



## **Integrating the Gumansalangi Legend into Elementary Literature Learning: A Case Study at the Indonesian School of Davao**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Folklore is a cultural heritage rich in educational values, identity, and local wisdom. In the context of multicultural learning at Sekolah Indonesia Davao, literature teaching materials need to be both contextual and culturally relevant. The limited understanding of students toward local folklore such as the *Legend of Gumansalangi* from the Sangir ethnic group highlights the importance of integrating local stories into literature learning. This study employed a qualitative approach using observation, interviews, documentation, and note-taking techniques. The research participants consisted of 2 teachers and 4 students of Sekolah Indonesia Davao. Data were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively through story reconstruction from interviews and literature studies, then linked to the learning outcomes of elementary school literature. The findings reveal that the *Legend of Gumansalangi* meets the criteria of a legend in literature learning, as it contains elements of origin, cultural values, and character transformation. The story is relevant to Grade V learning outcomes (understanding elements of fiction) and Grade VI outcomes (analyzing cultural values and relating stories to life). Integrating the *Legend of Gumansalangi* into literature learning contributes to enhancing contextual literacy, socio-cultural competence, and character building in a multicultural environment. The study recommends the development of learning media based on the *Legend of*

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*Gumansalangi* in the form of comics, picture books, or interactive digital modules that are integrated with local culture and the Graduate Profile Dimensions.

*Keywords:* Legend of Gumansalangi; Sekolah Indonesia Davao; Literature Learning; Character; Literacy

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### ABSTRAK

Cerita rakyat merupakan warisan budaya yang sarat nilai edukatif, identitas, dan kearifan lokal. Dalam konteks pembelajaran multikultural di Sekolah Indonesia Davao, diperlukan bahan ajar sastra yang kontekstual dan relevan secara budaya. Minimnya pemahaman siswa terhadap cerita rakyat seperti Legenda Gumansalangi dari suku Sangir menunjukkan pentingnya integrasi cerita lokal dalam pembelajaran sastra. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik observasi, wawancara, dokumentasi, dan pencatatan. Partisipan penelitian terdiri dari 2 guru dan 4 siswa Sekolah Indonesia Davao. Analisis data dilakukan secara deskriptif kualitatif melalui rekonstruksi cerita dari wawancara serta studi literatur, kemudian dikaitkan dengan capaian pembelajaran sastra di sekolah dasar. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Legenda Gumansalangi* memenuhi kriteria legenda dalam pembelajaran sastra karena mengandung asal-usul tempat, nilai budaya, serta transformasi karakter tokoh. Cerita ini relevan dengan capaian pembelajaran kelas V (memahami unsur cerita fiksi) dan kelas VI (menganalisis nilai budaya serta mengaitkan cerita dengan kehidupan). Integrasi *Legenda Gumansalangi* dalam pembelajaran sastra berkontribusi pada peningkatan literasi kontekstual, kecakapan sosial budaya, serta pembentukan karakter siswa di lingkungan multikultural. Penelitian merekomendasikan pengembangan media pembelajaran berbasis *Legenda Gumansalangi* dalam bentuk komik, buku cerita bergambar, atau modul digital interaktif yang terintegrasi dengan budaya lokal dan Dimensi Profil Lulusan.

**Kata Kunci:** Legenda Gumansalangi; Sekolah Indonesia Davao; Pembelajaran Sastra; Karakter; Literasi

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### INTRODUCTION

Language, literature, and thinking skills are the basis of literacy skills. All fields of study, aspects of life, and social goals utilize literacy skills (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). In line with the importance of literacy skills, folk tales or legends are part of the cultural treasures that have high educational, moral, and historical value (Istiq'faroh et al., 2020). In the context of literature learning, legends can be used as an effective medium to foster students' appreciation of literary works while introducing cultural values that live in society (Hendratno, 2017). Through folklore, students not only learn about the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of literature but also gain a deeper understanding of identity, origins, and local wisdom that shape their cultural identity (Riski & Huda, 2025). In this way, folk tales or legends not only function as a means of learning literature, but also as a tool for introducing and instilling cultural values that shape students' identities.

