

RECONSTRUCTION OF MALAY TEACHING VALUES IN FOLKLORE OF RIAU PROVINCE BASED ON DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan nilai-nilai budaya Melayu yang terdapat dalam cerita rakyat yang dianalisis berdasarkan konsep Tunjuk Ajar Melayu menurut Tenas Effendy. Fokus kajian meliputi nilai religius, kerja keras, tanggung jawab, kasih sayang, kemandirian, tahu diri, pemurah, ikhlas, serta rasa syukur. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik analisis isi. Data berupa kutipan-kutipan naratif dan dialog tokoh yang mengandung ajaran moral dan budaya Melayu, kemudian dianalisis dengan mengaitkannya pada prinsip-prinsip Tunjuk Ajar Melayu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tokoh-tokoh dalam cerita memperlihatkan sikap yang selaras dengan nilai luhur masyarakat Melayu, seperti bekerja keras mencari nafkah, mengajar tanpa pamrih, bertanggung jawab terhadap keluarga, menyayangi sesama, bersikap pemurah, serta mensyukuri nikmat Allah. Nilai-nilai tersebut tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai pedoman perilaku individu, tetapi juga sebagai landasan pembentukan karakter masyarakat yang beradab, religius, dan berakhlak mulia.

Kata kunci: cerita rakyat, tunjuk ajar melayu, nilai budaya melayu

Abstract

This study aims to describe the Malay cultural values found in folk tales analyzed based on the concept of Tunjuk Ajar Melayu according to Tenas Effendy. The focus of the study includes religious values, hard work, responsibility, compassion, independence, self-awareness, generosity, sincerity, and gratitude. The method used is descriptive qualitative with content analysis techniques. The data consists of narrative quotations and character dialogues that contain Malay moral and cultural teachings, which are then analyzed by relating them to the principles of Tunjuk Ajar Melayu. The results of the study show that the characters in the stories display attitudes that are in line with the noble values of Malay society, such as working hard to earn a living, teaching selflessly, being responsible for the family, loving others, being generous, and being grateful for God's blessings. These values not only serve as guidelines for individual behavior, but also as the foundation for the formation of a civilized, religious, and noble society.

Keywords: folktales, malay teachings, malay cultural values

1. INTRODUCTION

Efforts to preserve Malay culture need to be directed toward students as the younger generation who play a strategic role in ensuring the sustainability of regional culture. Cultural value education functions not only as an introduction to identity but also as a means of shaping character and life attitudes (Shomary et al., 2014; Erni et al., 2018). In this regard, literature plays a crucial role because it is capable

of conveying life values in a contextual and meaningful manner. Dewi (2024) explains that literary works used in education can serve as an effective medium for instilling moral and social values through communicative and easily comprehensible language.

Folklore presented as reading material for students represents a form of educational literature with significant potential for transmitting cultural values. Mastuinda et al.

(2025) state that packaging folklore into reading books functions to broaden young generations' access to their local wisdom. Through folklore, students not only gain entertainment but also develop an understanding of norms, values, and worldviews of the communities from which the stories originate. Thus, folklore serves as an indirect yet sustainable medium for the transmission of cultural values.

One of the Malay cultural value systems rich in life teachings is *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* formulated by Tenas Effendy. *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* contains twenty-nine value principles encompassing aspects of faith, morality, social conduct, and ethics as guidelines for Malay society. Alber (2017) emphasizes that Tenas Effendy's teachings do not merely stress manners and politeness but also promote responsibility, compassion, and obedience to God. Therefore, *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* is highly relevant as a value framework for analyzing the content of folklore used as student reading material (Erni & Herwandi, 2018; Marlina, 2019; Almahfuz et al., 2022).

