

Analysis of the Development of BIPA Teaching Modules With Minangkabau Local Content for Foreign Learners' Language Skills in Padang City

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Artikel Info

Received : 30 Juny 2026
Revised : 7 Oktober 2026
Accepted : 20 Oktober 2026
Published : 22 Oktober 2026

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.51673/jurnalistrendi.v11i4.3076>

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the need for developing Indonesian Language for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) teaching modules enriched with Minangkabau local content to enhance the language skills of foreign learners in Padang City. The research is motivated by the finding that nationally distributed BIPA teaching materials, particularly the *Sahabatku Indonesia* textbook series, remain generic and fail to accommodate the sociocultural context of local environments where foreign learners study. A qualitative descriptive method was employed, utilizing in-depth interviews with BIPA instructors at three major implementing institutions in Padang City the Language Center of Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP), Universitas Andalas (Unand), and UIN Imam Bonjol Padang—alongside document analysis of currently used teaching materials. The findings reveal that all three institutions rely on nationally standardized materials that insufficiently integrate Minangkabau cultural content. Instructors reported that existing materials predominantly reference Javanese cultural contexts, rendering them less relevant to the learning environment in West Sumatra. All respondents recommended the development of BIPA teaching modules that integrate Minangkabau local wisdom to improve the effectiveness and contextual relevance of instruction. The implications of this study provide an empirical foundation for developing locally grounded BIPA teaching modules applicable to BIPA-implementing institutions in Padang City.

Keywords: BIPA; teaching modules; local wisdom; Minangkabau; language skills

A. INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian Language for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) program is one of the Indonesian government's strategic initiatives aimed at internationalizing the Indonesian language. The program is grounded in robust legal frameworks, including Law Number 24 of 2009 on the National Flag, Language, Emblem, and Anthem, which in Article 44 mandates the gradual enhancement of Indonesian as an international language; Government Regulation Number 57 of 2014 on the Development, Fostering, and Protection of Language; Presidential Regulation Number 63 of 2019 on the Use of Indonesian; and Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 27 of 2017 on Graduate Competency Standards for BIPA, which establishes national quality benchmarks for BIPA instruction (Kurniawan et al., 2019).

From a geopolitical perspective, BIPA serves as an instrument of the Indonesian government's soft diplomacy. The government's long-term objective is to establish Indonesian as one of the official languages at international forums by 2045. In this regard, language cannot be separated from culture; hence, BIPA is designed not merely to teach formal Indonesian but

also to introduce cultural identity, customs, and societal values to foreign learners (Pontoh et al., 2024). Beyond diplomatic rationales, practical needs also drive BIPA implementation. Indonesia's rising position in the global economy has increased interactions with foreign nationals, including expatriate workers, investors, diplomats, and international students arriving through scholarship programs such as Darmasiswa and KNB (Tiawati et al., 2023).

In Padang City, the primary BIPA providers are the Language Technical Implementation Units (UPT) at state universities, namely the Language Center of Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP), Universitas Andalas (Unand), and UIN Imam Bonjol Padang. These institutions are supported by the West Sumatra Provincial Language Office, which is tasked with instructor training, material development, and the establishment of BIPA partnership networks across the region. All three Language Centers generally employ the nationally standardized *Sahabatku Indonesia* textbook series published by the Agency for Language Development and Fostering under the Ministry of Education and Culture, covering proficiency levels A1 through C2 in accordance with the CEFR framework (Nurilah et al., 2023).

However, document analysis and preliminary interviews indicate that the content of the *Sahabatku Indonesia* textbook remains nationally oriented and fails to specifically accommodate the sociocultural context of the regions where BIPA learners study. This finding aligns with Zuindra and Mayasari's (2025) research revealing that local wisdom is inadequately represented in BIPA teaching texts, and with Muzaki's (2021) assertion that locally grounded BIPA teaching materials are needed to enhance relevance and instructional effectiveness. Saddhono et al. (2023) further emphasized that BIPA instructors must attend to all aspects of instructional planning, process, and evaluation, including the selection of contextually and culturally embedded teaching materials.

