

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In today's interconnected academic landscape, the ability to engage with a global community is essential for students and scholars. Within this framework, English serves as an essential global lingua franca that facilitates seamless international communication. In higher education, developing English language proficiency is of paramount importance for students. It enables them to access a wide range of learning materials that can help support their competence in their specific field. As Rokhyati (2013) claims, being proficient in English equips a person with a passport to the world. Thus, learners with better English proficiency are more likely to succeed in their careers and compete in the global job market, particularly in non-English-speaking countries (Deepa et al., 2023; Daqiq et al., 2024).

In order to maximize language mastery, tertiary education students must build strong communicative capabilities, which include both spoken and written language, as reflected in their receptive and productive skills (Harmer, 2003). In response to current English proficiency demands, this is a good decision: English remains an international language required in today's global culture. Hence, in higher education, English is taught in all departments. It is categorized into two classifications: a core subject and a supporting subject (Akhiroh & Semarang, 2020). However, in accordance with the Decree of the Minister of National Education No. 232/U/2000 on Guidelines for Higher Education Curriculum

Development, the higher education curriculum is structured autonomously (Kemendiknas, 2000). Thus, the content of the English course at higher education is adjusted according to the characteristics of the university concerned. This institutional autonomy aligns with Law No. 12 of 2012, Article 35, Paragraph 2, regarding the curriculum, which mandates that higher education institutions design their own curricula based on the Indonesian National Education Standards. Specifically, the standard of graduate competencies requires the cultivation of three core abilities: attitudes, knowledge, and skills.

English language instruction in Indonesia is typically divided into two categories: General English (GE) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). In most higher education institutions, including Institut Agama Hindu Negeri Tampung Penyang (henceforth IAHN-TP) Palangka Raya, English is taught as a General English course to help students develop general communicative competence. However, research indicates that many English teachers continue to use generic materials that are not tailored to the institutional features or learners' backgrounds (Dethan et al., 2024; Ekayati et al., 2020; Guo Hui, 2017; Nartiningrum & Nugroho, 2020). This issue is particularly noticeable at IAHN-TP Palangka Raya, where students struggle to improve their English ability. Current teaching practices still rely heavily on conventional General English textbooks and online resources that lack cultural relevance and contextual engagement. Students find it challenging to make connections between classroom learning and real-life communication due to their limited exposure to meaningful, authentic texts that reflect their cultural and academic environment. In line with this, Marsakawati (2024) highlights that

inadequate exposure to contextualized, culturally relevant materials often leads to difficulties applying English skills effectively in real-world situations.

IAHN-TP Palangka Raya is a Hindu-based higher education institution in Central Kalimantan with unique characteristics compared to other Hindu universities in Indonesia. The institution is founded on Hinduism and Kaharingan, the indigenous Dayak belief formerly known as *agama helo*, which has been officially integrated into Hinduism since 1980 as *Hindu Kaharingan*. The acronym “TP” refers to *Tampung Penyang* from the ancient Sangiang language, meaning “the spirit of unity”. As a higher education institution, IAHN-TP positions English as an essential course to prepare graduates for global competitiveness. The university comprises three faculties: Dharma Acarya, Dharma Duta and Brahma Widya, and Dharma Sastra.

The Dharma Acarya faculty is a term synonymous with the Teacher Training and Education Faculty. One of the popular departments in this faculty is Hindu education. The goals of this department are to provide professional educators, trainers, and researchers across many fields of study and to uphold high spirituality in the Hindu religion, particularly within the context of the Dayak Hindu Kaharingan. Therefore, the presence of an English course at the Hindu Education Department is not merely designed to help learners speak English as the international language, but also to express the fundamentals of the Hindu religion. Since the focus of each course in the curriculum is to enhance morality, ethics, and spirituality, the English course is responsible for this goal.