The development of digital technology has transformed the way society accesses and appreciates traditional culture, including folklore that has traditionally been transmitted orally. In the disruptive era, the digitalization of cultural heritage has proven capable of expanding the reach of local cultural values while maintaining the sustainability of traditional knowledge through interactive and multimedia platforms (Febrianto et al., 2025). Integrating cultural narratives into digital media can facilitate the preservation of local wisdom while simultaneously attracting younger generations who are more familiar with technology, ensuring that cultural values are not lost amid rapid modernization. Therefore, the digital-based reconstruction of *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* values represents a strategic step in adapting Malay cultural teachings to remain relevant, widely accessible, and effectively disseminated among

increasingly diverse digital generations (Firzal, 2019; Roziah, 2023; Hannah & Junior, 2025).

Previous studies discussing Malay culture, children's literacy, and *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* provide an essential foundation for this research. Alber (2017) examined the values of *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* as a basis for character formation in Malay society in Riau, emphasizing aspects of faith, responsibility, politeness, and compassion as formulated by Tenas Effendy; however, the study remained theoretical and did not relate these values to literary media, particularly folklore. Mukhlis et al. (2020) developed learning media based on *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* values but did not conduct textual analysis of literary works. Sofiani and Sugiarto (2022) mapped Malay cultural values in manuscripts authored by Tenas Effendy without linking them to student literacy or folklore texts. Furthermore, Saputra et al. (2025) investigated the influence of Malay cultural values on elementary school students' moral behavior without positioning literary works as a medium of value transmission, while Mastuinda et al. (2025) focused on developing folklore books based on local culture without specifically analyzing *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* values through in-depth content analysis. Based on this review, it can be concluded that studies specifically mapping the values of *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* in folklore texts from various regencies in Riau are still limited. Therefore, this research offers novelty by concentrating on a comprehensive and cross-regional mapping of *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* values in folklore texts used as student reading materials.

This study focuses on identifying and describing the values of *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* in folklore from Riau Province based on the twenty-nine principles formulated by Tenas Effendy. The analysis is limited to the textual examination of the stories and does not include reader reception. These values are traced both explicitly through characters' actions and dialogues and implicitly through plot development, setting, and embedded

moral messages. Based on this focus, the research addresses the following questions: What *Tunjuk*

Ajar Melayu values are present in folklore from Riau Province, and how are these values represented in the narrative texts? Accordingly, the objective of this study is to identify and describe the *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* values appearing in Riau folklore and to reveal how these values are presented through intrinsic narrative elements such as characters, plot, dialogue, and events, thereby providing a deeper understanding of the role of folklore as a medium for transmitting Malay cultural values.

2. METHOD

A qualitative approach was employed in this study using the content analysis method. The analysis was directed at uncovering the values of *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* as formulated by Tenas Effendy through intrinsic elements of the stories, such as characters, plot, dialogue, and events. The data sources consisted of folktales digitally published by the Balai Bahasa Provinsi Riau through the SEMBARI program. From the 28 available titles, ten stories were selected, each representing one regency/city in Riau Province to ensure balanced regional representation. The research data encompassed all linguistic units within the texts, including dialogues, narrations, words, and sentences containing moral, ethical, social, and religious values of Malay society.

Data were collected through reading and note-taking techniques using a hermeneutic approach to interpret both explicit and implicit meanings in the texts. The data analysis process was carried out systematically through several stages: unitization (determining units of analysis in the form of text segments containing *Tunjuk*

Ajar Melayu values), sampling (selecting stories as data sources), coding (assigning codes based on value categories such as faith, ethics, social conduct, and responsibility), reducing (filtering data relevant to the research focus), and inference (drawing conclusions regarding the representation of values in the texts). Through these stages, the study aims to descriptively reveal how the values of *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* are presented and embodied in the folktales of Riau Province.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are nine folktale books that serve as the objects of this study, all of which were published in 2021, with varying numbers of pages. Book 1, entitled *Asal Mula Desa Gajah Sakti* by Andi Mulya, originates from Bengkalis Regency and consists of 36 pages. Book 2, entitled *Bujang Manja* by Agus DS, originates from Dumai City and contains 32 pages. Book 3, entitled *Legenda Umbut Muda* by Sugiarti, comes from Siak Regency and consists of 24 pages. Book 4, entitled *Daerah itu Bernama Sikijang Mati* by Fitri Mayani, S.S., originates from Pelalawan Regency and contains 36 pages.

