Mapping the Landscape of Culturally Responsive Teaching: A Review on Bicultural Materials, Instructional Strategies, and Learning Outcome

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Abstract

This systematic literature review maps the landscape of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, with a focus on Indonesia's setting. Guided by the PRISMA framework, the review synthesizes 20 recent studies (2024-2025) to analyze the integration of bicultural materials or culturally nuanced resources, the instructional strategies employed, and the resulting learning outcomes. Findings reveal that effective CRT implementation predominantly utilizes multimodal, project-based strategies, such as comparative cultural analysis, digital storytelling, and role-play, leveraging culturally nuanced resources like local folklore, artifacts, and traditions. The synthesis demonstrates that this pedagogical approach yields a dual benefit: it significantly enhances specific English language competencies (notably vocabulary mastery, writing, and speaking skills) while concurrently fostering critical socio-affective outcomes, including strengthened cultural identity, intercultural awareness, student motivation, and critical thinking. The study presents evidence-based strategies grounded in practical application to effectively pair local content with interactive pedagogy. These findings contribute to the discourse on equitable language learning by providing a validated map of practices that support both language achievement and cultural competence. The study advances the field by proposing integrated frameworks for material selection and instructional strategy to enhance holistic learning, while underscoring the necessity for further empirical research across diverse K-12 settings to validate and adapt these approaches.

Keywords: Culturally Responsive Teaching; CRT; Bicultural Materials, EFL Instruction, Instructional Strategies.

Introduction

The landscape of Indonesian education is strategically guided by the national philosophy of education proposed by Ki Hadjar Dewantara (KHD), who envisioned education as a "garden of culture", a dynamic environment where learners' moral and intellectual growth is cultivated through the preservation and revitalization of local wisdom. This vision underscores the centrality of character and cultural values in shaping both educational content and pedagogical practice. Within this context, integrating such values into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction becomes imperative to ensure that language learning reflects Indonesia's cultural identity and educational ideals. Supporting this, Sukarno et al. (2024) emphasize that embedding local wisdom within EFL classrooms simultaneously enhances learners' English proficiency and nurtures moral integrity, aligning instructional practice with the broader national educational philosophy.

The incorporation of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) principles into Indonesia's EFL classrooms represents a transformative pedagogical shift toward sustainability and cultural inclusivity. CRT emphasizes aligning instruction with learners' sociocultural backgrounds, positioning cultural identity as a vital component of effective learning (Gay, 2018; Siregar et al., 2023). This alignment resonates deeply with KHD educational philosophy, which upholds cultural values as the foundation of national education. By situating English learning within culturally relevant frameworks, CRT transforms Indonesia's multicultural classrooms into spaces where diversity becomes an educational asset rather than a challenge. As Sukarno et al. (2024) and Walsh (2025) note, embedding local wisdom and cultural values into language learning not only strengthens national identity but also fosters global communicative competence, thus bridging local heritage with international engagement.

Within this broader vision, Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) emerges as a critical pedagogical framework for bridging cultural identity and academic achievement. CRT, as conceptualized by Gay (2018), advocates for teaching that acknowledges, respects, and utilizes students' cultural backgrounds as integral to the learning process. It is rooted in constructivist principles, emphasizing that learners actively construct knowledge based on prior cultural and social experiences. In this view, education becomes a culturally mediated process that enhances meaning-making and fosters equity.

When applied to English as a Foreign Language (EFL), CRT evolves into Culturally Responsive English Teaching (CRET), a contextualized adaptation emphasizing the integration of learners' cultural identities, local knowledge, and lived experiences into English instruction (Siregar et al., 2023; Walsh, 2025). CRET redefines English language learning as a space for empowerment, where teachers intentionally design lessons that leverage students' cultural realities as resources for linguistic and intercultural development. Through the deliberate embedding of local narratives, cultural expressions, and community practices, EFL instruction

under the CRT framework becomes not merely linguistic training but an avenue for cultural affirmation and intercultural awareness.

In practice, CRT frameworks inspire diverse pedagogical innovations that foster cultural engagement and language competence through: (1) bicultural materials or culturally nuanced resources and (2) instructional strategies. Bicultural materials explicitly bridge learners' native culture with the English-speaking world, promoting critical reflection and intercultural awareness (Garza et al., 2020; Hidayah et al., 2024; Pulverness & Tomlinson, 2003). Complementarily, instructional strategies like Project-Based Learning or PjBL (Harahap et al., 2025), provide an ideal structure for employing these materials, such as through tasks where students create English-language presentations on local cultural heritage while drawing comparisons to global practices (Zhang et al., 2023).