Theoretically, this study is grounded in the concept of needs analysis, which is widely regarded as the starting point of language curriculum and teaching material design. Needs analysis is a systematic process of gathering and interpreting information about what learners need to learn, what they currently lack, and what they and other stakeholders expect from instruction, so that the resulting course or material is relevant to its users (Macalister & Nation, 2020). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) distinguish between target needs and learning needs. Target needs comprise necessities, namely what learners must be able to do in the target situation; lacks, namely the gap between learners' current proficiency and those necessities; and wants, namely what learners and other stakeholders perceive as necessary. Learning needs, in turn, concern the conditions, resources, and approaches that enable learning to take place. In the BIPA field, needs analysis has increasingly served as the empirical basis for material development. Aulia et al. (2025), for instance, found through interviews with learners and instructors a strong preference for materials that combine simplified literary content with authentic cultural narratives, while Oktarina and Ansori (2026) identified a very high demand for differentiated and local-wisdom-based digital instructional materials among international students. Instructors hold a strategic position in this process because they observe learners' difficulties directly, select and adapt teaching materials, and mediate between national standards and the local learning environment.

The central issue underlying this study is the absence of BIPA teaching modules that specifically integrate Minangkabau local wisdom for the instructional context in Padang City. Currently used materials tend to reference Javanese cultural contexts including Javanese modes of transportation, cuisine, and traditions despite the fact that foreign learners are situated within Minangkabau cultural settings in West Sumatra. This mismatch diminishes the relevance of the materials to learners' lived experiences in their learning environment (Mayori et al., 2023). Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the need for developing BIPA teaching modules enriched with Minangkabau local content, drawing on the perspectives of BIPA instructors at the three principal implementing institutions in Padang City, as an empirical foundation for the

creation of more contextually relevant and effective teaching modules. Whereas previous studies in West Sumatra have examined cultural content in BIPA materials and learners' cross-cultural understanding at a single institution (Mayori et al., 2023; Nurilah et al., 2023), the novelty of this study lies in comparing instructor perspectives across all three principal BIPA-implementing institutions in Padang City and in explicitly positioning the findings as a needs analysis for developing Minangkabau-based teaching modules.

B. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach aimed at describing and analyzing the need for developing BIPA teaching modules enriched with Minangkabau local content in Padang City. The qualitative approach was selected for its capacity to provide in-depth understanding of BIPA instructors' perspectives, experiences, and needs within authentic instructional contexts (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The research was conducted at three principal BIPA-implementing institutions in Padang City: the Language Center of Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP), Universitas Andalas (Unand), and UIN Imam Bonjol Padang.

Data sources comprised both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with three BIPA instructors: Dr. Ayu Gustia Ningsih, M.Pd. (BIPA instructor at UPT UNP), Dr. Sawirman, M.Pd. (BIPA instructor at UPT Unand), and Chanti Diananseri, M.Pd. (BIPA instructor at UPT UIN Imam Bonjol Padang). Informants were selected purposively based on their BIPA teaching experience and direct involvement in program implementation at their respective institutions. Secondary data were obtained through document analysis of the BIPA teaching materials in use, namely the Sahabatku Indonesia textbook series published by the Agency for Language Development and Fostering, as well as curriculum documents and course plans employed by each institution.

Data collection techniques included semi-structured interviews and document review. The interview instrument was constructed around key dimensions of BIPA teaching material needs, encompassing the types of materials used, their perceived effectiveness, their strengths and limitations, and the need for developing modules with local cultural content. The study employed three instruments. First, the researcher served as the key instrument who conducted the interviews, examined the documents, and interpreted the data. Second, the semi-structured interview guide was grounded in the needs analysis framework, namely target needs (necessities, lacks, and wants) and learning needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Macalister & Nation, 2020). The guide covered five aspects, each operationalized into indicators and open-ended core questions that were followed by probing questions according to the informants' responses, as presented in Table 1. Third, a document analysis sheet was used to examine the teaching materials and curriculum documents in terms of (a) the representation of local, national, and other regional (including Javanese) cultural content in texts, dialogues, and illustrations; (b) alignment with the BIPA Graduate Competency Standards and CEFR levels; (c) integration of the four language skills; and (d) use of digital media and supporting resources. Each informant was interviewed individually, and the interview data were documented and transcribed before being analyzed.

