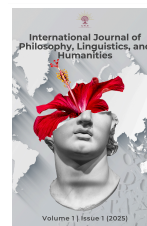




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### Research Article

# Bridging Language and Culture: A Study of the Meanings and Values in Maguindanaon Idioms

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### Abstract

This study explores Maguindanaon idioms, focusing on their meanings and the moral, social, spiritual, political, and cultural values they convey. Using an ethnolinguistic approach and qualitative research design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis from native speakers in Patadon, Kidapawan City, Philippines. Findings reveal that Maguindanaon idioms serve as linguistic tools for preserving cultural identity, teaching ethical values, and strengthening social cohesion. Specifically, idioms highlight moral values such as honesty (Di maluto pagyaw – “not fully cooked” as a metaphor for dishonesty), perseverance (Di mapaulan sa timos – “unbeatable” reflecting resilience), and humility (Malambet i kakulang – “high jump” warning against arrogance). Social values promote unity (Pikit a sulì – “inseparable”), while spiritual idioms emphasize belief in divine will (Nawma na ukol – “destiny struck,” signifying fate and submission to God’s plan). Political values critique leadership ethics, while cultural values encourage intelligence and wisdom (Molad i itungan – “broad-minded” symbolizing deep thinking). The study concludes that Maguindanaon idioms play a crucial role in language preservation, moral education, and intercultural awareness. Their integration into educational curricula can enhance cultural appreciation, ethical development, and critical thinking, ensuring the continuity of traditional values.

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## Introduction

Language is a powerful reflection of a community's values, beliefs, and worldview. Among the Maguindanaon people of the southern Philippines, language is deeply intertwined with cultural heritage, social norms, and historical experiences. A distinctive feature of Maguindanaon is its rich idiomatic expressions, which extend beyond literal meanings to convey cultural wisdom, ethical principles, and spiritual beliefs.

Despite their cultural and linguistic significance, Maguindanaon idioms remain underexplored in linguistic research. Existing studies primarily focus on grammar, phonology, and oral traditions, leaving idiomatic expressions undocumented. This study addresses this gap by examining how Maguindanaon idioms encode moral, social, spiritual, political, and cultural values. Furthermore, it explores how idioms function as tools for cultural transmission, preserving values across generations (Mangindra & Sandoval, 2021).

## Materials and Methods

### Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design, which is appropriate for exploring the meanings and values embedded in Maguindanaon idioms. Qualitative research is particularly effective in examining language and culture, as it allows for in-depth analysis of linguistic expressions within their social and cultural contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study follows an ethnolinguistic approach, which integrates linguistic analysis with cultural interpretation, emphasizing how language reflects community identity and worldview (Sharifian, 2017). Ethnographic methods, including interviews and focus group discussions, were used to capture the lived experiences of Maguindanaon speakers,

While past research (e.g., Nunberg et al., 2015; Mancuso et al., 2019) has analyzed idioms' syntactic and cognitive properties, their cultural and social dimensions remain largely unexamined. Similarly, studies on Maguindanaon cultural expressions—such as Maulana et al. (2024) on protest songs and Traspe (2024) on healing rituals—highlight the symbolic power of language, reinforcing the need to explore idiomatic expressions as cultural artifacts.

By examining Maguindanaon idioms through the lens of Cultural Linguistics, Metaphor Theory, and Social Constructivism, this study demonstrates that language is not merely a tool for communication but a medium for preserving collective wisdom, moral values, and social cohesion. It also aligns with Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2001) by analyzing how idioms convey leadership ideals, communal expectations, and spiritual beliefs, enriching our understanding of their cultural significance.

ensuring an authentic representation of idiomatic meanings (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019).

The research also incorporates discourse analysis to examine how idioms function as cultural artifacts, shaping social interactions and moral values (Fairclough, 2001). By using this multidisciplinary approach, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of Maguindanaon idioms beyond their linguistic structures, focusing on their role in cultural transmission and social cohesion (Nunberg, Sag, & Wasow, 2015).