Furthermore, schools have an important role in forming students' identities and instilling cultural values. The Indonesian School of Davao, which is located in the Southern Philippines, is an educational unit that provides the Indonesian curriculum for students of Indonesian descent who live in the Davao region and its surrounding cities (Riski et al., 2023). The majority of students at the Indonesian School of Davao come from the Sangir tribe, from the Sangihe Islands, Indonesia. The close geographical conditions have led to a long history of migration and cultural connectivity with the region between the Sangihe Islands, Indonesia and Southern part of Mindanao, the Philippines (Imigrasi.go.id, 2022). One of the folk tales that developed in the Sangir community is the Gumansalangi Legend, a story that is believed to be closely related to the origins of the Sangir tribe and its connection with the Sultanate in the Southern Philippines region in the past (Sangihekab.go.id, 2018). Thus, the story of Gumansalangi holds great potential as teaching material for literature learning in the

classroom (Lawendatu et al., 2022). Gumansalangi stories not only offer rich literary elements such as characters, plot, and moral values but also contain local content that is close and relevant to students' life backgrounds.

However, based on initial observations, most students at the Indonesian School of Davao are less familiar with local stories such as the Gumansalangi Legend. In grade V and grade VI, the majority of students stated they were from the Sangir tribe; however, they did not know the folklore of their tribe. Students only know folk tales that are often found in texts from national textbooks. The textbooks presented in class do not reflect the life background of students in border areas and communities abroad. Meanwhile, stories from the origin of the Sangir tribe are rarely heard and preserved. Research by Cahyani and Subrata (2024) emphasizes that student involvement in learning will increase when the material taught is in direct contact with students' daily lives. On the other hand, the folklore of the Sangir tribe, such as the story of Gumansalangi, is not widely told to the current generation (Sangihekab.go.id, 2018). This shows that there is a gap between local potential as a learning resource and its application in literature learning in the classroom. Hence, to answer these problems, it is important to develop a learning approach based on local folklore.

Several studies have emphasized the role of folklore in character education and cultural appreciation. Nurfarida (2016) highlights its reflective function in shaping students' character and fostering cultural awareness. Iman and Sulaeman (2019) highlights that folklore, as a form of oral literature, carries essential cultural values, ethics, and moral teachings. More recently, Lawendatu et al. (2022) demonstrate that integrating regional folklore in literature learning enhances students' engagement and appreciation of local wisdom. Unlike previous studies that examine folklore as cultural artifacts or textual analysis, this study focuses on the instructional integration of the Gumansalangi Legend into elementary literature learning. This approach aims to increase student motivation, enrich contextual teaching materials, strengthen cultural identity, and foster a sense of belonging to their heritage while promoting a deeper understanding of literary elements.

In the current Indonesian curriculum, literature learning at the elementary level particularly in grades V and VI refers to *Capaian Pembelajaran (CP)* or Learning Outcomes of Indonesian Language Phase C. These outcomes emphasize students' abilities to understand, respond to, and produce literary and non-literary texts both orally and in writing, while considering linguistic elements, structure, and socio-cultural context. Furthermore, students are expected to demonstrate respect for cultural diversity through the texts they engage with. The novelty of this study lies in its integration of a transnational-local folklore, the Legend of Gumansalangi, into elementary literature learning in a multicultural school setting abroad – namely, the Indonesian School of Davao. While previous studies have explored local folklore in regional Indonesian contexts, this research provides a unique contribution by utilizing folklore from the Sangir tribe, which has historical ties to the Southern Philippines, as a culturally responsive teaching medium. The integration of this legend not only aligns with national learning outcomes but also serves to contextualize learning, promote intercultural understanding, and affirm students' cultural identities within a diasporic environment. This contextual and identity-based approach to literature learning represents a significant innovation in efforts to localize the curriculum in Indonesian schools overseas.

This research attempts to bridge the gap between the richness of local culture and literary learning practices in the classroom through the integration of the Gumansalangi Legend into Indonesian language learning materials. This study is also a form of contribution to the preservation of local folklore and strengthening students' cultural identity as part of the Indonesian community abroad. In contrast to previous research which tends to discuss folklore in a regional context in Indonesia, this research offers a new perspective by highlighting local stories of the Sangir tribe who live in the Philippines, especially those who have historical

connections with the Sultanate of Mindanao. This is different from previous research which has not specifically discussed the use of folklore in a transnational context.