Book 5, entitled *Puti Pitopang* by Afrinaldi, comes from Kampar Regency and consists of 31 pages. Book 6, entitled *Selendang Delima* by Isral Fauzana, originates from Rokan Hilir Regency and contains 48 pages. Book 7, entitled *Dubalang Alam* by Nur Atika, comes from Rokan Hulu Regency and consists of 40 pages. Book 8, entitled *Asal Usul Ikan Patin* by Andi Mulya, originates from Indragiri Hulu Regency and contains 36 pages. Finally, Book 9, entitled *Asal Mula Desa Bedari* by Darmaisyah, comes from Indragiri Hilir Regency and consists of 36 .

Table 1. Results of the Analysis of Tunjuk Ajar Melayu Values in Folklore

No	Malay Moral Teachings Values	Book									Total amount
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
1	<i>Ketakwaan kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa</i>	3	2	1	7	0	1	7	5	1	27
2	<i>Ketaatan kepada ibu dan bapak</i>	0	2	0	0	3	2	0	1	3	11
3	<i>Ketaatan kepada pemimpin</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
4	<i>Persatuan, gotong royong, dan tenggang rasa</i>	1	2	0	3	4	0	1	0	3	14
5	<i>Keadilan dan kebenaran</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
6	<i>Keutamaan menuntut ilmu pengetahuan</i>	1	0	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	6
7	<i>Ikhlas dan rela berkorban</i>	0	1	1	0	1	0	3	2	0	8
8.	<i>Kerja keras, rajin, dan tekun</i>	0	2	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	9
9	<i>Sikap mandiri dan percaya diri</i>	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
10	<i>Bertanam budi dan membalas budi</i>	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	4
11	<i>Rasa tanggung jawab</i>	0	3	2	3	0	2	4	3	1	18
12	<i>Sifat malu</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
13	<i>Kasih sayang</i>	2	4	2	1	1	3	3	4	1	21
14	<i>Hak dan milik</i>	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
15	<i>Musyawaharah dan mufakat</i>	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
16	<i>Keberanian</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
17	<i>Kejujuran</i>	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
18	<i>Hemat dan cermat</i>	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
19	<i>Rendah hati</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
20	<i>Bersangka baik terhadap sesama</i>	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	4
21	<i>Menjauhi sifat perajuk</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
22	<i>Sifat tahu diri</i>	1	2	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	7
23	<i>Keterbukaan</i>	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
24	<i>Sifat pemaaf dan pemurah</i>	0	5	0	0	3	3	0	0	1	12
25	<i>Sifat amanah</i>	0	0	2	0	0	7	1	0	1	11
26	<i>Memfaatkan waktu</i>	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
27	<i>Berpandang jauh ke depan</i>	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	8
28	<i>Mensyukuri nikmat Allah</i>	0	1	0	4	1	0	5	1	0	12
29	<i>Hidup sederhana</i>	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	4
	JUMLAH	13	29	17	34	19	21	28	17	21	199

Based on the presentation of data in the table above, it can be observed that the collected excerpts have been classified according to the relevant values of Melayu Tunjuk Ajar. This categorization aims to facilitate the identification and interpretation of the meanings contained in each data point. Subsequently, each excerpt is analyzed in depth by linking it to the concepts and principles of Melayu Tunjuk Ajar according to Effendy (2004) to explain the form, function, and

relevance of the cultural values reflected in the stories.