The learning environment in the Hindu Education Department is closely connected with the study of Hindu values, local wisdom, and the cultural traditions of the Dayak Hindu Kaharingan community. These characteristics shape students' academic experiences and constitute an important part of the educational context in which English is learned. Therefore, English learning materials should not rely solely on generic topics but also reflect students' cultural and educational contexts. Infusing local culture into General English curricula enhances the authenticity and relevance of language acquisition, thereby reinforcing the educational shift toward contextual instruction and cultural awareness.

In fact, the preliminary review of the curriculum documents, Program Learning Outcomes (CPLs), syllabus, and the existing Semester Learning Plan (RPS) for the English course at the Hindu Education Department of IAHN-TP Palangka Raya revealed a gap between curriculum expectations and instructional practices. The curriculum explicitly promotes the principles of *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM), communicative competence, cultural understanding, and integration of Tri Hita Karana values within the context of Hindu higher education (See **Appendix 6**). However, these expectations were not adequately reflected in the existing instructional materials and learning activities. While the curriculum emphasizes communicative competence, cultural understanding, and appreciation of local wisdom, the teaching materials primarily focused on grammatical elements and general English content, with limited opportunities to learn English through materials that reflected their cultural and academic contexts. This condition highlights the need for more contextualized English learning

resources that are aligned with both curriculum expectations and students' learning needs.

A review of the existing syllabus and Semester Learning Plan (RPS) provided further evidence of this gap. The course content primarily focused on foundational aspects of English, such as personal pronouns, auxiliary verbs, possessive pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs (See **Appendix 7 & 8**). The learning process was supported through activities such as demonstrations, question-and-answer sessions, role-play, and mind mapping. While these materials and activities provided an important foundation for students' language development, opportunities to engage with local wisdom, Hindu values, and contexts reflecting students' cultural and educational backgrounds remained limited.

This need was further reinforced by the institutional vision and educational context of IAHN-TP Palangka Raya. As a Hindu higher education institution, IAHN-TP Palangka Raya is committed not only to developing students' academic competencies but also to fostering an appreciation of local cultural values. This commitment is reflected in the curriculum, which emphasizes attitude-related learning outcomes, including the ability to understand, preserve, and apply local wisdom in educational contexts. Therefore, English learning is expected to go beyond language mastery by providing students with opportunities to engage with cultural values that are meaningful to their lives and learning experiences.

One of the key values promoted within the Hindu Education Department is Tri Hita Karana. According to Sukarma (2016), *Tri Hita Karana* refers to the harmonious relationship among God, human beings, and nature, serving as a

fundamental principle for achieving balance and well-being in life. More than a philosophical concept, it embodies a set of values that guides individuals in their interactions with others, the environment, and the divine. Therefore, Tri Hita Karana has become an important foundation for character development and value-based education within the Hindu Education Department.

In the local context of Central Kalimantan, similar values can be found in *Batang Haring*, one of the most prominent symbols of Dayak local wisdom. *Batang Haring*, often referred to as the Tree of Life, originates from Bahasa Sangiang, the ancient language of the Dayak people, and is documented in the Panaturan, the sacred text of Hindu Kaharingan. Like Tri Hita Karana, *Batang Haring* reflects the importance of maintaining harmony among God, human beings, and nature (Mau & Sukawati, 2019). For the Dayak community, it serves not only as a cultural symbol but also as a guide for living a balanced and harmonious life. Given the shared philosophical foundations of Tri Hita Karana and *Batang Haring*, Embedding these local wisdom traditions within English instructional resources creates an authentic cultural backdrop that enriches the language learning experience. Although they originate from different cultural traditions, both philosophies emphasize harmonious relationships among God, fellow human beings, and the natural environment. In this study, the values represented by *Kayu Gambalang Nyahu* were aligned with *Parahyangan*, *Kayu Pampang Seribu* with *Pawongan*, and *Kayu Erang Tingang* with *Palemahan*. These values were embedded throughout the e-book by serving as the basis for learning objectives, reading texts, listening materials, speaking activities, writing tasks, and classroom

discussions. Rather than being presented as supplementary cultural information, they served as meaningful contexts through which students learned and practiced English while engaging with cultural values familiar to their educational and sociocultural backgrounds.