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## Research Site and Participants

Participants for this study were selected from Patadon, Kidapawan City, Philippines, based on their fluency in Maguindanaon and their depth of knowledge regarding traditional idioms. The study focused on native speakers aged 40 and above, as they have been exposed to and actively use these idiomatic expressions. Participants were recruited from different social backgrounds, including community elders, educators, and cultural practitioners, ensuring a diverse range of perspectives. Gender balance was also considered to capture potential differences in idiom usage across demographics.

## Data Collection Strategies

Data for this study were collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews allowed participants to share their insights on Maguindanaon idioms while providing flexibility for follow-up questions and deeper discussions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Focus group discussions facilitated collective reflection, enabling participants to engage in discourse on the meanings and significance of idioms within their cultural and social contexts (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Document analysis involved reviewing written

## Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach. This method was chosen for its systematic process of identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data. The analysis followed six phases: (1) familiarization with data through repeated reading of transcripts, (2) generating initial codes to categorize meaningful data extracts, (3) searching for themes by clustering related codes, (4) reviewing themes to refine their coherence, (5) defining and naming themes to ensure clarity, and (6) producing the final report with

To ensure cultural sensitivity, interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in Maguindanaon, allowing participants to express their insights naturally. The research team worked closely with local cultural representatives to frame questions respectfully and avoid misinterpretations. Data analysis was conducted with attention to cultural nuances, ensuring that idioms were contextualized within their sociocultural setting rather than interpreted through external linguistic frameworks.

records and transcriptions of oral traditions that contained idiomatic expressions, providing a historical perspective on idiom usage.

Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants. The research objectives, data collection methods, and confidentiality measures were explained in their native language to ensure full understanding and voluntary participation. Participants were assured that their identities would remain anonymous and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

relevant interpretations. This approach allowed for an in-depth understanding of how Maguindanaon idioms encapsulate cultural values and beliefs, ensuring that themes were grounded in participant narratives and contextual insights (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

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## Trustworthiness of the Study

To ensure rigor and reliability, this study follows Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) trustworthiness framework, focusing on **credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability**.

Credibility was established through prolonged engagement with participants, triangulation of data sources (interviews, focus groups, and document analysis), and member checking, ensuring the accuracy of interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Transferability was addressed by providing thick descriptions of the research setting, participant

demographics, and idiomatic contexts, allowing findings to be applicable to similar cultural and linguistic settings.

Dependability was ensured through detailed documentation of research procedures, an audit trail of methodological decisions, and peer debriefing sessions to validate interpretations (Nowell et al., 2017).

Confirmability was reinforced by maintaining researcher reflexivity and minimizing bias. A reflexive journal was kept, and direct participant quotations were included to ensure interpretations were grounded in empirical data (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

## Results

Maguindanaon idioms are deeply rooted in the cultural and linguistic heritage of the Maguindanaon people, serving as expressions of their values, beliefs, and way of life. These idioms use metaphorical and symbolic language to convey lessons on morality, social relationships, spirituality, and leadership (Sharifian, 2017; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). They function not only as a means of communication but also as tools for teaching ethical behavior and preserving indigenous

wisdom (Vygotsky, 1978). While previous studies have focused on the grammatical and oral traditions of the Maguindanaon language (Mangindra & Sandoval, 2021), recent research highlights the broader cultural significance of linguistic expressions (Maulana et al., 2024; Traspe, 2024). By analyzing these idioms, this study aims to explore their meanings and values, demonstrating their role in shaping community identity and ensuring the continuity of cultural traditions.