Potential learning outcomes of such CRT-based instruction are multifaceted. For instance, research indicates enhancements not only in linguistic competencies like vocabulary acquisition and communicative confidence but also in affective and socio-cultural domains, including increased motivation, stronger cultural identity, and improved critical thinking skills (Siregar et al., 2023; Sukarno et al., 2024). However, implementing these culturally responsive practices poses significant challenges for teachers. Key obstacles include a frequent lack of pedagogical training in CRT principles, the scarcity of readily available high-quality bicultural materials, perceived tensions between preparing for standardized tests and implementing culturally-rich curricula, and the demands of navigating multiple cultural frameworks simultaneously within diverse classrooms (Freire & Valdez, 2017; Kartini et al., 2025; Meihami, 2023). These challenges underscore a gap between the recognized potential of CRT and its consistent, effective application in teaching.

The interplay between bicultural materials or culturally nuanced resources and instructional strategies under the CRT principles are crucial for reimagining English education in Indonesia's multicultural setting. Recent studies (Siregar et al., 2023; Sukarno et al., 2024; Walsh, 2025) underline that culturally responsive EFL instruction not only strengthens English language competence, but also cultivates intercultural knowledge hence there is a growing need for a CRT-based pedagogical model that meaningfully incorporates Indonesian cultural perspectives into English learning. Such integration supports the dual mission of promoting globalism and sustaining cultural rootedness. Given these intersections and challenges, this Systematic Literature Review (SLR) seeks to explore and map the evolving landscape of CRT in EFL contexts by focusing on bicultural and culturally nuanced pedagogical resources. Specifically, this SLR aims:

1. To synthesize the specific instructional strategies employed in the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching approach, with a focus on their application alongside culturally nuanced resources or bicultural materials.
2. To map the teaching materials creation uses of culturally nuanced resources or bicultural materials documented on Culturally Responsive Teaching.

3. To identify the types of learning outcomes measured in empirical studies on Culturally Responsive Teaching involving bicultural materials and strategies.

Method

The methodological approach for this review was guided by the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework (Page et al., 2021) to ensure a systematic and reproducible process for identifying, selecting, and synthesizing relevant scholarly literature.

Article Search Strategy

A primary search was conducted using Google Scholar database, the search strategy employed a combination of keywords and Boolean operators. Key search strings included:

("culturally responsive teaching" OR "culturally relevant pedagogy") AND ("bicultural material" OR "culturally nuanced resource") AND ("EFL" OR "English as a foreign language"); and ("instructional strategy" OR "teaching method") AND ("cultural responsiveness" AND "Indonesia").

The initial search was limited to publications from 2024 to 2025 to capture the most recent studies. All retrieved citations were imported into the Zotero reference manager for deduplication and subsequent screening.

Article Selection Criteria

Studies were evaluated against predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria, detailed in Table 1, to ensure their relevance to the review's objectives. The focus was on empirical studies that explicitly addressed the intersection of instructional strategies and bicultural/culturally nuanced materials within the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) of Indonesian EFL education context.

Table 1 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Year	2024 - 2025	Published before 2024
Language	English or Bahasa	Non-English/Bahasa
Publication Type	Empirical study	Non-empirical study
Context & Focus	Studies explicitly examining Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) principles, the development/use of bicultural materials or culturally nuanced resources, and specific instructional strategies	Studies on multicultural education or general material development without a specific, articulated link to CRT theory and pratices
Subject Population	Indonesian EFL teachers and/or students. Studies with a clear implication for Indonesian EFL contexts	Studies conducted in non-Indonesian settings and higher education/university context
Outcomes	Studies reporting or discussing educational processes, material design, pedagogical strategies, and/or learning outcomes related to CRT.	Studies focusing solely on general curriculum policy, language acquisition theory without pedagogical application from cultural content.