A preliminary investigation was conducted through document analysis and interviews with the English course lecturer to examine the current state of English learning in the Hindu Education Department. The investigation showed that the instructional materials were mainly adapted from general English resources and offered limited opportunities for students to relate language learning to their local culture and everyday experiences. Most of the materials focused on grammar and vocabulary, with less attention to integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills into meaningful communicative activities. The lecturer also explained that many teaching materials were sourced from publicly available online sources and had not been systematically developed to meet students' learning needs. These conditions highlighted the need for English teaching materials that were more relevant to students' learning contexts and educational needs. Integrating local cultural content into English instruction could provide more meaningful learning experiences by connecting language learning to students' cultural backgrounds and daily lives.

The importance of integrating culture into English learning has been widely acknowledged in previous studies. Culture helps make language learning more meaningful, relevant, and engaging because students can relate what they learn to familiar experiences and contexts (Khan, 2014; Hossain, 2024; Tantri &

Santosa, 2024). However, the preliminary investigation revealed that although lecturers had used various digital resources, including YouTube videos and website-based materials, these resources were often fragmented and were not specifically designed to meet students' learning needs. They also provided limited integration of local cultural content and Hindu philosophical values, resulting in English learning materials that were less contextual and less representative of students' cultural backgrounds.

Given these conditions, developing a locally culture-based English e-book was deemed an appropriate response to the identified needs. As university students increasingly rely on digital resources and engage in independent learning, an e-book offers flexible access to learning materials anytime, anywhere. By combining texts, images, learning activities, and QR code-supported resources on a single platform, the e-book offers a more accessible and meaningful experience. Through these features, the developed e-book was intended to provide English learning materials that were better aligned with students' learning needs, cultural backgrounds, and the learning context of the Hindu Education Department.

The e-book was developed to provide learning materials closely aligned with students' cultural backgrounds and learning contexts. Local cultural themes were incorporated into seven genres, namely narrative, descriptive, report, recount, procedure, explanation, and exposition, allowing students to learn English through topics that are familiar to their daily lives. As a result, the learning activities become more meaningful and relevant to students' experiences. By connecting new

knowledge to what students already know and experience, the e-book helps create a more contextual and supportive learning environment for English learning.

In addition, the e-book was developed in line with the principles of adult learning, which emphasize learner autonomy, self-direction, and the use of prior experiences in the learning process (Knowles et al., 2005). As university students, learners are expected to take greater responsibility for their own learning. The e-book supports this process by allowing students to access the materials independently and progress at their own pace while learning through culturally familiar topics. The design of the e-book also reflects the principles of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA), which views language learning as a process of developing language competence through meaningful texts in authentic social contexts (Hyland, 2007; Martin & Rose, 2008). Through this approach, students are guided to develop their English skills while engaging with texts that are relevant to their learning context.

The integration of local cultural content was an important consideration throughout the development process to ensure that the learning materials reflected students' cultural backgrounds and educational context. By introducing local cultural values, traditions, and practices across different text genres, the e-book enables students to learn English through topics familiar to their daily lives. This approach helps connect new knowledge with students' existing experiences, making learning more meaningful and relevant. It also aligns with the educational context of the Hindu Education department at IAHN-TP Palangka Raya, where local culture forms an important part of students' learning experiences.

Local culture has been defined in various ways in the literature. It refers to cultural elements that are maintained and practiced within a particular community (Ratminingsih & Budasi, 2018) encompasses values and beliefs that shape community attitudes and behaviors (Afifuddin & Nafis, 2023), and reflects the cultural values embedded in everyday social life (Yuliastuti & Sukmawati, 2020). In this study, local culture refers to the distinctive values, traditions, customs, language varieties, social practices, and ways of life that characterize a particular community and serve as meaningful resources for learning.

The integration of local cultural content into English teaching materials can enhance the relevance of learning by connecting language instruction with students' cultural experiences and social realities. When learning materials reflect contexts familiar to students, learning English becomes more meaningful and engaging. Therefore, locally based cultural materials should incorporate authentic cultural content that reflects the values, traditions, and practices of the local community.