**Table 1.** Translation of Maguindanaon Idioms

Count	Maguindanawn Idioms	Literal Translation	Definition in English
1	Nawma na ukol	Destiny struck	Dead
2	Pikit a sulì	Close taro	Can't be separated
3	Di mapaulan sa timos	Will not rain salt	Unbeatable
4	Papedtibpon sa buwaya	Fight the crocodile	Destroy
5	Baw na onta	Camel smell	Bad breath
6	Di maluto pagyawn	Not overcooked	What a lie
7	Di kawma na ulan	Rain can't catch it	careless
8	Pebpilandok	Stumbled	Lying
9	Makadampo sa kamantis	Step on a tomato	be damned
10	Mukit sa peso na lagum	Go through the eye of a needle	will go through hardship
11	Malambet i kakulang	High jump	Arrogant
12	Pagkamang a baw	Crawling Turtle	Slow
13	Malendu i lima-	The hand is long	thief

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14	Mibpanggi sa maputi	White flag	someone died
15	Matebpul i utek	The brain is dull	Weak
16	Matenggaw I dapulan	The kitchen is cold	Nothing can be served
17	Kagkaputi na Uwak	White crow	Impossible to happen
18	Malendo I lig	Long neck	Can't be satisfied
19	Malendo I kadtali	The string is long	Patience is long
20	Molad I itungan	Broad minded	Smart
21	Utek na Bulinaw	Anchovy brain	Stupid/weak brain
22	Manot I tangila	Small ears	It's easy to die
23	Mangasela I alebin	Big knees	Datu/ leader
24	Kemabal sa udtuan	climb in the sky	Greedy
25	Naksugkol sa langit	Crashed into the sky	So much happiness

This section presents how idioms encapsulate key values, including moral lessons, social

norms, spiritual beliefs, political ideologies, and cultural practices.

### Moral Value

Moral Value refers to the ethical principles embedded in Maguindanaon idioms that guide behavior and decision-making, teaching lessons

on honesty, patience, perseverance, and respect to promote good character and social harmony.

**Table 2.1.** Moral Values of Maguindanaon Idioms

Count	Maguindanaon Idioms	Moral Appreciation
1	Di mapaulan sa timos	1. Courage 2. Self confidence
2	Di maluto pagyawn	1. Being honest
3	Di kawma na ulan	1. Valuing time
4	Pebpilandok	1. Telling the truth
5	Malendo I lima	1. Appreciation of Morality 2. Self respect
6	Makadampo sa kamatis	1. Being cunning
7	Malambet I kakulang	1. Being proud
8	Pegkamang a baw	1. Valuing time
9	Malendo I lig	1. Contentment
10	Malendo I kadtali	1. Being patient

#### “Di mapaulan sa timos” (Unbeatable)

This idiom represents **resilience** and the **strength** to face challenges. The phrase "will not

rain salt" implies that no matter how tough the situation may seem, an individual who remains steadfast and committed will ultimately overcome the difficulty. The idiom reflects the **moral value of perseverance**, emphasizing that

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external challenges should not shake one's inner resolve. It teaches individuals to remain strong and **undaunted by adversity**, which is central to maintaining personal dignity and moral integrity in the face of hardship.

The idiom emphasizes **resilience** and **steadfastness**, aligning with the Islamic teaching that believers must remain patient in adversity. The Qur'an states:

*"Indeed, Allah is with the patient."* (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:153)

This verse highlights how perseverance in facing challenges is a quality that earns Allah's support and guidance.

#### **"Di maluto pagyaw"** (*What a lie*)

Literally meaning "not fully cooked," this idiom criticizes **deception** or half-truths. It uses the metaphor of food that appears cooked but remains raw inside, symbolizing how something may look fine on the surface while hiding dishonesty underneath. The idiom reinforces the **moral lesson of authenticity** and **honesty**, warning against superficiality. It suggests that actions and words should reflect the truth to ensure harmony and mutual trust in relationships. This aligns with the idea that true integrity is not just about external appearances but the inner truth that one expresses.