## METHODS

### Type and Design

The research method used in this research was qualitative descriptive research, incorporating elements of narrative inquiry, and was conducted in Davao City, Philippines, in November 2024. This approach was chosen to explore and interpret the Legend of Gumansalangi, which narrates the origins of the Sangir tribe and its historical connection to the Cotabato Sultanate in Mindanao, Philippines. The study aimed to describe how the legend can be integrated into literature learning at the elementary school level, particularly in culturally diverse educational contexts. Narrative inquiry was used to reconstruct and analyze the story from interview data and existing literature, while descriptive methods were applied to examine its relevance to curriculum objectives and student identity formation.

### Data and Data Sources

The research data consisted of sentences, words, discourses, and phrases related to the Gumansalangi folklore. The primary sources of data included both written and oral materials. One of the main references was the original trilingual documentation of the Sangir people's origins written by Maryott (1995), in Sangir, Indonesian, and English. This rare and foundational source provides authentic insights into the oral tradition and cultural identity of the Sangir community. Additional textual data were obtained from the folklore collection published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia (Kemendikbud, 2013), which includes a summarized version of the Gumansalangi story within the broader context of Sangihe oral traditions.

### Data collection technique

Field data were collected through interviews with four students (grades V and VI) and two teachers at the Indonesian School of Davao who possessed background knowledge about the Gumansalangi legend and the cultural history of the Sangir tribe.

| Informan | Elements | Descriptions   |
|----------|----------|--|
| NS       | Teacher  | Possesses background knowledge of the Gumansalangi legend and the cultural history of the Sangir tribe, and acts as the research supervisor.       |
| YTR      | Teacher  | Responsible for processing research data.  |
| CTS      | Student  | They come from the Sangir tribe. As the younger generation of Sangir, they offer a contemporary perspective on cultural heritage and local legends |
| JMM      | Student  |  |
| YBT      | Student  |  |
| JMC      | Student  |  |

The use of both archival and contemporary oral sources enabled the researcher to triangulate the data and analyze the story's relevance to literature learning in a modern multicultural classroom. Recent studies such as (Lawendatu et al., 2022) and Riski Huda (2025) support the importance of integrating regional folklore into school curricula to preserve intangible cultural heritage and reinforce students' cultural identity.

### Data analysis

The data analysis technique used in this study is descriptive qualitative analysis, guided by the Interactive Model of Data Analysis proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). This

model consists of concurrent and interrelated components: data reduction, data collection, data presentation and drawing conclusions.

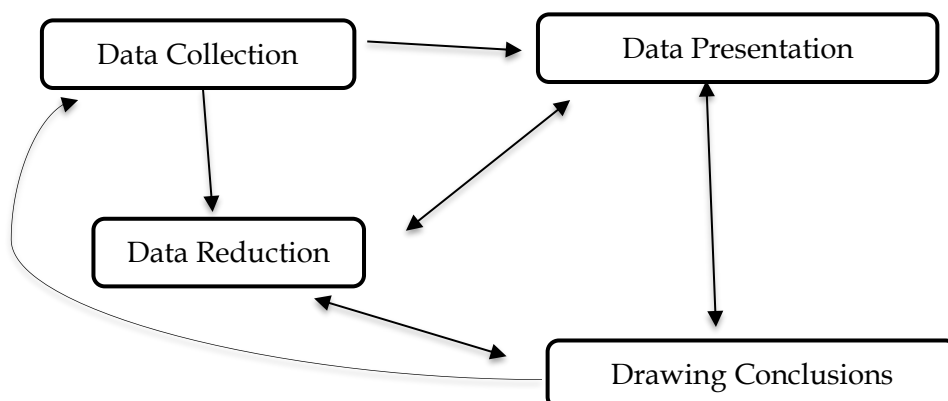


Figure 1. Components in Data Analysis: Interactive Model

In the data reduction stage, the researcher rewrote the Gumansalangi folk tale based on interview findings and literature studies, focusing on essential cultural elements. The data collection phase involved gathering supporting information from various sources, including informant narratives and written references. The data presentation stage organized this information into coherent narratives and thematic structures that connect the folk tale's content to literature learning in elementary schools. Finally, in the drawing conclusions stage, the researcher interpreted the findings to describe the origins of the Sangir tribe and their cultural values, highlighting their relevance to character education and national identity through literature learning. These components were applied interactively to ensure the depth and credibility of the analysis process.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Gumansalangi Legend Story in Relation to Learning Indonesian Literature at the Indonesian School of Davao, Philippines:

### *Gumansalangi Legend Story*

The Gumansalangi legend based on the Ministry of Education and Culture (2013), explained the story of a prince from the Sultanate of Cotabato, now part of the Philippines, who was exiled to the forest because he had bad behavior. In exile, he repented and then met Princess Konda, a messenger from heaven, who disguised herself as an old woman. After proving his sincerity, Gumansalangi married Princess Konda and looked for a new land according to divine instructions in the form of rain and thunder for three days and three nights. Gumansalangi and Putri Konda finally settled on the large island of Tampungang Lawo. Gumansalangi was crowned as the first king with the title *Yang Dipertuan Agung* or The Supreme Ruler of Medelu. This story is believed to be the origin of the Sangir people.

