Have teachers ever tried to adjust to design technology- and culture-based learning in English learning even though the facilities are still inadequate, what would the design look like? Both teachers gave similar answers, namely based on students' abilities as stated by Hidayat et al., (2024), which can be seen in the following interview results.

Teacher 1: *Uh, if we talk about language, it's definitely a bit difficult for the students here, uh because they use Mandar. Hmm, but yeah, that's the role of learning at school, so that they know English. Uh, then, this is indeed a bit difficult because I face various kinds of characters in the classroom, I mean sometimes there are those who don't get along. But I try to adjust to the abilities they have. It's still lacking, but so far what I can do is just use YouTube. Maybe someday I will design my own YouTube content to make, uh, something like local cultural content in English. But, maybe not yet because there's still a lot of other work hehe.*

Teacher 2: *Adjusted to their abilities. Usually, I mix those who are smart with those who are less so, so they can help each other. Because sometimes there are students who complain, saying they don't know what to do. Usually, ah, all the smart ones are there, ma'am. If it's about design, I usually use Canva, it's good if there's a story inserted into Canva.*

Based on the interview results, it can be concluded that both teachers adjust their teaching methods to the characteristics of the students through two main strategies: Differentiated instruction, namely by adjusting the materials, methods, and approaches according to students' abilities. The teachers strive to ensure that every student can still follow the lessons according to their capacity. Peer learning, namely by grouping more capable students with those who are

still struggling, thus creating an atmosphere of mutual help and collaboration in the classroom. This strategy not only eases the teacher's workload but also trains students to actively participate and fosters empathy toward peers who need assistance. This is in line with the findings of another study at a vocational school in Banten, which also found a positive relationship between differentiated learning and peer tutoring, both of which are associated with improved student learning outcomes (Hidayat et al., 2024).

The third question concerns how teacher–student interaction takes place during the learning process. The interview results are as follows.

Teacher 1: *Ah yeah, yes Students are active in class, they actively answer when asked because maybe they can directly see what is being shown—hmm, I mean if there is a video. Even though what is shown is still quite simple.*

Teacher 2: *Yes, enthusiastic, yes, they feel interested. If they bring their cellphones to school, I immediately send it on WA to be opened, there is specific material that I share in the group. Sometimes some watch and then identify, like yesterday there was a conversation, they identified what could be understood, I mean what the dialogue was about.*

The interview findings indicate that the integration of technology and simple visual media contributes significantly to enhancing students' active participation and enthusiasm in English learning. The availability of concrete and easily comprehensible materials, even when delivered through basic media, encourages students to respond more confidently during classroom activities. Moreover, the incorporation of *WhatsApp* groups and instructional videos facilitates not only passive reception of knowledge but also active engagement in analytical tasks, such as interpreting the meaning of conversations or dialogues. Consequently, technology functions as a catalyst for creating an interactive and engaging learning environment that fosters both cognitive and emotional involvement among students.

In relation to Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) within the TPACK framework (Koehler & Mishra, 2009), the findings highlight teachers' ability to design and adapt teaching methods to students' needs and local contexts. The use of differentiated instruction and peer learning reflects teachers' pedagogical flexibility in managing classroom diversity, ensuring that every student can engage with English learning according to their capacity. This aligns with PK's emphasis on how teachers manage instruction, facilitate peer collaboration, and foster a supportive learning environment.

Furthermore, the incorporation of game-based strategies, translanguaging practices, and the use of simple digital tools (e.g., YouTube, WhatsApp, Canva) demonstrates how teachers contextualize pedagogy to suit students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds. These practices not only facilitate comprehension but also enhance motivation and participation, thereby actualizing the PK dimension of TPACK, which focuses on how pedagogy interacts with technology and content to create meaningful learning experiences. Thus, teachers' pedagogical decisions—whether through activity-based learning, peer tutoring, or contextual language practices—illustrate the critical role of PK in shaping effective English instruction for Mandar coastal students.

c. Content Knowledge (CK)

Content knowledge (CK) is teachers' knowledge about the subject matter to be learned or taught (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). In this case, teachers who possess strong content knowledge will be able to design English teaching materials. In this study, the main focus is the integration of technology and culture within the content of English learning. To explore information related to teachers' CK, several questions were posed by the researcher, elaborated as follows.

The first question concerns how English learning materials are structured and connected with culture and technology so that they are easier for students to understand.