This idiom critiques **dishonesty** and urges truthfulness, reflecting the Islamic value of sincerity. The Qur'an warns against deceit:

*"And do not conceal testimony, for whoever conceals it—his heart is indeed sinful. And Allah is Knowing of what you do."* (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:283)

This verse emphasizes the importance of aligning words and actions with truth.

#### **"Pebpilandok"** (*Lying*)

The term *pilandok*, referring to an animal known for being deceitful, represents the **moral flaw of lying**. By using this metaphor, the idiom highlights that lying may sometimes be clever or disguised, but it disrupts social harmony. The idiom acts as a warning against dishonesty, urging people to adhere to the truth, as **trust and transparency** are the cornerstones of healthy relationships and community well-being.

Lying is strongly condemned in Islam, as it disrupts trust and relationships. The Qur'an says:

*"And do not mix the truth with falsehood or conceal the truth while you know [it]."* (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:42)

This idiom aligns with the Islamic teaching that truthfulness is essential for maintaining harmony and righteousness.

#### **"Malendo i lima"** (*Thief*)

"The hand is long" metaphorically refers to the act of stealing. It serves as a reminder to respect others' belongings and avoid taking what does not belong to you. This idiom promotes **respect for personal property** and enforces the idea that unethical behavior, like stealing, harms not only individuals but the community's trust and solidarity. It is a **moral lesson** that upholds **honesty** and encourages individuals to engage in fair and just practices.

The idiom condemns theft, which is prohibited in Islam. The Qur'an prescribes consequences for such actions:

*"As to the thief, the male and the female, amputate their hands as recompense for what they committed as a deterrent from Allah. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise."* (Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:38)

This verse underscores the importance of

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respecting others' property and upholding justice.

**"Makadampo sa kamantis"**  
(Dangerous)

"To step on a tomato" symbolizes **danger** or the consequences of acting recklessly. The idiom encourages individuals to be cautious and consider the potential risks of their actions. Just as stepping on a tomato might cause a mess or damage, the idiom suggests that **carelessness** can lead to **unforeseen negative consequences**. It advocates for thoughtful decision-making and caution in interactions with others.

This idiom warns against **recklessness** and acting without consideration. Islam promotes caution and thoughtful actions:

*"And do not throw [yourselves] with your [own] hands into destruction [by being reckless]. And do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good."*  
(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:195)

It reflects the importance of avoiding harm through hasty or ill-considered decisions.

**"Malambet i kakulang"**  
(Arrogant)

The phrase "high jump" refers to someone who is overly self-confident, proud, or arrogant. It critiques excessive pride and emphasizes the **moral value of humility**. This idiom suggests that arrogance is an undesirable quality and warns that those who elevate themselves above others may cause discord. The lesson here is to maintain humility and not overestimate one's own importance, as **modesty** is a highly valued virtue in the community.

Arrogance is condemned in Islam, as humility is a virtue of true believers. The Qur'an states:

*"And do not walk upon the earth exultantly. Indeed, you will never tear the earth [apart],*

*and you will never reach the mountains in height."* (Surah Al-Isra 17:37)

This idiom aligns with the teaching that arrogance leads to one's downfall.

**"Pegkamang a baw"**  
(Slow)

The idiom "crawling turtle" refers to slowness in action or decision-making. It encourages individuals to act with **urgency** and not procrastinate. In the context of moral values, this idiom teaches the **importance of time management** and **responsibility**, stressing that **delays** in tasks or decisions can lead to missed opportunities and inefficiency. It emphasizes the **virtue of diligence** and timely action.

The idiom encourages diligence and timely action, which Islam advocates. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

*"Take advantage of five before five: your youth before your old age, your health before your illness, your wealth before your poverty, your free time before your preoccupation, and your life before your death."* (Narrated by Al-Hakim)  
This underscores the value of using time wisely and avoiding laziness.

**"Malendo i lig"**  
(Contentment)

"Long neck" metaphorically refers to someone who is never satisfied, always wanting more. This idiom speaks to the importance of **contentment** and appreciating what one has, rather than constantly seeking more or comparing oneself to others. It promotes **gratitude** and the **ability to find happiness** in the present, encouraging individuals to avoid the destructive cycle of endless desire.