Article Selection Process

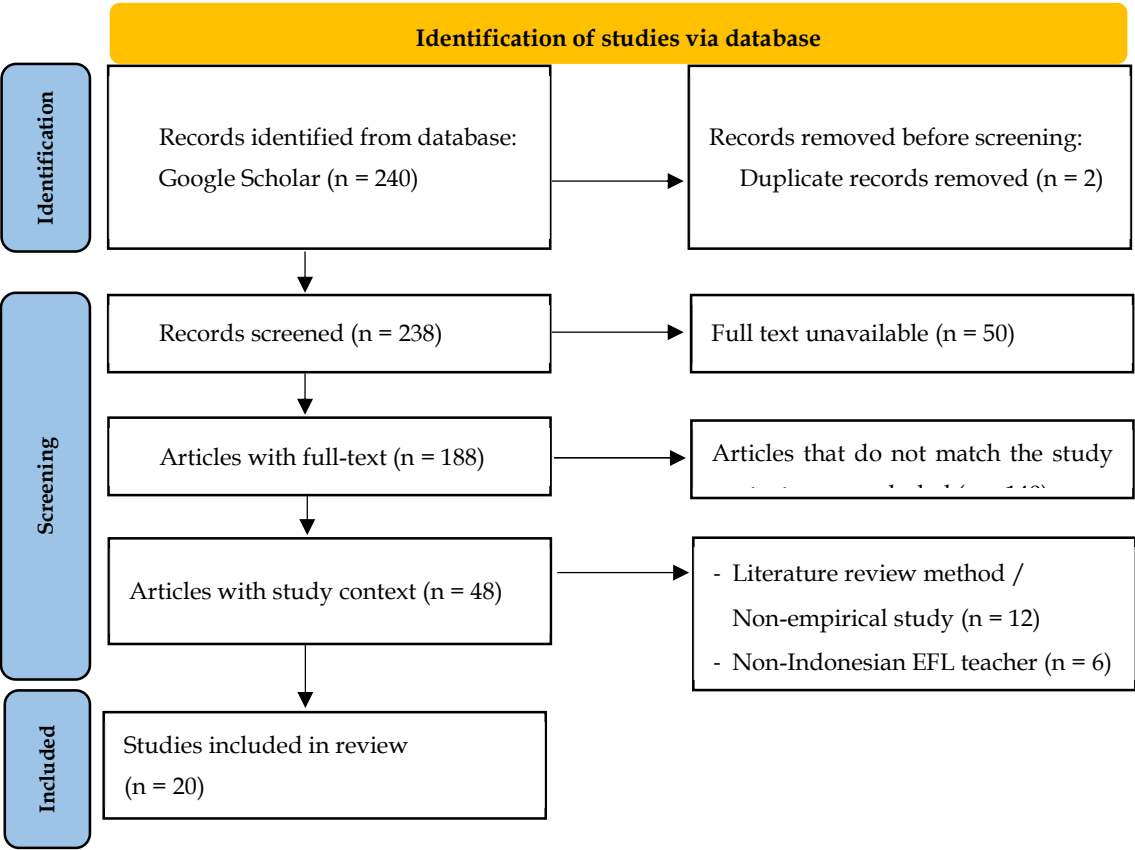The article selection process followed the PRISMA 2020 flow diagram (Figure 1), 20 studies were included in review.

Figure 1 PRISMA flow diagram of article selection (Source: PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram)

Data Collection and Data Analysis

A standardized data extraction form was developed to systematically capture relevant information from the 20 included studies. Data pertaining to instructional strategies, material creation, and learning outcomes were coded inductively. These codes were then grouped into thematic categories to identify patterns, and convergent practices, allowing for a coherent narrative synthesis that directly addresses the stated research aims.

Table 2 Data Extraction from 20 journal articles

N	Study ID	Mapping the Landscape of Culturally Responsive Teaching		Measured Learning Outcome
		Instructional Strategies	Teaching Materials	
1.	The Integration of Local Cultures in English Teaching Materials in Promoting Culturally Responsive	Project-based learning, descriptive text tasks, role-play, and cultural discussion based	Teaching materials designed by pre-service teachers integrating local cultural products (places,	Cultural awareness, engagement, speaking and writing skills, cultural sensitivity, and

	Teaching (Azhary & Fatimah, 2024)	on local content.	architecture, traditional food, dance, games), practices (customs like Tepung Tawar, Batamat Qur'an), and perspectives (folktales).	appreciation of local and diverse cultures.
2.	Developing A Culturally Responsive Reading Module For First-Grade Islamic Junior High School Students (Rahman et al., 2024)	Culturally responsive reading instruction, structured comprehension questions, critical thinking activities, contextualized learning based on Islamic values.	Reading modules with Islamic narratives, local folklore, religious themes, culturally relevant texts aligned with students' backgrounds.	Reading comprehension, student engagement, motivation, cultural and religious identity connection.
3.	Enhancing Writing Skills through Cultural Integration: Exploring the Impact of Culturally-Responsive Writing Instruction in Diverse EFL Classrooms (Sutrisno et al., 2024)	Translanguaging strategies	Multicultural texts and global literature, Culturally themed writing prompts, Digital tools (Canva, PowerPoint, videos), and Student-produced essays and narratives	Writing performance (organization, coherence, vocabulary, grammar)
4.	Developing CCU Instructional Materials Integrated with Local Cultures in Improving EFL Learners' Communicative	Cross-Cultural Understanding (CCU) instruction using comparative cultural analysis, discussion, role-play, and reflective tasks based on	Developed CCU instructional modules integrating local cultural elements (e.g., Bekelewang and Barodak traditions from	Communicative competence, speaking skills (pronunciation, fluency, accuracy), cross-cultural understanding, vocabulary

