

An Analysis of Character Values in *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* Folklores of Manggarai People in Manggarai Language

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article history	This research entitled "An Analysis of Character Values in <i>Empo Poti Mese</i> and <i>Lanur Agu Timung Te'e</i> Folklores of Manggarai People in Manggarai Language", explores the character values embedded in two Manggarai folktales: <i>Empo Poti Mese</i> and <i>Lanur Agu Timung Te'e</i> . The research aims to identify the character values and analyze the comparison of character values contained in the folktales <i>Empo Poti Mese</i> and <i>Lanur Agu Timung Te'e</i> . This research uses a descriptive qualitative method with text analysis as the main approach. Text analysis is conducted to identify and interpret the character values contained in the folktales <i>Empo Poti Mese</i> and <i>Lanur Agu Timung Te'e</i> . The analysis reveals that both folktales reflect various character values deeply rooted in the cultural context of the Manggarai people, such as intelligence, justice, cooperation, perseverance, appreciation of beauty and cultural preservation. The study also finds that <i>Empo Poti Mese</i> emphasizes the value of courage, while <i>Lanur Agu Timung Te'e</i> highlights the values of wisdom and loyalty. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the cultural significance of Manggarai folktales and their role in shaping character values.
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1. Introduction

Indonesia is a nation celebrated for its vast cultural diversity, with oral literature comprising folklore disseminated across generations serving as a cornerstone of its societal identity. In the Manggarai Regency of East Nusa Tenggara, oral tradition remains a vital vessel for noble values and life guidance. Specifically, in Peso Village, Central Manggarai, folklores such as *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* are not merely historical relics but are essential components of the community's character formation.

Endrasara (2018) defines oral literature as a collection of aesthetic works containing cultural and social history elements. However, despite their intrinsic value, these Manggarai folklores face a modern crisis: the younger generation's dwindling interest in traditional

narratives in favor of contemporary entertainment, leading to a breakdown in the transmission of these essential noble values.

Recent scholarly debates have highlighted the significance of Manggarai folklore. Sumitri (2023) demonstrated that folklore in East Manggarai plays a critical role in preserving local heritage and social functions. Furthermore, Sumitri, Gunartha, and Sudarthy (2025) explored the Du Wangka Rana Mese folklore as a representation of local wisdom. While these studies establish the importance of folklore in the Manggarai region, they largely focus on general functions and broad local wisdom. There is a notable academic gap regarding the specific character values—moral, religious, social, and cultural—embedded within the Manggarai-language narratives of *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e*.

The scientific value of this manuscript lies in its focus on these two specific folklores which have not been previously analyzed for their pedagogical potential. This research moves beyond merely identifying "missing links" by offering a positive contribution to both cultural preservation and English language education (ELE). By analyzing these stories in their native Manggarai language, this study provides a foundation for how local narratives can be integrated as authentic materials for character-based language education.

The urgency of this research is driven by the rapid erosion of local identity among Manggarai youth. Without a systematic analysis of these character values, the pedagogical benefits of *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* remain untapped. Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to analyze and describe the specific character values contained within the folklores of *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e*. Specifically, this research addresses the following problems: 1) What are character values contained in the Manggarai folk tales "*Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e*"? and 2) What values are similar and different in both folklores?.

2. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative research design with a descriptive-analytical method to explore and interpret the character values embedded in Manggarai folklore. Following the framework proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), this qualitative approach was selected to provide an in-depth, systematic, and objective understanding of the social phenomena and cultural meanings within the texts. The study specifically focuses on a comparative content analysis of two prominent Manggarai folklores: *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e*.

By utilizing the content analysis perspective of Mayring (2014) and Creswell (2014), the researcher examined the narratives to uncover latent meanings related to character education, such as intelligence, cooperation, justice, courage, and wisdom.

The data for this research were categorized into primary and secondary sources. The primary data consisted of the Manggarai-language texts of the selected folklores. The text for *Empo Poti Mese* was sourced from the documented version on the Eni-jola cultural blog (2012), while the text for *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* was obtained from the book "Manggarai Grannie's Tales Tombo Turuk Dise Empo" (2017) by Su et al. These sources were selected for their linguistic authenticity and relevance to the Manggarai oral tradition. Secondary data included academic journal articles, such as those by Ndun (2020), and relevant digital archives from Scribd and Kopipait (2017) to provide contextual support and a broader understanding of the values inherent in these stories.

The primary instrument of this research was the researcher themselves (human instrument), supported by a structured data analysis sheet. This sheet was designed to categorize character values into specific domains, including moral, social, and cultural values. Each category was accompanied by specific indicators to ensure a systematic identification process. The analysis sheet featured dedicated columns for textual evidence, categorization codes, and researcher notes to maintain a transparent and comprehensive record of the analytical process.