Teacher 1: *I start from a very basic level, because as we can see, coastal children have very limited knowledge of English. The material is structured step by step. Hmm, So, I also use many visual examples, pictures. But I only use the LCD, because, as we know, the facilities here are still limited, especially the Wi-Fi network. When it comes to culture, usually there is actually culture, but not Mandar, other cultures that are in the textbook. That's what the students learn. Sometimes I also connect it a little, hmm, besides that, I often relate the material to real-life situations that are close to their lives, so the learning becomes more contextual and easier to remember. I also usually use flashcards, but if it's related to culture, it's still very minimal or hmm maybe later there will be training about that. Or maybe it will be included in the curriculum about connecting culture with English because they know the stories.*

Teacher 2: *Uh, for me, I arrange English materials starting from the basic level, like simple vocabulary, verbs, adjectives. Because most students have limited knowledge of English. The material is structured step by step. As for integrating technology with culture, hmm I think that's still not happening. Technology, yes, but even that is still very simple. We once joined training such as the use of Quizizz, Kahoot, and what's that, Bamboozle, but it still can't really be applied because of the lack of Wi-Fi. So, we just use the LCD. or videos. But the content is not Mandar culture, it's just ordinary content. Like daily life or ordinary stories. Maybe because we were never required to connect it with culture, such as folklore or traditional food, so it gets forgotten like that.*

Based on the interview results, it can be concluded that both teachers start teaching from a basic level because coastal students still have limited knowledge of English. Both use simple media such as LCDs and videos, since limited Wi-Fi access makes internet-based applications (Quizizz, Kahoot, Bamboozle) difficult to implement. In terms of culture, Mandar culture has not yet been integrated into the lessons; teachers mostly refer to general culture found in textbooks or daily life. This shows that the use of EdTech is still limited and the integration of local culture is not yet optimal, even though both teachers are aware that connecting English with local culture would make it easier for students to understand. In fact, according to Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky), social and cultural contexts greatly influence language

learning. The integration of local culture, such as folklore or the daily practices of the Mandar community, could strengthen the meaning and relevance of English learning for students (Cherry, 2022).

The second question is about their opinions regarding the integration of culture, technology, and language into language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing). They gave different answers as follows:

Teacher 1: *Well, in my opinion, eh the integration of culture, eh technology, and language is very helpful, hmm especially in listening and speaking. Yup, hmm, we can say that if students watch a video or listen to a conversation that is connected to culture, they find it easier to understand the meaning because the context is close to their daily lives. For example, if Mandar folktales are presented in the form of a video in English, students can learn to listen and also practice pronouncing vocabulary. The only problem is the lack of facilities. So, for reading and writing, I still use materials from textbooks or worksheets. That's it.*

Teacher 2: *For me, technology mostly supports reading and writing ya hmmm like what because I can use Canva or PowerPoint to display texts or writing exercises. Culture has never been directly integrated into the classroom, only in the community, but I think it can also help if connected to speaking, for example, when students are asked to talk about Mandar food or traditions in English. So, in my view, integration is important for all skills, but in practice, eh it is still more eh focused on reading and writing because it is easier to use simple media.*

Based on the interview findings, it can be concluded that both teachers demonstrate a fundamental understanding of content knowledge (CK) by structuring English learning materials step by step, starting from basic vocabulary and gradually moving toward more complex structures. This reflects their awareness of students' limited prior knowledge, particularly in coastal contexts, and their ability to adapt the subject matter accordingly. However, their CK remains limited in terms of designing materials that integrate both technology and local culture into the four language skills.

Teacher 1 emphasizes the potential of integrating culture and technology in listening and speaking, suggesting that students can better comprehend and practice language when exposed to contextualized materials, such as Mandar folktales in video form. This shows partial use of CK, where cultural content is linked to the skill development process. Teacher 2, on the other hand, sees technology as more supportive of reading and writing, through tools like Canva and PowerPoint, while acknowledging that cultural elements have not yet been brought into classroom practice. This highlights a gap in applying CK to make cultural integration part of language learning content.

Overall, both teachers' CK reflects their capacity to design basic English content appropriate to students' needs, but the integration of EdTech and local culture is still underdeveloped. Their reliance on simple media (LCDs, videos) due to infrastructural

limitations further restricts the effective use of CK in enhancing learning. According to Koehler & Mishra (2009), strong CK enables teachers to design meaningful instructional content. In this study, the findings reveal that while teachers are aware of the benefits of connecting language with cultural context and technology, their current practices show that CK is applied more conventionally, relying on textbooks and worksheets. Strengthening teachers' CK—particularly in the contextualization of English materials through local cultural integration (folklore, traditions, daily practices)—would significantly increase the relevance and meaningfulness of English learning for Mandar students.

d. TPACK Integration

To explore information related to teachers' TPACK, several questions were posed by the researcher, elaborated as follows.

The first question concerns how teachers integrate technology, teaching strategies, and English learning materials into a single learning activity. Their responses are as follows.

Teacher 1: *Yes, I, I, I'm not sure whether this is correct or not, but in learning activities, for example, I show interesting videos or animations, then apply strategies like group discussions or educational games so that students are more active. English materials are delivered gradually and contextually, so students can understand vocabulary and language structures while applying them. In this way, technology supports the teaching strategies and makes the material easier to understand.*

Teacher 2: *For me, I use the LCD, then students also write what they see, and then I usually give English games.*

Based on these results, it can be concluded that both teachers utilize technology, such as videos, animations, LCDs, and educational games, to support teaching strategies in a gradual and contextual manner. This technology helps students understand vocabulary, language structures, and language skills in a more interactive and enjoyable way, making learning more effective and easier to implement in the classroom.