Culture is commonly understood as a system of values, social practices, and cultural artifacts that shape people's ways of thinking and behaving (Schein, 2004; Koentjaraningrat 2005). As a source of learning content, local culture can make language learning more meaningful and relevant to students' lives. It can be introduced through cultural ideas, cultural practices, and cultural artifacts that reflect the community's way of life. In this study, these cultural dimensions are represented through the Hindu philosophical concept of Tri Hita Karana as reflected in *Batang Haring*, a symbol of Dayak local wisdom. By incorporating these cultural

elements, language learning can be connected to students' own cultural backgrounds and experiences.

The e-book developed in this study is grounded in the Genre-Based Approach (GBA), which enables students to learn English through meaningful texts and contextualized learning experiences. The approach was chosen because the needs analysis revealed the importance of connecting English learning with students' cultural and educational backgrounds. Since GBA emphasizes learning language through texts and contexts, it provides opportunities to incorporate local culture and Hindu values into the learning process. At the same time, it supports the development of communicative competence by helping students understand how language is used in everyday communication. For these reasons, GBA was considered suitable for developing the e-book.

The Genre-Based Approach is a pedagogical approach rooted in Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL) that emphasizes the explicit teaching of language within its social context of use (Christie & Derewianka, 2011). It aims to help students develop the ability to use language effectively across a range of text types and communicative situations. In GBA, genre encompasses both written and spoken texts, and learning focuses on how texts are organized and how language functions to achieve particular communicative purposes.

A key principle of GBA is the close relationship between text and context. According to functional linguists, every text is situated within two interconnected contexts: the context of culture and the context of situations (Butt et al., 1995). The context of culture provides the broader social and cultural background that shapes

a text, whereas the context of situation refers to the immediate circumstances in which the text is produced and interpreted. This emphasis on context makes GBA particularly well-suited to integrating local cultural content into English-language learning, as it allows students to learn the language through texts embedded in meaningful cultural and social contexts.

The Genre-Based Approach is implemented through a series of learning cycles that systematically support learners in understanding and producing texts. These cycles provide guided instruction that enables students to gradually develop their language skills through meaningful engagement with language in context (Kartika-Ningsih & Gunawan, 2019). As noted by Triastuti et al. (2022), each stage of the learning cycle incorporates classroom activities that support both receptive and productive language skills and encourage learners to think critically about how language is used to achieve specific communicative purposes.

Within GBA, learning extends beyond the study of text structures alone. While genres are often represented in written texts such as narratives, descriptions, reports, procedures, recounts, explanations, and expositions, the concept of genre also encompasses spoken forms of communication, such as interviews, presentations, discussions, and debates. Therefore, GBA provides a comprehensive framework for developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through texts that serve authentic social purposes.

A central principle of GBA is that language should be learned through meaningful and contextualized texts. Consequently, instructional materials should reflect learners' social and cultural environments so that language learning is

connected to contexts that are familiar and relevant to them. This principle is particularly important in the development of local culture-based teaching materials, as culturally relevant content can provide meaningful contexts for language learning while enhancing students' engagement with the learning process.

The integration of local cultural content and genre-based instruction offers a pedagogically sound framework for English language learning. Through culturally familiar texts across various genres, learners have opportunities to engage with English in meaningful contexts while developing their language skills. As suggested by Emilia (2011) and Herdi et al. (2023), the combination of contextualized texts and culturally relevant content can support more meaningful learning experiences. Therefore, the Genre-Based Approach provides an appropriate framework for developing the local culture-based e-book in this study.