Piety Toward God Almighty

Data 2 Then Pak Sakti began the slaughtering process by reciting the prayer, *Bismillahi Allahu Akbar*. (Andi Mulya, 2021:15)

This excerpt shows that every significant activity, especially those related to living beings, must begin by mentioning the name of Allah. This action emphasizes that the process of slaughtering is not merely a physical task but also an act with religious and ethical dimensions. In

Malay culture, mentioning Allah's name is a form of acknowledgment of God's sovereignty and a manifestation of human awareness as creatures submissive to His will. This practice demonstrates that religious values are integrated into daily activities in Malay society and serve as a guideline for proper conduct. Thus, Islamic teachings function as the primary foundation for determining correct attitudes and behaviors (Sofiani & Sugiarto, 2022; Liza et al., 2023). This aligns with Effendy's (2004) view that all cultural values and social norms in Malay society must refer to Islamic teachings and should not contradict them.

Piety Toward Parents

Data 23 The two daughters of Tolamah enjoy helping their mother clean the house, cook, and work in the garden. (Agus DS, 2021:6)

This excerpt represents the value of obedience to parents in Malay society. In Malay culture, respecting and obeying one's mother and father is highly prioritized. Effendy (2004) asserts that obedient children will attain safety in this world and honor in the hereafter. The form of obedience in this excerpt is not explicitly stated but is implied through concrete actions of helping the mother with domestic chores. Activities such as cleaning the house, cooking, and gardening demonstrate respect and a willingness to lighten the parents' burden. The phrase "enjoy helping" indicates that these actions are performed consciously and sincerely, not out of compulsion. Therefore, this data embodies the value of filial piety, manifested through devoted behavior, reflecting the ideal of a child according to Malay cultural norms.

Obedience to Leaders

Data 169 Datuk Che Ngah, a respected elder, serves as the leader and community figure in his village. All residents obey, respect, and listen to him. (Darmaisyah, 2021:5)

This excerpt highlights a strong hierarchical relationship between leaders and the community in village life. Datuk Che Ngah is portrayed as an elder, leader, and community figure possessing social authority. The residents' obedience, indicated by their respect, compliance, and attentiveness to his words, reflects recognition of his authority and the responsibilities he carries. His position as a respected elder is not merely symbolic but also demonstrates that he serves as a central reference point in maintaining order and harmony in the community. This corresponds with Effendy's (2004) assertion that in Malay society, leaders must be respected and obeyed as long as they perform their duties properly and are regarded as individuals who are "elevated one step, prioritized one step ahead."

Unity, Mutual Cooperation, and Consideration for Others

Data 94 The residents of Rumbio enjoy living in mutual cooperation. They uphold the philosophy of "bearing heavy burdens together, carrying light ones together." This motto has been collectively embraced by the Rumbio community since ancient times. (Afrinaldi, 2021:4)

This excerpt demonstrates that the life of the Rumbio community is built on a foundation of togetherness and strong social solidarity. The statement that residents enjoy working cooperatively and uphold the philosophy of "bearing heavy burdens together, carrying light ones together" illustrates a collective spirit in facing life's challenges. The philosophy emphasizes that every responsibility is shared, ensuring that no community member feels alone or neglected. This attitude reflects the strong values of unity, cohesion, and consideration for others within social life. The sense of togetherness is not merely habitual but a principle passed down through generations. This aligns with Effendy's (2004) view that unity, mutual cooperation, and consideration for others

constitute the core of Malay personality, believed to enable peace and harmony in communal life.

Justice and Truth

Data 190

“Pedane must leave this village for ten years,” said Datuk Che Ngah, looking straight at Pedane (Darmaisyah, 2021:19).

This quote shows the firmness of a leader in enforcing decisions related to village rules and order. The statement contains elements of a sanction imposed openly, indicating that the decision was made based on certain considerations to maintain social balance. Datuk Che Ngah’s attitude in delivering the decision firmly and directly reflects the responsibility of a leader in upholding regulations impartially. This action demonstrates that leadership is not only symbolic but also functions as the executor of customary law that must be upheld to preserve the dignity and authority of society. This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that in Malay life, justice and truth are key in upholding dignity, and fair laws must be enforced to achieve an orderly and prosperous society.