In the context of literature learning at the Indonesian School of Davao, this legend has important value. The Gumansalangi story is one of the most complete legends that tells about Sangihe, from its inhabitants to the events behind the formation of the kingdoms in Sangihe (Kurnia et al., 2017). This story not only introduces intrinsic literary elements such as characters, setting, and plot but also strengthens the cultural identity of students, the majority of whom come from the Sangir tribe (Lawendatu et al., 2022). The Gumansalangi Legend Story

meets the main requirements as literary learning. First, the main character in a children's or adolescent story. Gumansalangi is a prince who in this context falls into these criteria. Second, the themes raised, be it ideas, relationships, or language, can be simple or complex. Third, is the content or content (Ibda & Wijayanti, 2023). In line with the opinion of Hendratno (2017), meaningful literary learning in elementary school must be directed at character building. The focus is on developing honest, disciplined, sensitive, and creative characters, which are especially important for children. In learning activities, integrating local legends in literature learning makes learning closer, relevant, and meaningful to students' daily lives.

#### *The Relationship between the Gumansalangi Legend Story and Literature Learning*

The Gumansalangi Legend story can be linked to Indonesian Literature Learning at the Indonesian School of Davao, Philippines at the Elementary School level which refers to the Indonesian Language Learning Outcomes Phase C (grade V and grade VI). Learning outcomes: students are able to understand, respond to, and create literary and non-literary texts in oral and written form by paying attention to language elements, structure, and socio-cultural context. Learning outcomes can be seen as follows:

Table 1. Phase C Indonesian Language Learning Achievements in Relation to Literature Learning in Elementary Schools

| <b>Grades</b> | <b>Learning Outcomes</b>  |
|---------------|---|
| Grade V       | Identifying and understanding the building blocks of fictional stories, such as legends and folk tales, and conveying the contents of the story orally and in writing in coherent and clear language. |
| Grade VI      | Analyzing folklore based on the cultural values contained in it and relating the story to personal and social life.   |

Based on Indonesian Learning Outcomes (CP) Kemendikbudristek (2022)

Furthermore, learning activities that can be carried out include reading the Gumansalangi Legend, discussing the values contained in the story, making a story plot map, and rewriting or staging the legend in the form of a drama or oral tale. This is in line with research by Riski dan Huda (2025), which explains Project Based Learning (PjBL) to increase curiosity and pride in the origins of students through Gumansalangi ethnostories. In the Gumansalangi legend, there are interesting things for role models, namely: 1) firmness, 2) respect for others, 3) spirit of self-improvement, 4) perseverance, and 5) courage. Students can learn lessons from the Gumansalangi legend. Gumansalangi firmly commits to change after realizing his mistakes, showing the importance of standing by good values. His respect for Princess Konda, even in her disguise as an old woman, teaches kindness and equality. His sincere effort to become a better person reflects the value of self-improvement, while his perseverance through exile and trials shows the strength to endure hardship. Lastly, his courage in facing the unknown inspires students to be brave and determined.

Based on an analysis of the criteria for selecting folk tales as teaching materials, the Gumansalangi legend has great potential for use in literature learning in schools. The criteria for a story that has the potential to be used in learning must contain story elements such as

characters that develop dramatically, a coherent plot, and a setting that supports the storyline (Damayanti et al., 2023). The Gumansalangi legend meets these criteria such as the main characters, Gumansalangi and Putri Konda, represent changes in character from negative behavior to becoming better and wiser individuals. The moral values contained in this legend, such as regret for mistakes, respect for others, perseverance, and the spirit of self-improvement, are very relevant to instill in students. Furthermore, because most of the students at the Indonesian School of Davao come from the Sangir tribe, the story of Gumansalangi will feel closer and more meaningful in the learning context. This integration of local legends not only enriches students' understanding of literary elements but also strengthens students' cultural identity.