		local and Western cultures.	West Sumbawa) alongside Western cultural examples.	mastery, and intercultural sensitivity.
5.	Teachers' challenges and strategies in adapting English materials for multicultural students (Natasya & Kembaren, 2025)	Differentiated instruction, culturally relevant examples, active participation & cultural exchange, technology integration (PowerPoint, Kahoot, YouTube).	Modified textbooks with local food examples (e.g., Padang satay), local folktales, digital tools (YouTube, Kahoot, smart TV).	Student engagement, cross-cultural awareness, language proficiency, classroom participation.
6.	Exploring Culturally Responsive Teaching in Indonesian ELT: Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences (Najah et al., 2025)	Integration of local and youth culture, student-centered learning, technology-supported tasks (digital research, multimedia presentations), diagnostic assessment.	Local narratives (e.g., Roro Jongrang), regional dishes (e.g., Nasi lengko), job vacancy texts (e.g., content creator), digital platforms for student submissions.	Reading and writing comprehension, student engagement, cultural relevance perception, motivation in learning English.
7.	Multicultural and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Practice: A Visual Analysis of Indonesian EFL Textbooks (Abid et al., 2025)	Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of textbook images; visual literacy-based pedagogy; multicultural dialogue and discussion based on textbook illustrations.	Official EFL textbooks published by the Ministry of Education and Culture for junior and senior high schools; visual representations (photographs, illustrations, cartoons, infographics).	Multicultural awareness, respect for diversity, intercultural competence, civic values, social harmony, and moral imagination.
8.	Culturally Responsive English	Multiple Intelligences-	Local folklore (e.g., Legenda Timun	Student motivation,

	Teaching: Integrating Local Wisdom and Multiple Intelligences in EL Classrooms (Najib et al., 2025)	based strategies (kinesthetic, interpersonal, visual-spatial, musical, intrapersonal), storytelling, role-play, peer collaboration, reflective journaling.	Mas, Jaka Tarub), traditional arts (batik, tembang macapat), regional songs, student-created digital storytelling.	cultural identity affirmation, language engagement, self-confidence in English use.
9.	Students Perception of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in English Language Learning in East Kalimantan (Yulianti et al., 2025)	Contextual learning, cultural discussions, experiential learning.	Movies, music, novels, local texts, folklore, cultural projects, visual media.	Student perceptions, motivation, cultural understanding, emotional engagement, communication skills, self-confidence.
10.	Culturally Responsive Vocabulary Instruction through Memes: Integrating Digital Culture into EFL Classrooms in Indonesia (Utami et al., 2025)	Meme-based learning, meme analysis and creation, group discussion, reflective journaling.	Digital memes, social media content, images, multimodal texts, local cultural contexts.	Vocabulary mastery, long-term retention, student engagement, creativity, cultural awareness, pragmatic competence.
11.	Culturally Responsive Pedagogy at Primary School Level: The Implication of Teachers' Attitudes and Contributing Factors (Idaryani,	Hands-on activities, textbook-based instruction, teacher-centered methods, and occasional cultural integration (e.g., bringing local	MoEC-endorsed textbooks, pictures, realia (e.g., local fruits), and classroom visuals; limited use of technology (in-focus, videos).	Student engagement, classroom dynamics, cultural awareness, learning attention, and teachers' competency in TEYL and CRP.

2025)	fruits to class).		
12. Educators' Perspectives on Integrating South Sumatran Local Wisdom in English Language Teaching: An Ethnopedagogical Inquiry (Silva et al., 2025)	Storytelling with local folklore; Role-playing and dramatization; Use of traditional games (e.g., Congklak); Integration of cultural artifacts (e.g., Songket, Pempek); Project-based learning with cultural themes	Local legends (e.g., Pulau Kemaro); Cultural artifacts (textiles, culinary items); Digital platforms (YouTube, WhatsApp); and Student-created scripts and performances	Student engagement and participation; Cultural identity and pride; Critical thinking and discussion skills; Language comprehension and production; and Motivation and confidence
13. Integration of Culturally Responsive Teaching Approach, Local Wisdom, and Gamification in Pancasila Education to Develop Students' Multicultural Competence (Patras et al., 2025)	Gamification and Problem-Based Learning (PBL).	Learning modules based on local Sundanese wisdom (e.g., silih asih, asah, asuh), gamified elements (e.g., levels, points, badges), traditional games, folklore.	Multicultural competence (knowledge, attitudes, skills), learning motivation, student engagement, Pancasila values understanding.
14. Cultural Responsiveness and Digital Tools in Literacy Instruction: Insight from Indonesian High School Teachers (Vonti et al., 2025)	Digital tool integration, project-based learning, group discussions, reflective practice.	Culturally relevant texts, digital platforms (e.g., Storybird, Canvas), multimedia, local resources, teaching modules.	Literacy skills, motivation, engagement, critical thinking, collaboration, digital competence.
15. Politeness Strategies in EFL Classroom	Qualitative discourse analysis, teacher and	Teacher and student utterances,	Pragmatic competence, politeness