Contentment is a core Islamic principle. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

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*"Riches do not mean, having a great amount of property, but riches are self-contentment."*  
(Sahih Muslim 1051)

This idiom reflects the Islamic teaching that being grateful and content brings peace and fulfillment.

**“Malendo i kadtali”**

"Long patience" or "long rope."

This idiom symbolizes the virtue of **patience** and **endurance** in the face of difficulties. The imagery of a "long rope" reflects the ability to extend one’s capacity to bear hardship, much like a rope that stretches without breaking. In Maguindanaon culture, this idiom emphasizes the importance of staying calm, composed, and persistent when facing challenges, whether in

**Social Value**

Social Value refers to values about the importance of relationships and community interactions reflected in idioms, emphasizing

personal relationships, work, or life struggles. It encourages individuals to develop emotional resilience and persevere without losing hope, as patience often leads to favorable outcomes.

In Islam, patience (*sabr*) is one of the most celebrated virtues. It is considered a quality that strengthens faith, pleases Allah, and brings about divine rewards. The Qur'an repeatedly highlights the importance of patience in various aspects of life:

*"Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account."* (Surah Az-Zumar 39:10)

This verse underscores the immense reward for those who exercise patience, encouraging Muslims to endure trials with steadfastness and faith in Allah's wisdom

unity, cooperation, hygiene, and social responsibility to maintain strong family and societal bonds.

**Table 2.2.** Social Values of Magindanaon Idioms

Count	Magindanawn Idioms	Social Valuation
1	Pikit a suli	1. Fellowship 2. Good Fellowship
2	Papedtibpon sa buwaya	1. Socializing
3	Baw na onta	1. Appreciation of personal hygiene
4	Mukit sa peso na lagum	1. Difficulty
5	Matenggaw I dapulan	1. Scarcity 2. Literacy

**"Pikit a suli"**

*(Inseparable)*

“Close taro roots” symbolizes the strength and inseparability of close relationships, particularly within families or communities. This idiom reflects the **importance of unity** and **solidarity** in social interactions. The Maguindanaon people believe that strong, cohesive relationships help

maintain social order and harmony. The idiom emphasizes the value of **supporting one another** and staying together, even through challenges.

Unity is emphasized in Islam, as it strengthens the community. The Qur'an states:

*"And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided."* (Surah

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Aal-E-Imran 3:103)

This idiom reflects the teaching that solidarity and mutual support are essential for maintaining harmony.

**"Baw na onta"**  
(*Camel smell*)

This idiom speaks to **personal hygiene**, specifically referencing bad breath (smell of a camel) as a social deterrent. The lesson is clear: maintaining cleanliness is essential for maintaining **social respectability** and good relationships. It reflects the social expectation that individuals should take care of their appearance and hygiene, as it impacts the community's view of them.

Personal hygiene is a requirement in Islam, as it is part of faith. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

*"Cleanliness is half of faith."* (Sahih Muslim 223)

This idiom emphasizes the importance of cleanliness in social interactions, aligning with Islamic principles.

**Spiritual Values**

Spiritual Values refer to the beliefs and principles that guide individuals in their faith, emphasizing concepts such as divine will,

**"Papeditibpon sa buwaya"**  
(*Destroyed*)

"Fight the crocodile" warns against engaging in futile battles. Crocodiles are powerful and hard to defeat, symbolizing insurmountable challenges. This idiom teaches the value of **wisdom** in knowing when not to engage in conflicts that cannot be won. It encourages individuals to **pick their battles wisely**, suggesting that not all struggles are worth the effort.

Avoiding unnecessary conflict is a value in Islam. The Qur'an advises:

*"And do not dispute and [thus] lose courage and [then] your strength would depart; and be patient. Indeed, Allah is with the patient."* (Surah Al-Anfal 8:46)

This idiom reflects the teaching of choosing battles wisely and promoting peace.

obedience to religious teachings, gratitude, and acceptance of fate.