Table 1. Interview Guide Blueprint Based on the Needs Analysis Framework

No.	Aspect (needs analysis dimension)	Indicators	Core interview questions
1	Teaching materials currently used (learning needs)	Types and sources of main and supplementary materials; reference standards (BIPA Graduate Competency Standards, CEFR)	What teaching materials do you use in BIPA classes, and which standards are they based on? Do you use supplementary materials? If so, what are they?
2	Effectiveness, strengths, and limitations of the materials (lacks)	Perceived effectiveness for the four language skills; strengths; limitations, including the relevance of cultural content to the learning environment	How effective are the current materials in developing learners' language skills? What are their strengths and limitations, particularly regarding cultural content?
3	Foreign learner profiles (necessities)	Number, countries of origin, proficiency levels, and learning purposes of the learners	How many foreign learners are enrolled, and where do they come from? What are their proficiency levels and purposes for learning Indonesian?
4	Need for modules with Minangkabau local content (wants)	Perceived need for locally grounded modules; Minangkabau cultural themes to be integrated	Do you consider it necessary to develop BIPA modules with Minangkabau local content? Why? Which aspects of Minangkabau culture should be included?
5	Recommendations for module development (wants and learning needs)	Expected content, media, learning activities, and scope of application	What content, media, and activities would you recommend for the module? Could the module be applied in your institution and in other institutions?

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles et al. (2014), involving three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data trustworthiness was ensured through source triangulation, whereby data from all three informants were compared to obtain a comprehensive and reliable account.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on in-depth interviews with three BIPA instructors in Padang City and document analysis of the teaching materials in use, four principal findings emerged, presented systematically below and summarized in Table 2.

1. Currently Used Teaching Materials

All three BIPA-implementing institutions in Padang City use the *Sahabatku Indonesia* textbook series, published by the Agency for Language Development and Fostering and aligned with APPBIPA standards, as their primary teaching resource. The textbook covers proficiency levels A1 through C2 and integrates four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The BIPA instructor at UPT UNP, Dr. Ayu Gustia Ningsih, M.Pd., stated that the primary materials are aligned with CEFR standards and comply with Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 27 of 2017 on BIPA Graduate Competency Standards. The BIPA instructor at UPT Unand, Dr. Sawirman, M.Pd., confirmed the use of the same textbook but noted that he independently integrates Minangkabau contextual elements into his teaching practice. At UPT UIN Imam Bonjol Padang, Chanti Diananseri, M.Pd., also uses the APPBIPA textbook, supplemented by religious content through the Rumah Moderasi Beragama (Religious Moderation House) program and elements of local culture.

2. Effectiveness and Limitations of Teaching Materials

All respondents indicated that the currently used teaching materials are not fully effective. Dr. Ayu Gustia Ningsih stated that the materials lack effectiveness because they are

incongruent with the cultural backgrounds of learners in West Sumatra. Much of the content references Javanese culture, such as specific modes of transportation and local cuisine that learners do not encounter in Padang. While the materials are systematically organized according to the four language skills, they are not grounded in local wisdom. Dr. Sawirman identified several deficiencies: the materials do not cater to millennial and Generation Z learners, lack innovation and creativity, underutilize digital media and specialized applications, and fail to achieve contextually relevant pedagogical depth. He assessed the current state of BIPA instruction at Unand at approximately 30 percent of its potential. Chanti Diananseri indicated that the BIPA program at UIN IB Padang remains in a curriculum development phase and continues to operate on a trial-and-error basis in assessing foreign students' needs.

3. Foreign Learner Profiles

Learner profile data across the three institutions reveal diversity in national origins and proficiency levels. At UPT UNP, approximately five new international students enroll per cycle, with an additional seven students from China and one Nigerian learner who has reached the B1 level. At UPT Unand, there are approximately 17 foreign learners projected for 2026. At UPT UIN IB Padang, international students are predominantly from Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, and Nigeria, totaling approximately 30 individuals distributed across various departments, particularly within the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training. Proficiency levels range from A1 for Nigerian learners to B-level for students from Malay-speaking backgrounds. Prior to entering regular coursework, all foreign students are required to complete an intensive BIPA program lasting six months to one year.