Interaction: A Pragmatic Perspective on Pedagogical Implications (Wati et al., 2025)	student reflection, interaction-based learning.	classroom interaction recordings.	functions (expressive, directive, representative), student engagement, classroom climate.
16. Project-based Learning Through a Culturally Responsive Lens: Enhancing Learners' English Literacy Skills (Harahap et al., 2025)	Project-based Learning (PjBL)	Culturally integrated teaching materials (e.g., texts on traditional houses, clothing, dances; use of Curipod and Canva for digital projects)	English literacy skills (specifically genre text writing, e.g., hortatory explanatory text)
17. Linguistic Perspectives on English Teachers' Perceptions of Culturally Responsive Teaching (Sariningsih & Adityarini, 2025)	Project-based learning, Storytelling with local cultural narratives, Differentiated learning based on cultural background, and the Integration of school routines (greetings, prayers)	Local legends and folklore, Cultural artifacts (e.g., Songket, traditional games), Student-created story maps, PowerPoint, Canva, videos, and Cultural themes in narrative texts	Engagement and participation; Critical thinking; Cultural identity awareness; Vocabulary and grammar skills; and Confidence in speaking English
18. Contextualizing ELT Materials through Local Folklore: A Case Study in a Multilingual Eastern Indonesian Classroom (Setiawan et al., 2025)	Storytelling and retelling of local folklore; Translanguaging in classroom discussion; Group work and peer collaboration; Cultural comparison activities; and	Adapted folklore texts in English; Visual aids and illustrations of local stories; Bilingual storytelling materials; Student-generated summaries and	Reading and speaking comprehension; Vocabulary acquisition; Cultural pride and identity affirmation; Engagement and participation; and Multilingual

	Project-based learning with narrative tasks	retellings	communication skills
19	The Application of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) Approach in Learning the Indonesian Language (Sukmawati et al., 2024)	Poetry musicalization projects; Group collaboration and discussion; Cultural integration in text development; Differentiated instruction based on cultural background; and Use of multimedia in teaching	Poetry with cultural themes; YouTube videos of poetry musicalization; PowerPoint presentations with cultural content; and Student-created musicalization videos	Student activity and engagement; Understanding of poetry and cultural values; Creative expression and collaboration; Motivation and interest in learning; and Critical thinking and moral reasoning
20	Culturally Responsive Teaching Approach in Differentiated Learning on Students' Learning Interests and Learning Outcomes (Harmilawati et al., 2024)	Differentiated Instruction; tailored activities based on students' readiness, interests, and cultural backgrounds.	English tasks aligned with students' cultural contexts.	Learning interest, learning outcomes (English proficiency), academic achievement, and student engagement.

Results and Discussion

Synthesis of the Specific Instructional Strategies Employed in the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching with Culturally Nuanced Resources or Bicultural Materials

Based on the synthesis of the instructional strategies documented in the provided literature, the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) with culturally nuanced or bicultural materials primarily employs multimodal and interactive pedagogical approaches that bridge local and global cultural contexts. These strategies frequently integrate project-based learning (PjBL) as a central framework, as seen in studies by Azhary & Fatimah (2024), Silva et al. (2025), Harahap et al. (2025), Sariningsih & Adityarini (2025), and Setiawan et al. (2025). Within this framework, educators embed activities such as role-play, storytelling

using local folklore, and comparative cultural analysis to facilitate deeper engagement and critical reflection. For instance, Aristia et al. (2025) and Setiawan et al. (2025) explicitly utilize comparative tasks between local and Western cultures, while Silva et al. (2025) and Sariningsih & Adityarini (2025) incorporate tangible cultural artifacts and school-based cultural routines. These methods collectively emphasize experiential and contextualized learning, allowing students to actively construct meaning through culturally relevant content (Rahman et al., 2024; Yulianti et al., 2025).