The Virtue of Seeking Knowledge

Data 89

Like most Muslims of that time, many of them studied suluk, a path to draw closer to Allah (Fitri Mayani, 2021:29).

This quote shows that people at that time were highly aware of deepening religious knowledge through the practice of suluk as a means to approach Allah. Studying suluk was not merely a spiritual ritual but also a serious effort in seeking knowledge related to the afterlife. This attitude demonstrates that the pursuit of knowledge is considered essential in developing one’s character and piety. In Malay society, learning is not only for personal benefit but also

to balance worldly life and the hereafter (Samsudin et al., 2024). This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that the Malay Teachings (Tunjuk Ajar Melayu) mandate seeking useful knowledge in accordance with Islamic teachings and customs, as such knowledge is believed to save one’s worldly life and bring welfare in the afterlife.

Sincerity and Willingness to Sacrifice

Data 55

Seeing her child’s anger, the mother felt both reluctant and fearful. She jumped into the river to retrieve Umbut’s lost bracelet (Sugiarti, 2021:16).

This quote demonstrates a mother’s willingness to sacrifice for her child. Her action of jumping into the river, despite fear, shows sincerity and deep affection. The decision was not based on personal interest but on the desire to comfort and make her child happy. This reflects the value of sincerity—doing something without expecting a reward and with a pure intention. In Malay society, such behavior is regarded as noble character and serves as a model for harmonious family relationships (Azkiya & Romadhona, 2025). This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that sincerity and willingness to sacrifice foster righteous deeds and strengthen social solidarity in the community.

Hard Work, Diligence, and Perseverance

Data 43

Therefore, her mother continued working as a weaver despite earning little (Sugiarti, 2021:1).

This quote demonstrates the mother’s perseverance and sense of responsibility as she continues weaving despite minimal income. Her decision to keep working under limited conditions shows determination to fulfill her duties toward the family. This reflects the values of hard work and resilience in facing life’s

challenges without giving up. In Malay society, working and earning a living is not only an economic activity but also a measure of one's character and honor. The mother's diligence indicates a strong sense of responsibility and awareness of her obligations. This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that hard work, diligence, and perseverance are virtues that determine one's dignity in Malay society.

Independence and Self-Confidence

Data 5

"Step aside, let me tie it!" he added. Pak Sakti appeared confident. People knew that Pak Sakti was a renowned buffalo butcher at Pasar Duri (Andi Mulya, 2021:21).

This quote illustrates Pak Sakti's confidence and independence in a specific situation. The statement "Step aside, let me tie it!" shows courage and self-assurance without relying on others. The community's recognition of Pak Sakti as a famous buffalo butcher further strengthens his image as skilled and experienced. This attitude reflects steadfastness and courage in acting independently. In Malay life, independence and self-confidence are regarded as commendable traits, demonstrating one's ability to stand on their own abilities (Aliska, 2023). This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that being independent and confident is considered "courageous" or "steadfast," and is a valued character in Malay teachings (Tunjuk Ajar Melayu).

Cultivating Good Deeds and Repaying Kindness

Data 63

Even if it can be shared with neighbors or cooked and eaten by the students attending religious lessons (Fitri Mayani, S.S, 2021:6).

This quote reflects an attitude of sharing and social care toward others, especially neighbors and students attending religious lessons. The act of sharing or preparing food for others

demonstrates the desire to instill goodness without prioritizing personal interest. Such behavior shows that what one gains is not solely for personal benefit but shared to express care and generosity. This reflects the value of budi (goodness) in Malay society, regarded as a measure of one's nobility. Giving and sharing are not only social acts but also a means of fostering relationships. This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that cultivating and repaying good deeds is noble, and those who fail to do so are considered lacking in custom and are avoided by society.