Using the Genre-Based Approach, the texts or materials used in teaching should be contextual and reflect learners' social and cultural contexts, enabling them to understand how texts are used in real-life situations. In this case, learners will benefit more if the materials provided feature texts relevant to their specific field or study. Thus, the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) is highly relevant for students in the Hindu Education Department because it provides a structured way to develop their language skills aligned with real-world communication needs. GBA teaches language through socially meaningful texts, making it suitable for preparing students to listen, read, write, and speak about Hindu philosophy and local culture in various genres (Hyland, 2007). Moreover, GBA supports the

development of localized teaching materials that enhance students' understanding of English through culturally relevant themes (Feez & Joyce, 1998).

Research has consistently emphasized the importance of contextualized and culturally relevant learning in English language education. However, scholars have approached this issue from different perspectives. Emilia (2011) argues that genre-based instruction enables learners to develop language skills through meaningful texts situated within specific social contexts. Similarly, Triastuti et al. (2022) highlight the role of genre-based learning cycles in systematically scaffolding learners' language development through contextualized instruction. In contrast, Herdi et al. (2023) focus on the integration of local cultural content as a means of enhancing the relevance of English learning by connecting instructional materials with learners' cultural experiences. Although these studies collectively highlight the importance of contextualized learning, they discuss genre pedagogy and local culture largely as separate instructional considerations. Consequently, limited attention has been given to how local cultural content can be systematically integrated into genre-based English teaching materials to support both language development and culturally meaningful learning experiences in higher education.

Previous studies on contextualized English learning differ in their emphasis. Studies on local culture (Kanoksilapatham, 2020; Ratminingsih et al., 2018; Sudartini, 2012a) primarily focus on enhancing cultural relevance and learner engagement, whereas studies on the Genre-Based Approach emphasize the development of communicative competence through contextualized texts and systematic learning cycles. Despite their shared commitment to meaningful

learning, these two lines of research have largely evolved independently. As a result, the literature has not sufficiently explained how local cultural content can be systematically integrated into genre-based English teaching materials while preserving the pedagogical principles of the Genre-Based Approach. Moreover, limited attention has been given to integrating local wisdom and Hindu philosophical values, such as *Tri Hita Karana* and *Batang Haring*, into genre-based English teaching materials for higher education.

These theoretical and contextual gaps indicate the need for English teaching materials that systematically integrate local cultural content within a genre-based learning framework while remaining responsive to students' educational and cultural contexts. In the Hindu Education Department at IAHN-TP Palangka Raya, such materials are particularly important because they support the institution's commitment to promoting local wisdom as an integral part of character education. Responding to these gaps, the present study develops an English e-book based on the findings of a systematic needs analysis. The e-book integrates local cultural content, Hindu values, and the Genre-Based Approach into a single learning resource. It provides listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities through texts that reflect students' cultural backgrounds and learning needs. By bringing these elements together, the study seeks to contribute to the development of more contextualized and culturally responsive English teaching materials for higher education.

Based on these considerations, this study aimed to develop and validate a local culture-based English e-book grounded in the Genre-Based Approach for

students of the Hindu Education Département at IAHN-TP Palangka Raya. By integrating Dayak local culture, Hindu values, and genre-based language learning, the study seeks to address the need for English learning materials that are relevant to students' cultural backgrounds and learning needs while supporting the educational goals of Hindu higher education.

1.2 Identification of Problems

Based on the background of the study, some problems are identified, as follows:

- 1.1.1 The existing English teaching materials used in the Hindu Education Department at IAHN-TP Palangka Raya had not been systematically developed based on students' learning needs and the educational context.
- 1.1.2 The available teaching materials provided limited opportunities for students to connect English learning with their cultural backgrounds, local experiences, and the educational context.
- 1.1.3 Local cultural content, including the philosophical values of Tri Hita Karana as reflected in *Batang Haring*, had not been systematically integrated into the existing English teaching materials.
- 1.1.4 Existing studies have provided limited theoretical guidance on how local cultural content can be systematically integrated into Genre-Based English teaching materials while maintaining the pedagogical principles of the Genre-Based Approach.
- 1.1.5 A local culture-based English e-book that systematically integrates local cultural content with the Genre-Based Approach and responds to students'

learning needs and educational context was not yet available for General English learning in the Hindu Education Department at IAHN-TP Palangka Raya.