4. Need for Developing Modules with Minangkabau Local Content

All respondents expressed unequivocal support for the development of BIPA teaching modules enriched with Minangkabau local wisdom. Dr. Ayu Gustia Ningsih strongly recommended such development so that the modules could be directly applied in instruction with foreign students. Dr. Sawirman emphasized the need for BIPA materials linked to tourism, grounded in digitalization, and supported by expanded learning databases. He further advised that instructors should carefully curate content appropriate for foreign learners. Chanti Diananseri expressed hope that the developed modules would integrate both cultural and religious elements and could be adopted by other BIPA-implementing institutions. At UIN IB Padang, the integration of Minangkabau culture has already reached over 50 percent through the mahad (dormitory) program

Table 2. Summary of Interview Findings with BIPA Instructors in Padang City

Aspect	UPT UNP	UPT Unand	UPT UIN IB Padang
Primary Materials	Sahabatku Indonesia, APPBIPA, CEFR & BIPA SKL standards	Sahabatku Indonesia, independently integrated with Minangkabau context	APPBIPA, Sahabatku Indonesia, religious & cultural content
Effectiveness	Insufficiently effective, misaligned with local culture	30% development level, not yet innovative	Curriculum still in trial phase
Key Limitations	Materials reference Javanese culture, not based on local wisdom	Not digital, not creative, not contextual	Curriculum still under development
Number of Learners	±5 + 7 from China	±17 (2026)	±30
Recommendations	Strongly recommends local wisdom modules	Link to tourism, digitalization, expand database	Cultural & religious modules, cross-institutional applicability

Discussion

Viewed through the needs analysis framework (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Macalister & Nation, 2020), the findings can be organized into three dimensions. In terms of necessities, foreign learners in Padang City must be able to use Indonesian to function in a Minangkabau sociocultural environment and, for degree-seeking students, to participate in regular academic coursework after completing the intensive BIPA program. In terms of lacks, the currently used materials do not yet provide the local cultural content, digital support, and contextual depth required to meet these necessities. In terms of wants, the instructors call for modules that integrate Minangkabau local wisdom, tourism, and digital media and, in the case of UIN Imam Bonjol Padang, religious values. These three dimensions frame the discussion that follows.

The findings of this study confirm a significant gap between nationally standardized BIPA teaching materials and the contextual needs of foreign learners in Padang City. This gap lies primarily in the cultural dimension, where materials fail to accommodate Minangkabau local wisdom as the authentic learning environment of foreign students. This finding corroborates Zuindra and Mayasari's (2025) research indicating that local wisdom in BIPA teaching texts is presented through narrative texts, dialogues, and visual illustrations, yet its representation remains suboptimal and tends to present national culture in generic terms. Febriyana and Syamsuyurnita (2025) similarly affirmed that integrating local wisdom into BIPA instruction enhances learning motivation, cross-cultural understanding, and contextual language proficiency. A similar pattern has been reported beyond the BIPA field: Sholikhah and Laili (2025) found that local cultural values such as mutual cooperation, politeness, diversity, and heritage preservation appear in the reading texts of the *English for Nusantara* textbook, yet their integration remains incomplete and needs to be strengthened.

The cultural incongruity within teaching materials directly affects instructional effectiveness. The BIPA instructor at UPT UNP explicitly noted that materials heavily reference Javanese culture, including specific modes of transportation and regional cuisine irrelevant to learners' daily lives in Padang. This phenomenon is consistent with prior research demonstrating that BIPA materials across various regions remain dominated by Javanese cultural references (Nova, 2024; Nurilah et al., 2023). Within the framework of contextual learning theory, Johnson (2002) asserted that instruction connecting content to learners' real-life contexts yields more meaningful and enduring understanding. Recent empirical studies support this view: Rumindah et al. (2025) showed that a contextual approach in BIPA instruction improved foreign learners' speaking, writing, and understanding of Indonesian culture, while Syahira and Budiman (2026) reported that contextual learning strategies significantly improved students' writing ability because the material was connected to their real experiences.