Sense of Responsibility

Data 150

Everyone that night returned home carrying a great sense of responsibility; children were tasked to continue honoring their parents, while parents bore the duty to set a good example for their children and maintain their household (Nur Atika, 2021:36).

This quote shows that each individual in society bears responsibility according to their role and position. Children are entrusted to honor their parents, while parents carry the duty of providing good examples and maintaining household integrity. This division of roles reflects collective awareness that family and societal life can only function harmoniously if each member fulfills their responsibilities. This attitude demonstrates that responsibility is fundamental to establishing orderly and civilized relationships. In Malay society, responsibility is not only personal but also encompasses moral obligations to family and community (Harahap, 2025). This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that every member of society must live responsibly, as civilized individuals uphold their entrusted duties.

Sense of Shame

Data 179

“Forgive me for failing to educate my child properly,” said Datuk, gazing at Atan. Sri’s father remained silent (Darmaisyah, 2021:16).

This quote reflects moral awareness manifested through shame over failing to educate a child. Datuk’s apology for feeling unable to guide his child properly demonstrates personal responsibility and self-reflection as a parent. The attitude shows that mistakes are acknowledged openly rather than hidden or shifted onto others. Sri’s father’s silence further emphasizes an atmosphere filled with remorse and shame. In Malay society, a sense of shame is viewed as a moral mirror that prevents improper behavior and regulates social conduct (Oktariza & Efendi, 2022). This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that shame is highly valued as an indicator of proper manners and personal character.

Affection

Data 164

Mother Awang also became increasingly fond of them. Dayang was given a nice house in front of Awang’s home (Andi Mulya, 2021:24).

This quote shows the development of sincere affection among the characters. Mother Awang’s growing fondness and the act of building a nice house for Dayang indicate attention, care, and a desire to maintain closeness. This action demonstrates emotional and social responsibility toward others. Providing decent living space symbolizes genuine acceptance and appreciation. In Malay life, affection is the foundation for harmonious relationships, both within the family and the wider social environment (Fitri et al., 2025). This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that a noble life is founded on genuine care for others regardless of background.

Rights and Property

Data 87

People who came there could freely live and cultivate land as long as they did not disturb others’ rights. The land they occupied could become theirs (Fitri Mayani, S.S, 2021:27).

This quote shows recognition of individual property rights in society. Newcomers were allowed to reside and farm as long as they respected others’ rights, implying that freedom is limited by social rules. The statement that the land could become theirs reflects social legitimacy of ownership. This attitude demonstrates balance between openness to newcomers and respect for legitimate boundaries. In Malay life, rights and property must be protected to prevent disputes. This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that one must respect others’ property, and arbitrary seizure violates custom and religious teachings.

Deliberation and Consensus

Data 35

After discussion and consensus, the village elder asked Tolamah and his family to release Bujang Manja into the forest according to his original place (Agus DS, 2024:18).

This quote shows that community decisions are made collectively rather than unilaterally. The elder’s request represents a mutual agreement reached after careful consideration. This process reflects respect for collective opinion and desire to maintain balance and order. Decisions born from consensus show that personal interests are placed below communal welfare. In Malay society, deliberation and consensus form the main foundation for determining actions in family and community affairs (Novita et al., 2024). This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that customs stand through consensus, and blessings arise from deliberation.

Courage

Data 139

Before sleeping, Suli heard the Dubalang Alam from under his house but was not too afraid (Nur Atika, 2021:16).

This quote demonstrates Suli's courage when hearing a potentially frightening sound yet remaining calm. The courage here is not recklessness but composed control in tense situations. It reflects inner strength and resilience. In Malay society, courage is praiseworthy when guided by truth and goodness. This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that respected courage is that which upholds truth and righteousness, not reckless bravery.