These results align with research by Khasanah et al. (2025) and Damayanti et al. (2023), which shows that folk tales or legends can be used as an effective source in literature learning at the elementary school level. It was further emphasized that the moral message in the legend can encourage students to become better individuals. This is in line with research by Oktaviana et al. (2023), which explains that literature learning that utilizes a multiple intelligence-based approach is effective in instilling character values. Therefore, the Gumansalangi legend has the potential to be a contextual and meaningful medium for strengthening students' character through literary learning.

Literary learning outcomes related to the use of legends as teaching material are contained in grade V and grade VI material. In grade V, these achievements are listed in Chapter 2: "Recognizing the Elements of Fictional Stories", with the achievement of "Identifying and understanding the building blocks of fictional stories such as legends and folk tales, as well as conveying the contents of the story orally and in writing in coherent and clear language".

Meanwhile, in grade VI, learning outcomes are in Chapter 3: "Exploring Values and Wisdom from Folk Stories," with the achievement "Analyzing folk tales based on the cultural values contained in them, and relating these stories to personal and social life." These two achievements show that literature learning does not only focus on story structure but also plays an important role in shaping students' character and cultural understanding.

Using the Gumansalangi legend as a literary learning medium has a number of advantages. First, students can recognize and understand the origins of the Sangir tribe which is closely related to their cultural identity, especially in the Mindanao region. Second, students can retell the contents of the legendary story in their own language, both orally and in writing, thereby practicing critical thinking and communication skills. Third, learning in class becomes more interesting and meaningful because it involves local stories that are relevant to students' lives, and strengthens the connection between literature and cultural context.

More than that, the integration of folklore into literature learning also supports the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDG 4 (Quality Education) by enhancing literacy skills and preserving local culture in education, and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by conserving intangible cultural heritage through contextual learning.

## **Table 2. Integration of Learning Outcomes, Gumansalangi Legend, and SDGs**

| Class | Material Chapter   | Learning Outcomes (CP)  | Contents of the Gumansalangi Legend Story   | SDGs indicators  |
|-------|--|---|---|--|
| V     | Chapter 2: Recognizing the Elements of Fiction Stories   | Identifying and understanding the building blocks of fictional stories, such as legends and folk tales, and conveying the contents of the story orally and in writing in coherent and clear language. | There are complete and systematic characters, plot, setting, conflict, and resolution in the Gumansalangi legend. Students can retell the story orally and in writing.                                | SDG 4: Quality Education - Increasing literacy skills and preserving local culture in learning.                  |
| VI    | Chapter 3: Exploring Values and Wisdom from Folk Stories | Analyzing folklore based on the cultural values contained in it and relating the story to personal and social life.   | Legends contain moral messages such as regret, respect, responsibility, and the search for identity; they can be linked to the cultural context of Sangir students in the Indonesian School of Davao. | SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities - Conserve intangible cultural heritage through contextual education. |

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## CONCLUSION

The Gumansalangi legend tells the story of a prince from the Sultanate of Cotabato, Philippines, who was exiled to the forest because he had bad behavior. In exile, he repented and then met Princess Konda, a messenger from heaven, who later became his wife. Gumansalangi and Putri Konda then together looked for a new place to live and settled on the island which became known as Tabukan, the origin of the Sangir tribe in the Sangihe Islands,

Indonesia. The story of Gumansalangi later became a Sangihe folklore which is related to the Cotabato Sultanate in Mindanao-Philippines.

This story qualifies as a legend in literary studies because it contains the origins of places, cultural values, and character transformations. With a clear story structure and strong moral values, the Gumansalangi legend from Sangir tribe is very relevant as literature learning material in elementary schools, especially in the Indonesian School of Davao, where students come from the Sangir tribe. This story supports the achievements of literature learning in grade V, to understand the elements of fictional stories; and in grade VI, to analyze cultural values and relate stories to life. Learning activities that can be carried out include reading and retelling legends, discussing moral values, and creating creative projects such as comics or mini-dramas.

Further research is recommended to develop learning media based on the Gumansalangi legend in the form of picture storybooks, interactive digital modules, or student worksheets that are integrated with local culture-based approaches and strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile. In addition, further research could focus on evaluating the impact of using local stories such as Gumansalangi on improving literacy skills, socio-cultural skills, and character building of students in multicultural school environments, such as the Indonesian School of Davao.

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