The second question concerns teachers' opinions on how they incorporate elements of Mandar local culture into English language learning.

Teacher 1: *Yes, but very rarely. It's usually connected with traditional games, where they tell about their experiences. They talk about Mandar local culture, for example traditional competitions. However, some students are enthusiastic, while others are not; they say it's very difficult, ma'am. They don't know the meaning.*

Teacher 2: *In classroom learning, I don't include culture, but usually there is ELLITE, the English language community. There, recently, we took Mandar culture. I didn't include it in the class. Last year, the 9th graders performed a Mandar story. We applied it in ELLITE. Like the life of fishermen, so they learn about it in English. Mandar stories, like the Sandeq boat.*

Based on these results, it can be concluded that Mandar culture is rarely taught directly in the classroom. Teacher 1 occasionally connects local culture with traditional games, while Teacher 2 introduces Mandar culture more through the English language community (ELLITE) outside the classroom. This indicates that the integration of local culture in formal learning is still limited, although students have opportunities to learn about Mandar culture through extracurricular activities or non-formal media.

The third question concerns teachers' opinions on how technology helps present Mandar local culture in learning activities.

Teacher 1: Hmm, actually technology is very useful. Eh Technology helps present Mandar local culture by making cultural materials more concrete and interactive. For example, through videos, hmmm like pictures, or animations about customs, dances, songs, and daily life of the Mandar community, students can see and understand the culture visually. In addition, EdTech platforms allow students to interact with cultural content, such as quizzes about typical Mandar vocabulary or digital projects featuring local stories like the origin of Pamboang. Ya hmm With technology, cultural learning is not just theoretical, but can also be experienced and practiced in a more engaging and contextual way.

Teacher 2: Yes, I think technology makes it easier for students to see and understand Mandar culture visually and interactively. For example, through videos or animations about Sandeq boats and the life of fishermen, students can imagine and understand the local stories. In addition, EdTech platforms allow students to interact with cultural content through quizzes, digital projects, or simulations of daily activities, making learning more lively and enjoyable, as we do in ELLITE.

Based on these results, it can be concluded that both teachers assume that technology can make learning about Mandar culture more concrete, interactive, and contextual. Through videos, animations, pictures, quizzes, and digital projects, students can see, understand, and directly interact with local cultural content, making learning not only theoretical but also more engaging and enjoyable.

However, at present, many teachers are still unable to develop interactive technology-based learning media that align with current advancements due to a lack of training and professional development in using technology, limited access to technology and adequate infrastructure, and insufficient motivation and awareness of the importance of using technology in learning. As a result, the learning process remains largely traditional and less interactive, which can affect the quality of instruction and students' learning outcomes. Field observations revealed that many teachers still prefer to explain the lesson throughout the teaching process without using any instructional media (Hustiana, et al., 2025).

The final question concerns how teachers assess the effectiveness of integrating technology and culture on students' English language comprehension.

Teacher 1: *I can't be certain yet because it's still rarely applied. Yeah, I only use YouTube, as a reflection that if other platforms were added, students would definitely be more active. Especially if there is a cultural element.*

Teacher 2: *In my opinion, it's good, especially for coastal children so that they feel a sense of ownership when connected with culture. With this approach, students not only learn the language but also feel proud of and connected to their culture. Yeah, although it's still rarely applied.*

Based on these results, it can be concluded that the use of technology to integrate culture in learning is still rarely applied; however, this approach has the potential to increase student engagement and foster a sense of pride in their local culture. As stated by Telaumbanua (2024) the synergy between English language education and local wisdom will not only enrich students' learning experiences but also strengthen their cultural identity.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the integration of educational technology (EdTech) and Local Culture Among Mandar Youth is still limited. Teachers primarily use basic tools such as LCDs, projectors, YouTube videos, and Canva, while cultural elements are mostly introduced through extracurricular activities or informal references. Despite infrastructure limitations and unequal access to devices, technology positively supports student engagement, comprehension, and interactive learning.

Pedagogically, teachers apply strategies adapted to student characteristics, including activity-based learning, peer tutoring, translanguaging, and differentiated instruction. These approaches enhance participation and motivation, yet the full potential of technology and local culture as central resources for language skill development remains underutilized. Content knowledge is applied mainly to basic vocabulary and structures, with partial integration of culture and technology, highlighting a gap in designing culturally contextualized English materials.

Overall, while integrating EdTech and local culture shows promise in making learning more contextual, interactive, and meaningful, its implementation is still minimal. Strengthening teachers' TPACK through professional development and improving technological infrastructure are essential for enhancing English learning outcomes and fostering students' engagement and cultural identity.

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