Moreover, the synthesis reveals a strong emphasis on differentiated and technology-enhanced instruction tailored to students' diverse cultural backgrounds and intelligences. Scholars such as Natasya & Kembaren (2025), Harmilawati et al. (2024), and Najib et al. (2025) advocate for instruction that adapts to learners' readiness, interests, and multiple intelligences through culturally relevant examples, peer collaboration, and reflective journaling. Concurrently, digital tools and multimedia resources, including Kahoot, YouTube, digital research platforms, and meme-based activities, are widely integrated to support interactive and student-centered learning (Najah et al., 2025; Natasya & Kembaren, 2025; Utami et al., 2025; Vonti et al., 2025). Additionally, critical literacy and discourse-oriented approaches are employed to analyze cultural representations, as demonstrated by Abid et al. (2025) through Critical Discourse Analysis of textbook images and by Wati et al. (2025) through qualitative discourse analysis. These strategies collectively foster an inclusive classroom environment where cultural dialogue, critical thinking, and collaborative inquiry are systematically nurtured through both traditional and innovative instructional means. The following figure showing the distribution of Instructional Strategies across the 20 studies:
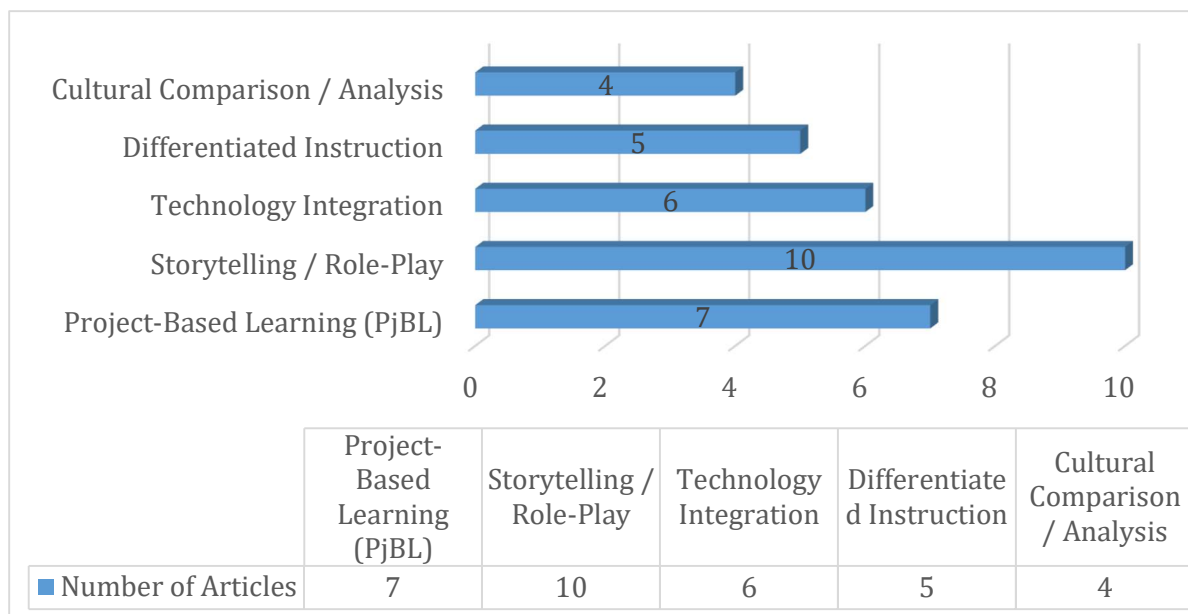

	Project-Based Learning (PjBL)	Storytelling / Role-Play	Technology Integration	Differentiated Instruction	Cultural Comparison / Analysis
■ Number of Articles	7	10	6	5	4

Figure 2. Instructional strategies (by occurrence in studies)

The Landscape of Teaching Materials of Culturally Nuanced Resources or Bicultural Materials Documented on Culturally Responsive Teaching

Based on the synthesis of the documented teaching materials, the landscape of culturally nuanced and bicultural resources in Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) practices is characterized by a rich integration of local cultural content with both traditional and digital pedagogical tools. A prominent trend across numerous studies is the deliberate embedding of indigenous elements such as local folklore (e.g., Roro Jonggrang, Timun Mas), traditional practices (e.g., Tepung Tawar, Batamat Qur'an), regional artifacts (e.g., batik, Songket textiles), and local culinary examples (e.g., Nasi lengko, Padang satay) into English language teaching modules and textbooks (Azhary & Fatimah, 2024; Najib et al., 2025; Natasya & Kembaren, 2025; Sariningsih & Adityarini, 2025). These materials often serve a dual purpose: they function as bicultural bridges by juxtaposing local traditions with Western cultural examples or global literature, as seen in modules that integrate West Sumbawa traditions like Bekelewang with Western counterparts (Aristia et al., 2025; Sutrisno et al., 2024). This approach not only validates students' cultural identities but also expands their intercultural awareness, moving beyond the monocultural focus often found in standard, ministry-endorsed textbooks (Abid et al., 2025; Idaryani, 2025).