The research followed a chronological procedure beginning with document analysis. The researcher performed an intensive reading of the folklore texts to identify linguistic cues and narrative segments reflecting character values such as respect, responsibility, honesty, tolerance, and justice.

For the data analysis, the study followed a two-stage process:

1. Content Analysis: The researcher conducted an in-depth examination of the story plots, character dialogues, and outcomes to uncover the embedded messages and noble values within the narratives.
2. Coding: The researcher applied a systematic coding system to facilitate rigorous analysis and comparison. Each datum was assigned a unique reference code based on its location within the text and its thematic category. For example, the code "P1K2" was used to mark data found in Paragraph 1, Sentences 2. This local coding process enabled the researcher to systematically

and accurately identify recurring patterns and themes in both folktales, ensuring that each categorized character value could be traced back to its original source in accordance with the established theoretical framework.

3. Research Findings and Discussion

Research Findings

The data analysis reveals sixteen (16) character values embedded in the Manggarai folklores *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e*. These values serve as a medium for moral education, reflecting the cultural identity and local wisdom of the Manggarai people. The distribution, similarities, and differences of these values are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. The Comparison of Character Values in Manggarai Folklores

No.	Character Values	Empo Poti Mese	Lanur Agu Timung Te'e	Status
1	Intelligence	✓	✓	Similarity
2	Perseverance	✓	✓	Similarity
3	Cooperation	✓	✓	Similarity
4	Justice	✓	✓	Similarity
5	Appreciation of Beauty	✓	✓	Similarity
6	Cultural Preservation	✓	✓	Similarity
7	Courage	✓	-	Difference
8	Wisdom	-	✓	Difference
9	Loyalty	-	✓	Difference
10	Creativity	-	✓	Difference

1. Character Values in *Empo Poti Mese*

The folklore of *Empo Poti Mese* emphasizes the communal struggle against a physical threat through several key values:

1. Courage: *Lanur* and *Timung Te'e* face the giant calmly. "...ise ita ata weki mese (caron lise empo poti mese)". They remain clear-headed, seeking solutions rather than showing excessive fear.
2. Intelligence: *Empo Poti Mese* demonstrates strategic thinking by waiting on a rock (*lonto one lobo watu mese*), while the protagonists respond with cleverness to overcome him.
3. Cooperation: The village unity is shown during harvest and trap-setting. "...ngo reje taung lise ata one mai beo hitu kudu cama-cama..."
4. Justice: Evident when the giant falls into the trap, symbolizing that evil actions meet fair consequences (*tu'a agu geté*).

2. Character Values in *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e*

This story focuses on overcoming deception through intellectual and emotional strength:

1. Intelligence: *Timung Te'e* showcases emotional intelligence by calming *Lanur*'s anger. "...paka kawé salang kudu haéng kodé mésé..." (We must find a way to catch the big monkey).
2. Perseverance: Despite their crops being stolen (*hang le kodé situ*), they replant their crops, demonstrating the Manggarai concept of *teing* (steadfastness).
3. Creativity: *Timung Te'e* devises unique strategies to trap the monkeys, reflecting an appreciation for innovative problem-solving.

3. Analysis of Similarities and Differences

Based on Table 1, the comparison provides the following insights:

1. Similarities: Both folklores share core values: Intelligence, Perseverance, Cooperation, and Justice. These reflect the Manggarai worldview where wisdom (*tuka agu geté*) and solidarity (*dalu agu ata one golo*) are essential for survival and harmony.
2. Differences: The difference lies in the nature of bravery. *Empo Poti Mese* highlights explicit courage in facing physical danger (a giant), whereas *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* emphasizes implicit courage, such as patience, loyalty, and wisdom in facing intellectual deceit (the monkey *Kodé Seket*).

Character Values Found in folk tales Empo Poti Mese and Lanur Agu***Timung Te'e***

Based on the results of data analysis, there are sixteen (16) character values found in the folktales “*Empo Poti Mese*” and “*Lanur Agu Timung Te'e*.” These character values reflect the moral and educational messages contained in the stories, as well as represent the cultural identity and local wisdom of the Manggarai people.

The analysis shows that the folktale *Empo Poti Mese* contains the following character values: (1) courage, (2) intelligence, (3) cooperation, (4) perseverance, (5) justice, (6) appreciation of beauty and (7) cultural preservation. Meanwhile, the folktale *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* contains: (1) intelligence, (2) perseverance, (3) cooperation, (4) justice, (5) wisdom, (6) loyalty, (7) creativity, (8) appreciation of beauty and (9) cultural preservation.