1.3 Research Limitations

- 1.3.1 This study focuses on the development of local culture genre-based English teaching materials for students of the Hindu Education Department at IAHN TP Palangka Raya.
- 1.3.2 The local culture content incorporated into the teaching materials is confined to the values of *Tri Hita Karana*, represented through *Batang Haring* as a symbol of the local wisdom of the Dayak community in Central Kalimantan.
- 1.3.3 The developed teaching materials cover only seven text genres: narrative, descriptive, recount, report, procedure, explanation, and exposition. All learning materials are presented using topics related to *Batang Haring*.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the study's background and the identified problems, the researchers formulated the following questions.

- 1.4.1 What are the characteristics of English learning materials needed by the students of IAHN TP Palangka Raya based on local cultural content and a genre-based approach?
- 1.4.2 How are the local culture genre-based English teaching materials developed for the students of IAHN TP Palangka Raya?

1.4.3 What is the quality of the developed local culture genre-based English teaching materials for the students of IAHN TP Palangka Raya?

1.4.4 What is the effectiveness of the developed local culture genre-based English teaching materials for the students of IAHN TP Palangka Raya?

1.5 Research Objectives

There are two main purposes of this research:

1.5.1 General Research Objective

Generally, the objective of this research is to develop English teaching materials based on local culture along with a genre-based approach. The teaching materials will be presented as an e-book for use in English courses at IAHN TP Palangka Raya.

1.5.2 Specific Research Objective

1.5.1 To describe the needs of students at IAHN TP Palangka Raya toward English teaching materials in English courses.

1.5.2 To develop local culture genre-based English teaching materials for the students of IAHN TP Palangka Raya.

1.5.3 To analyze the quality of the local culture genre-based English teaching materials which will be developed for the students of IAHN TP Palangka Raya.

1.5.4 To analyze the effectiveness of the developed local culture genre-based English teaching materials for the students of IAHN TP Palangka Raya.

1.6 Research Significance

This research is expected to have theoretical and practical significances, as follows.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on Genre-Based Approach and culturally responsive language teaching. It provides insight into how local culture, Hindu values, and genre-based instruction can be integrated into an English e-book for higher education. While these elements have often been discussed separately in previous studies, this study brings them together within a single learning resource developed through a needs-based approach. In doing so, it contributes to a better understanding of how local wisdom can be incorporated into English language teaching and how an English e-book can support culturally relevant language learning in specific educational contexts.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

1.6.2.1 For students

The developed e-book provides students with English learning materials that integrate local cultural content, Hindu values, and genre-based learning activities. Through a variety of listening, speaking, reading, and writing tasks, students have opportunities to develop their English language skills using texts and topics closely related to their cultural backgrounds. The inclusion of local culture and Hindu values encourages students to engage with local wisdom as they learn English, making the learning experience more meaningful and relevant to their everyday lives. In addition, as an e-book, the material enables students to interact

with digital learning resources and supports their access to and use of technology throughout the learning process.

1.6.2.2 For English lecturers

The developed e-book may serve as a useful resource for English lecturers, particularly in Hindu higher education institutions. It provides examples of how local cultural content, including *Batang Haring* and Tri Hita Karana values, can be incorporated into English language learning through the Genre-Based Approach. The materials and learning activities in the e-book may assist lecturers in planning and implementing more contextualized learning experiences relevant to students' cultural backgrounds and learning needs. In addition, the tasks provided in the e-book may help lecturers monitor students' progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The e-book may also serve as a reference for lecturers who wish to integrate local wisdom into English language teaching and to develop learning materials aligned with the educational goals of IAHN-TP Palangka Raya.

1.6.2.3 For other researchers

The findings of this study may provide useful insights for researchers interested in developing local culture-based English teaching materials. The needs analysis findings, material development procedures, and evaluation results presented in this study may serve as useful references for similar studies in different cultural and educational contexts. In addition, the developed e-book may inspire further research into integrating local wisdom into English language teaching, including the development of interactive digital learning resources and other

culture-based English learning materials. Future studies may also explore the use of similar materials across different educational levels and examine their impact on students' language learning and cultural engagement over a longer period.