Furthermore, the pedagogical delivery of these bicultural materials increasingly leverages digital and multimodal platforms to enhance engagement and student agency. Digital tools such as Canva, PowerPoint, YouTube, Kahoot, and Storybird are commonly used to create and present culturally themed content, including student-produced essays, digital storytelling, musicalized poetry videos, and multimodal memes (Sukmawati et al., 2024; Sutrisno et al., 2024; Utami et al., 2025; Vonti et al., 2025). This digital integration facilitates interactive and creative learning, allowing students to become co-creators of cultural knowledge, as evidenced in tasks involving student-created scripts, performances, and story maps (Harahap et al., 2025; Sariningsih & Adityarini, 2025; Silva et al., 2025). Additionally, some studies incorporate gamified elements and traditional games based on local wisdom (e.g., Sundanese silih asih, asah, asuh), further rooting the learning process in culturally relevant frameworks (Patras et al., 2025). Collectively, these documented practices illustrate a dynamic and evolving landscape where culturally responsive teaching materials are not merely static texts but are actively constructed, digitally enriched, and student-centered resources designed to foster both cultural pride and linguistic competence. The following figure showing the distribution of Teaching Materials across the 20 studies:
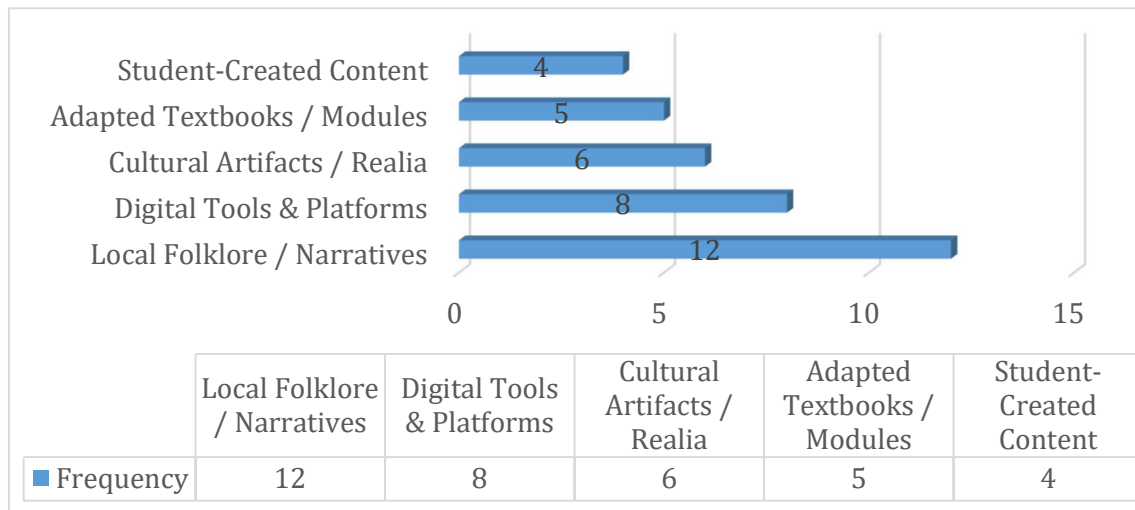
Figure 3. Teaching materials (by occurrence in studies)

Measured Learning Outcomes in Culturally Responsive Teaching with Teaching Materials of Culturally Nuanced Resources or Bicultural Materials

Culturally responsive teaching utilizing culturally nuanced or bicultural materials has been shown to positively impact a range of English language-specific competencies. Multiple studies report significant improvements in writing performance, particularly in terms of organization, coherence, vocabulary, and grammar (Harahap et al., 2025; Sutrisno et al., 2024). Furthermore, enhanced vocabulary mastery and long-term retention are commonly observed outcomes (Setiawan et al., 2025; Utami et al., 2025). Speaking skills, including pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and overall communicative competence, also show marked development (Aristia et al., 2025; Sariningsih & Adityarini, 2025). Gains in reading comprehension and broader literacy skills are similarly noted, often linked to increased student engagement with culturally relevant texts (Harmilawati et al., 2024; Najah et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2024; Vonti et al., 2025).

As illustrated in Figure 1, an analysis of the selected literature shows the following frequency of focus on specific language learning outcomes: reading comprehension (3 articles), speaking skills (4 articles), vocabulary mastery (5 articles), and writing performance (4 articles). Notably, when examining specific language features, vocabulary mastery emerged as the most frequently investigated outcome, being central to five articles.
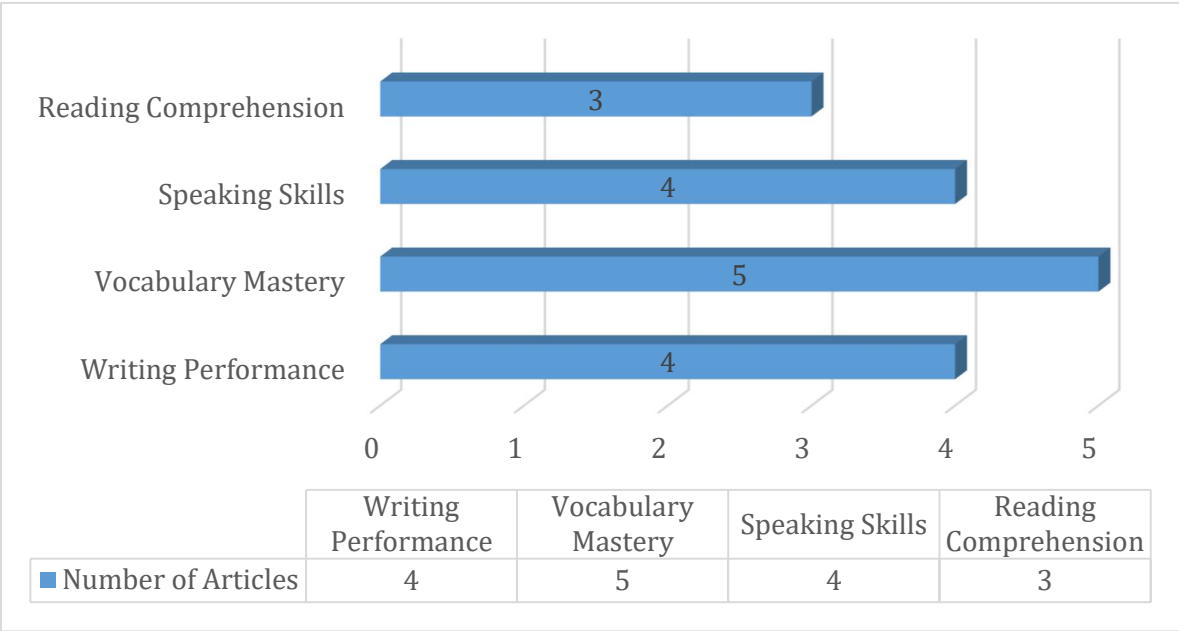
Figure 4 English language-specific competencies