The unanimous call among respondents for developing BIPA teaching modules with Minangkabau local content aligns with the broader trend of locally grounded BIPA material development across Indonesia. Muzaki (2021) developed BIPA materials based on Malang's local culture, while Tumanggor et al. (2024) developed a BIPA instructional model incorporating local wisdom through the Dampeng dance of North Sumatra. Saddhono et al.'s (2024) research on the internationalization of Indonesian cuisine in BIPA instruction further demonstrated that local cultural content enhances foreign learner engagement and motivation. The development of BIPA modules with Minangkabau content is expected to fill the void in locally relevant teaching materials for the West Sumatran context.

Dr. Sawirman's recommendation to link BIPA materials with tourism and digitalization is particularly pertinent to current developments. Rahmat et al. (2024) found that online collaboration and adaptive projects can enhance the language competence of international BIPA learners. Furthermore, Chanti Diananseri's recommendation to integrate religious elements into the teaching modules reflects the distinctive context of UIN Imam Bonjol Padang, which warrants accommodation given that Minangkabau culture is guided by the philosophy

of “Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah,” making Islam an inseparable component of Minangkabau cultural identity.

Overall, the development of BIPA teaching modules with Minangkabau local content must attend to several critical aspects: (a) alignment with BIPA Graduate Competency Standards as stipulated in Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 27 of 2017; (b) integration of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) with Minangkabau cultural contexts; (c) utilization of Minangkabau tourism and culinary potential as instructional content; (d) deployment of digital media and technology to support innovative learning; and (e) accommodation of the diverse national origins and proficiency levels of foreign learners. The last aspect deserves particular attention because learners’ first languages shape the difficulties they encounter. Melati et al. (2026) found that Arabic-speaking learners produced phoneme addition, deletion, and substitution errors when reading Nusantara legends and recommended combining articulation practice with culturally responsive teaching, while Andaresta et al. (2024) reported that Thai students’ errors in using effective sentences in academic writing stemmed from structural differences between Indonesian and Thai and from limited vocabulary. Because foreign students in Padang City must proceed to regular coursework after the intensive BIPA program, the modules should combine local cultural content with level-appropriate support for pronunciation, grammar, and academic literacy. Accordingly, the developed modules are expected to serve as contextually relevant, practical, and effective teaching materials for foreign learners in Padang City.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that there is an urgent need to develop BIPA teaching modules enriched with Minangkabau local wisdom for foreign learners in Padang City. The three BIPA-implementing institutions in Padang City employ nationally standardized teaching materials that insufficiently accommodate the Minangkabau local cultural context. Existing materials tend to reference Javanese cultural contexts, rendering them less relevant to the learning environment of foreign students in West Sumatra. All interviewed BIPA instructors recommended the development of teaching modules that integrate Minangkabau local wisdom to enhance the effectiveness, contextual relevance, and overall quality of BIPA instruction. This study provides an empirical foundation for developing locally grounded BIPA teaching modules encompassing Minangkabau tourism, cuisine, customs, and religious values, which can be applied across BIPA-implementing institutions in Padang City and throughout West Sumatra.

This study has several limitations. The data were obtained from three BIPA instructors and from document analysis; therefore, the perspectives of foreign learners, program administrators, and other stakeholders have not yet been captured, and the findings describe the situation in Padang City at the time of data collection.

Based on these findings, several suggestions are offered. First, developers of BIPA teaching materials should use the results of this needs analysis as the basis for designing modules that integrate Minangkabau local wisdom, such as customs, cuisine, tourism destinations, folklore, and the religious values embodied in the philosophy of *Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*, while remaining aligned with the BIPA Graduate Competency Standards and CEFR levels. Second, BIPA-implementing institutions in Padang City, together with the West Sumatra Provincial Language Office, are encouraged to collaborate in developing, sharing, and digitizing such modules so that they can be used across institutions and can accommodate learners of different origins and proficiency levels. Third, while dedicated modules are being developed, BIPA instructors are encouraged to continue supplementing national materials with Minangkabau cultural content and digital media. Fourth,

future researchers should extend this needs analysis by involving foreign learners through questionnaires or interviews and then proceed to the development, expert validation, and field testing of the modules using a research and development design, so that their validity, practicality, and effectiveness can be empirically established.

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