1.7 Product Specification

This study developed an English e-book based on the Genre-Based Approach for students of the Hindu Education Department at IAHN-TP Palangka Raya. The e-book integrates Dayak local culture and Hindu values represented through the philosophy of *Batang Haring*, which serves as an important symbol and life philosophy of the Dayak community in Central Kalimantan. The cultural content is organized into the three cultural aspects proposed by Koentjaraningrat (2005): cultural ideas, cultural activities, and cultural artifacts. Designed as the main learning resource for the English course, the e-book includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities presented through seven text genres: narrative, descriptive, report, recount, procedure, explanation, and exposition. Through these texts and activities, students have opportunities to learn English while exploring local culture and Hindu values relevant to their backgrounds and learning needs.

1.8 The Importance of Development

The development of this local culture-based English e-book is important in supporting English learning at IAHN-TP Palangka Raya. By integrating local culture into learning materials, students have opportunities to learn English while deepening their understanding of their own cultural heritage and values. The use of the Genre-Based Approach enables students to learn English through a variety

of meaningful texts and learning activities, helping them develop their language skills in relevant contexts. The inclusion of Dayak local culture and Hindu values is particularly important because it connects English learning with students' field of study and cultural backgrounds. Through the texts and activities presented in the e-book, students are also encouraged to engage with local culture and explore the values embedded in their cultural traditions. In addition, the e-book serves as a learning resource that reflects the educational context of the Hindu Education Department and addresses the need for English materials more relevant to students' learning experiences.

1.9 Assumptions and Limitations of Development

Developing local culture-genre-based English teaching materials that address issues related to Hindu values, using a genre-based approach, assists lecturers and students in teaching and learning English with appropriate materials in English courses. The presentation of English e-book teaching materials that use local cultural materials and religious concepts through a genre-based approach is highly useful for enhancing students' motivation to learn English. The developed e-book has the potential to serve as an effective learning resource for English courses at the Hindu Education Department of IAHN-TP Palangka Raya. The use of local culture as learning materials helps learners understand the text, since these materials reflect their own culture. The variety of genres used in e-books enables learners to learn English from context, fostering a positive learning atmosphere and enhancing their English language skills.

Acknowledging and thoroughly considering the inherent limitations of local-culture genre-based English teaching materials is crucial. This English teaching material was developed in response to the special requirements of IAHN-TP Palangka Raya students enrolled in the English course in the academic year 2024/2025 at the Hindu Education Department. Rather than being implemented as a one-size-fits-all solution, this teaching material (e-book) was carefully crafted to address the unique academic needs, learning challenges, and skill development requirements of the target students. The contextual specificity requires a complex approach that goes beyond traditional English instruction, necessitating a thorough understanding of the local educational environment, students' current English proficiency levels, and the specific skills required for their academic and professional needs.

The e-book's effectiveness was closely related to its alignment with the learning objectives and students' existing English proficiency levels. To address the gaps identified in students' English language proficiency, the e-book was developed with careful attention to instructional design, learning activities, and content selection. The development process was guided by a thorough understanding of the target learners' characteristics, learning needs, and educational context. As a result, the e-book was designed to provide a learning resource that was responsive to students' needs and relevant to their learning experiences. Within the context of the Hindu Education Department of IAHN-TP Palangka Raya, the e-book was intended not only to serve as a digital learning

resource but also as a pedagogical tool that supported students' English language development through culturally relevant and contextualized learning materials.

1.10 Definitions of Key Terms

To eliminate any possible misunderstanding about the essential factors examined in this study, some terms need to be clearly defined in both conceptual and operational contexts.