Honesty

Data 49

"No, Umbut, what good is it if I lie? Nobody has bought my weaving yet," said Umbut's mother (Sugiarti, 2021:6).

This quote illustrates a mother's honesty in answering her child without concealing reality. Her statement reflects openness and sincerity despite an unpleasant situation. This demonstrates that honesty is a core value in family relationships, teaching children to accept truth from an early age. Honesty also signifies moral responsibility not to build expectations on lies. In Malay society, honesty is a foundation for trust and dignity (Aulia & Syefriani, 2025). This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that honesty brings fortune and respect in social life.

Thriftiness and Prudence

Data 44

"Child, we must be thrifty. Use only what we need," her mother replied (Sugiarti, 2021:3).

This quote illustrates a mother advising her child to live frugally and use resources wisely. The statement reflects self-control and awareness to avoid waste. The advice to use only what is necessary demonstrates prudence in managing life to match available means. This also represents character education, as thriftiness is

instilled from an early age. In Malay life, being thrifty and prudent is esteemed as it prevents waste and overspending (Afrilla & Mulyati, 2024). This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that those who are thrifty gain sufficiency, and those who are prudent remain safe.

Humility

Data 101

Puti Pitopang enjoys sharing with everyone. Whoever comes to her house and asks for something, she always tries to fulfill the request, even if just a little (Afrinaldi, 2021:6).

This quote demonstrates Puti Pitopang's generosity and willingness to share without discrimination. Her efforts to fulfill requests, even minimally, show sincerity and avoidance of excessive calculation. Such actions reflect humility, as she does not boast or act arrogantly, remaining modest in helping others. In Malay society, humility is an identity that distances a person from pride and arrogance. This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that Malays avoid arrogance and prioritize gentleness and courtesy.

Thinking Positively of Others

Data 103

Puti Pitopang ignored the villagers' gossip. Her habit of thinking well of others allowed her to smile and remain calm (Afrinaldi, 2021:13).

This quote shows Puti Pitopang's maturity and inner calm in facing village gossip. Her disregard for negative talk demonstrates self-control and the ability not to be provoked by unverified judgments. Always thinking positively and smiling reflects steadfastness and a constructive view of others. This attitude maintains peace and harmony. In Malay society, thinking positively of others is fundamental to preserving unity and preventing conflict (Yanti et al., 2024). This aligns with Effendy (2004), who states that good people always think well of others, as ill thoughts only bring hostility.

Avoiding Sulking

Data 113

As the wedding approached, Puti Pitopang did not appear for three days. She locked herself in her room (Afrinaldi, 2021:26).

This quote shows Puti Pitopang withdrawing from social interaction before the wedding, associated with sulking in Malay culture. Isolating herself instead of facing issues indicates avoidance and lack of resilience. Such behavior is considered undesirable as it can disrupt social relations and demonstrate weakness of spirit. In Malay teachings, sulking is discouraged as it may lead to social exclusion (Effendy, 2004).

Self-Awareness

Data 78

“Therefore, when we enter the forest, we must behave. Do not cause damage or commit sins,” replied their teacher (Fitri Mayani, S.S, 2021:18).

This quote reflects guidance emphasizing awareness of one’s behavior, especially in the forest. The advice to maintain conduct and avoid wrongdoing demonstrates moral boundaries in every situation. The teacher teaches that humans must understand their position and responsibility toward nature and fellow beings. This reflects maturity in acting according to norms and customs. In Malay society, self-awareness is seen as moral maturity guiding proper action (Oktarizka et al., 2018). This aligns with Effendy (2004).

Openness

Data 47

“I’ve worked hard, child, but what can I do? Today I produced no weaving. Only a few were bought,” said Umbut’s mother sadly (Sugiarti, 2021:6).

This quote shows a mother’s openness in communicating reality to her child. Her statement

demonstrates honesty and willingness to present the facts, even in a disappointing situation. This reflects moral responsibility and builds trust in family relations. In Malay society, openness indicates a straight heart and good intentions in interactions. This aligns with Effendy (2004).