The analysis of learning outcomes in the reviewed literature reveals a detailed focus across specific language domains. To synthesize these findings systematically, the following table categorizes the primary learning outcomes, delineating the specific skills and competencies investigated within each broader category, such as writing performance, vocabulary mastery, speaking skills, and reading comprehension.

Table 3 English language-specific competencies

Broad Learning Outcome Category	Specific Skills / Competencies Investigated
Writing Performance	- Organization - Coherence & Cohesion - Vocabulary Use (in context) - Grammatical Accuracy & Range
Vocabulary Mastery	- Breadth (Size) of Vocabulary - Depth (Knowledge of form, meaning, use) - Productive Use (in speaking/writing) - Receptive Knowledge (in reading/listening)
Speaking Skills	- Pronunciation & Intelligibility - Fluency - Accuracy (Grammatical, Lexical) - Overall Communicative Competence

Reading Comprehension & Literacy	- Comprehension of Main Ideas & Details
	- Inference & Critical Thinking
	- Engagement with Culturally Relevant Texts
	- Broader Literacy Development

Beyond English learning outcome, this pedagogical approach strongly promotes affective, socio-cultural, and civic learning outcomes. A primary and recurrent finding across research is the significant enhancement of cultural awareness, sensitivity, and cross-cultural understanding (Aristia et al., 2025; Azhary & Fatimah, 2024; Idaryani, 2025; Natasya & Kembaren, 2025). This extends to the development of intercultural or multicultural competence, encompassing respectful attitudes toward diversity, relevant skills, and a sense of social harmony (Abid et al., 2025; Patras et al., 2025). Importantly, these materials often strengthen students' cultural and religious identity, fostering pride and affirmation (Najib et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2024; Setiawan et al., 2025; Silva et al., 2025). These outcomes are frequently mediated and amplified by notable increases in student motivation, engagement, participation, and self-confidence in using English (Silva et al., 2025; Sukmawati et al., 2024; Yulianti et al., 2025). Additionally, studies document the fostering of critical thinking, collaboration, and moral reasoning through engagement with culturally rich content (Sukmawati et al., 2024; Vonti et al., 2025).

Conclusion

Based on the synthesis of the reviewed literature, this study concludes that Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) implemented with culturally nuanced or bicultural materials constitutes an effective pedagogical paradigm. The research maps a coherent landscape where interactive, project-based strategies, such as comparative cultural analysis, storytelling, and technology-enhanced tasks, leverage locally embedded content (e.g., folklore, artifacts, traditions) to create meaningful learning bridges. The measured outcomes consistently demonstrate a dual impact: significant gains in specific English language competencies (particularly vocabulary mastery, writing, and speaking skills) are achieved alongside foundational socio-affective development, including enhanced cultural identity, intercultural awareness, motivation, and critical thinking.

However, it is critical to avoid overgeneralization from these findings. The research is limited by its reliance on a selected corpus of literature, which may not capture the full spectrum of challenges or unsuccessful implementations of CRT. Furthermore, the long-term sustainability and transferability of these outcomes across different educational systems and demographic groups require further investigation.

In suggestion, to build upon this synthesis, the findings of this review offer recommendations for designing future empirical research on the CRT approach.

This study presents evidence-based strategies grounded in practical application to effectively integrate bicultural materials with multimodal instructional strategies, such as project-based learning, digital storytelling, and comparative analysis, to target a holistic range of learning outcomes. These findings contribute to the discourse on equitable language pedagogy by providing a validated map of practices that concurrently develop language skills and intercultural competence. Therefore, a primary recommendation for further studies is to empirically test and adapt this integrated concept across primary (SD), junior high (SMP), and senior high school (SMA) levels.

Future research should investigate how the strategic pairing of specific bicultural materials (e.g., local folktales for younger learners, critical discourse analysis of media for older students) with developmentally appropriate instructional strategies can meet the distinct learning needs and outcome expectations at each educational stage. The study advances the field by proposing integrated frameworks for material selection and pedagogical action to enhance both academic achievement and cultural identity, while underscoring the necessity for diverse K-12 settings to validate and refine these approaches in Indonesian EFL context.

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