1.10.1 Conceptual Definition

a. Teaching Materials

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) Teaching materials are defined as tools used by teachers to deliver lessons and help students practice their English skills. Teaching materials provide content and practice opportunities that support learning in various settings. They are designed to help learners understand and use English, whether in everyday general English classes or other learning contexts, without being tailored only to specific or academic needs. This means that teaching materials aim to be useful and effective for a wide range of learners by supporting language-skills practice and content learning in a clear and accessible way.

b. Local culture

Culture is the totality of ideas, actions, and human creations that are learned and shared within a society (Koentjaraningrat, 2005). According to Koentjaraningrat (2005), culture is manifested in three forms: Cultural ideas, cultural practices, and cultural artifacts. Cultural ideas include values, beliefs, and knowledge; cultural practices refer to social activities and traditions, and cultural artifacts refer to tangible cultural products. Local culture, therefore, refers to the

values, beliefs, traditions, practices, and cultural products that characterize a particular community or geographical area (Sudartini, 2012).

c. Genre-Based Approach

Genre-Based Approach (GBA) is a pedagogical approach rooted in systemic functional linguistics (SFL), focusing on the explicit teaching of language within the context of its use, that aims to educate students on how to use language successfully in a variety of text types and social contexts (Christie & Derewianka, 2011).

d. Learning achievement

Learning achievement is defined as what students achieve or produce after learning. It includes students' behavior changes as a result of their interactions with one another, which led to changes in their character, actions, deeds, and behavior (Amaliah & Ampa, 2024).

1.10.2 Operational Definition

a. Teaching Material

The term teaching materials in this study refers to the local culture-based English materials for teaching English at the Hindu Education Department that were developed using a genre-based approach underpinning the Hindu concept of Tri Hita Karana, through the inclusion of *Batang Haring* values, the Dayak Hindus' philosophy of life in Central Kalimantan in the form of an e-book.

b. Local culture

In this study, local culture refers to the cultural ideas, cultural practices, and cultural artifacts of the Dayak ethnic communities in Central Kalimantan that

are incorporated into the English e-book. These cultural elements are selected for their relevance to the concept of Tri Hita Karana and the learning needs of students in the Hindu Education Department at IAHN-TP Palangka Raya.

c. Genre-based approach

In this study, the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) refers to the approach used to develop the local culture-based English e-book. The approach was applied through seven text genres, namely narrative, descriptive, report, recount, procedure, explanation, and exposition, which were used as the main learning materials to support the development of students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

d. Learning achievement

Learning achievement in this study refers to students' learning outcomes in English as reflected in their performance in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It was measured using scores from the listening, speaking, reading, and writing tests administered during the implementation of the local culture-based English e-book.

1.11 Novelty of the Research

This study addresses gaps in previous research by integrating local cultural values, particularly Tri Hita Karana (THK) and *Batang Haring*, into a Genre-Based English e-book for students at IAHN-TP Palangka Raya. Its novelty lies in contextualizing genre-based English materials within a Hindu-based educational setting by incorporating local wisdom. Learning English is connected to the values of Parahyangan (*Kayu Gambalang Nyahu*), Pawongan (*Kayu*

Pampang Seribu), and *Palemahan (Kayu Erang Tingang)*, allowing students to develop language skills while engaging with spiritual, social, and environmental values.

Although the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) has been widely applied in English Language Teaching, this study adapts it specifically for the Hindu Education Department. The developed materials enable students to learn English through texts centered on Hindu and Dayak cultural themes, providing a learning experience relevant to their educational and cultural contexts. Each genre, namely narrative, descriptive, report, recount, procedure, and exposition, is organized around these cultural themes, making the learning materials more authentic, contextualized, and meaningful.

Another contribution of this study is the integration of local cultural values, the Genre-Based Approach, and digital learning into a General English e-book developed for students in the Hindu Education Department. Rather than treating the e-book format itself as the main innovation, this study brings these elements together in a single learning resource. The e-book incorporates culturally relevant content inspired by Hindu philosophical concepts within genre-based learning activities while supporting blended and independent learning. As a result, it provides learning materials that are closely connected to students' educational and cultural context and demonstrates how local wisdom can be meaningfully integrated into General English Instruction.