Overall, these sixteen values illustrate the moral messages conveyed in both folktales. They emphasize important aspects of character education such as bravery, wisdom, preservation, justice, creative, respect for traditions and culture, which are deeply rooted in Manggarai society.

Similarities in the character values of both folk tales

The folktales *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* possess important character values in the life of the Manggarai community. Previous research by Sumitri (2023) shows that folktales play a significant role in the life of the Manggarai Timur community and serve as a means of preserving cultural heritage and local values. However, this study did not specifically examine the character values in folktales. Another study by Sumitri, Gunartha, and Sudarhi (2025) indicates that folktales can represent Manggarai local wisdom and have profound meaning in community life. However, this study did not specifically examine the character values in the folktales of *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e*.

In the context of folklore theory, folktales can be considered as a "mirror" of community values and norms (Dundes, 1980). Therefore, analyzing the character values in the folktales of *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* can provide insight into the values cherished by the Manggarai community. Additionally, character education theory

(Lickona, 1991) emphasizes the importance of using folktales as a means of teaching positive values to young generations.

This research aims to fill the knowledge gap regarding the character values in the folktales of *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e*. By analyzing the character values in these folktales, this study can contribute to the understanding of character values in Manggarai folktales and how folktales can be used as an effective means of teaching positive values to young generations and how these values can be applied in everyday life.

Differences in the Character Values of both folk tales

The folktales *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* differ in their emphasis on character values, types of conflict, and ways of conveying moral messages. *Empo Poti Mese* emphasizes bravery, perseverance, and communal solidarity, while *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* focuses more on wisdom, loyalty, and creativity. This difference highlights the richness and diversity of Manggarai oral traditions in conveying moral and cultural teachings. These two stories complement each other and reflect the balance between physical strength, moral intelligence, and communal harmony, which is central to the Manggarai worldview.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that Manggarai folklores, specifically *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e*, serve as sophisticated vessels for character education. While previous studies by Sumitri (2023) and Sumitri et al. (2025) emphasized the general social functions and local wisdom of Manggarai folklore, this research specifically identifies sixteen distinct character values that provide a practical framework for moral development. The core values shared by both narratives Intelligence, Perseverance, Cooperation, and Justice reveal a consistent Manggarai worldview that prioritizes intellectual and communal harmony over mere brute force.

The emergence of Intelligence (*Tuka agu geté*) as a dominant value in both stories highlights a significant pedagogical implication. In the context of English Language Education (ELE), these stories can move beyond simple reading comprehension materials. They offer "local wit" scenarios that can be used for critical thinking activities in the classroom. By analyzing how *Timung Te'e* outsmarts *Kodé Seket* or how *Lanur* traps the giant, students are not only learning language structures but also internalizing problem-solving strategies rooted in their own culture. This aligns with the necessity of integrating

culturally responsive pedagogy in modern language teaching to prevent the erosion of identity among the younger generation. Furthermore, the differences identified where *Empo Poti Mese* focuses on explicit bravery and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* on implicit wisdom and loyalty offer a balanced moral education. This duality addresses the research problem regarding the lack of noble character application among youth. The findings suggest that character is multifaceted; it involves the courage to defend the community and the patience to navigate deceit. The researcher argues that these folklores are essential "moral mirrors." Their inclusion in the English curriculum provides authentic, locally-situated materials that make character education more relatable and less abstract for students in the Manggarai region.

In terms of scientific contribution, this study moves beyond "filling a gap" by justifying that oral literature is a dynamic educational tool, not a static relic. The preservation of these stories through document analysis and character categorization provides a structured resource for educators to develop character-based language modules. However, this study is limited to textual analysis. Future research is encouraged to conduct empirical studies on the actual implementation of these folklores as teaching materials in classroom settings to measure their effectiveness in improving students' moral engagement and language proficiency.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that the Manggarai folklores *Empo Poti Mese* and *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* contain sixteen (16) character values categorized into six essential aspects: moral, social, religious, cultural, educational, and aesthetic values. The analysis identifies seven values in *Empo Poti Mese* and nine values in *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e*, with both stories sharing fundamental similarities in promoting intelligence, perseverance, cooperation, justice, appreciation of beauty, and cultural preservation. These similarities highlight the importance of strategic problem-solving and communal solidarity within the Manggarai worldview. Furthermore, the study identifies unique distinctive values; *Empo Poti Mese* specifically emphasizes explicit courage in facing physical threats, while *Lanur Agu Timung Te'e* underscores the significance of wisdom and loyalty in navigating moral and intellectual challenges. Collectively, these findings reflect the deep-rooted ethical principles of Manggarai culture, suggesting that these folklores are not only vital cultural heritage but also

valuable pedagogical instruments for instilling positive character and noble values in the younger generation.

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