Forgiving and Generous Nature

Data 128

Selendang Delima accepted the apology of the six daughters without a trace of resentment. Such is her generosity (Isral Fauzana, 2021:42).

This quote demonstrates Selendang Delima’s forgiveness and generosity. Accepting an apology without resentment shows a broad heart and emotional maturity. This behavior prioritizes peace over maintaining grudges. In Malay society, being forgiving and generous maintains harmony and prevents conflict (Rodi, 2022). This aligns with Effendy (2004).

Trustworthiness (Amanah)

Data 122

“Tuanku did not permit anyone to open it, Kak. If it is opened, Tuanku will be angry with me,” she said (Isral Fauzana, 2021:24).

This quote demonstrates trustworthiness and obedience. Awareness of the potential consequences for breaking the entrusted order reflects loyalty and integrity. In Malay society, being trustworthy reflects faith, honesty, and commitment to assigned duties (Rodi, 2022). This aligns with Effendy (2004).

Utilizing Time Wisely

Data 112

Without waiting any longer, I asked my mother for permission to go to Nenek Munah’s house at the nearby intersection (Isral Fauzana, 2021:3).

This quote shows awareness to act promptly. The phrase “without waiting any longer” reflects

alertness and decisiveness. Seeking parental permission shows responsibility in time management. In Malay society, wise use of time is part of life ethics ensuring order and well-being (Ersyliasari et al., 2023). This aligns with Effendy (2004).

Foresight

Data 34

“Do you know? Tigers are ferocious! If they are hungry, we will be eaten. Since Bujang Manja has grown, no one dares visit Tolamah’s shop or come to study, because of the tiger cub,” said many villagers (Agus DS, 2021:18).

This quote shows villagers’ concern about future risks. Considering possible danger demonstrates awareness and planning for long-term impact on the community. In Malay society, foresight is valued for ensuring security and continuity (Effendy, 2004).

Gratitude to Allah

Data 136

Suli remained grateful that he could still eat and study, and he would soon finish his lessons (Nur Atika, 2021:9).

This quote reflects Suli’s gratitude despite limitations. Appreciation of simple blessings shows sincere acceptance without complaint. Gratitude is believed to bring further blessings and prevent greed (Sofiani & Sugiarto, 2022). This aligns with Effendy (2004).

Simple Life

Data 42

His mother always reminded Umbut not to be arrogant about wealth. Live simply and remain like ordinary people (Sugiarti, 2021:1).

This quote reflects advice to maintain humility and simplicity. Simple living prevents

arrogance and social envy. In Malay culture, simplicity shows self-awareness and proper social positioning (Trirahmayati & Yasnel, 2025). This aligns with Effendy (2004).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that the folk tales under study contain values aligned with the teachings of *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* by Tenas Effendy. Religious values are reflected through attitudes of prayer, gratitude, and sincerity in performing good deeds, while diligence and responsibility are demonstrated by characters who work tirelessly to earn a living and protect their families. Acts of love, generosity, forgiveness, and self-awareness indicate a strong social and moral dimension within the Malay community, accompanied by values of independence and courage in facing challenges, which shape resilient and principled individuals.

These findings emphasize that folk tales serve not merely as entertainment, but also as a medium for cultural value transmission and character development grounded in Islamic teachings, customary law, and the noble norms of Malay society. In the context of digital technology reform, the preservation and dissemination of folk tales can be strengthened through the use of digital platforms, interactive learning media, and online educational resources that allow these cultural values to reach wider and younger audiences.

Therefore, it is recommended that future research expand the study objects to include a wider range of folk tales from various regencies in Riau, as well as develop digitalization models or learning media based on folk tales to test their effectiveness in strengthening students’ character through an interdisciplinary approach integrating literature, education, and digital technology.

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