**Table 2.3.** Spiritual Values of Magindanaon Idioms

Count	Magindanawn Idioms	Spiritual Appreciation
1	Nawma na ukol	1. Belief in the afterlife
2	Mibpanggi sa Maputi	1. Obedience to the command of Allah
3	Manot I tangila	1. Belief in the visions of Muslims
4	Kagkaputi na Uwak	1. Faith in Allah
5	Nakasugkul sa langit	1. Thanking God

**"Nawma na ukol"**  
(*Destiny struck*)

Reflecting **Islamic beliefs**, this idiom underscores the inevitability of **death** and the concept of **divine will**. It teaches that death is

part of God's plan, and individuals should accept it as part of the natural order. This idiom encourages **resignation to fate** and emphasizes the belief that life's events, including death, are preordained by Allah.

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The idiom aligns with the Islamic belief in Qadar (divine decree). The Qur'an states:

*"Indeed, we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return."* (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:156)

This verse teaches acceptance of life's events as part of God's plan.

### "Mibpanggi sa maputi" (Someone died)

The idiom "white flag" symbolizes death in the community. It reflects the **spiritual** practice of mourning and acknowledging the deceased with respect. This idiom also reinforces **Islamic funeral practices**, where the dead are wrapped in white cloth, and emphasizes the **spiritual belief** in life after death and the **importance of showing reverence** for those who have passed.

This idiom reflects Islamic funeral practices and reverence for the deceased. The Qur'an says:

*"Every soul will taste death. Then to Us will you be returned."* (Surah Al-Ankabut 29:57)

It underscores the importance of honoring life and preparing for the hereafter.

### "Manot i tangila" (Easy to die)

"Small ears" metaphorically represents vulnerability and the uncertainty of life. It encourages people to live with the **awareness of life's fragility**, recognizing that death can come at any moment. This idiom calls for **faith in God's plan** and reminds individuals to live virtuously in preparation for the afterlife.

The idiom emphasizes life's fragility and the need for preparation. The Qur'an reminds:

*"And no soul knows in what land it will die. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted."*  
(Surah Luqman 31:34)

It teaches individuals to live righteously and be mindful of life's brevity.

### "Kagkaputi na uwak" (Impossible)

"White crow" symbolizes the idea that some things are impossible, but only **Allah** has the power to make the impossible happen. This idiom emphasizes **faith** in God's power and encourages individuals to place their trust in the divine, knowing that no matter how difficult a situation, it is in God's hands.

The idiom reflects faith in Allah's power. The Qur'an says:

*"Indeed, Allah is over all things competent."*  
(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:284)

It teaches trust in divine intervention and the belief that Allah can achieve the impossible.

### "Nakasugkul sa langit" (Extreme happiness)

The idiom represents profound joy, often as a **blessing from God**. It encourages individuals to **express gratitude** when experiencing happiness, recognizing that such moments are divine gifts. It reinforces the idea that **happiness** should not be taken for granted, and **thankfulness to Allah** is essential.

This idiom aligns with expressing gratitude for blessings. The Qur'an states:

*"If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]."* (Surah Ibrahim 14:7)

It reinforces the value of gratitude as a form of worship.

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## Political Values

Political Values refer to the principles and beliefs that shape leadership, governance, and societal expectations regarding power and authority. These values define the moral and ethical standards leaders are expected to uphold, such as justice, integrity, responsibility, and service to the community. In the context of

Maguindanaon idioms, political values emphasize the importance of leadership rooted in humility, fairness, and the prioritization of collective welfare over personal ambition. These values align with cultural and religious teachings that advocate for responsible governance and the ethical exercise of power.

**Table 2.3.** Political Values of Magindanaon Idioms

Count	Magindanaon Idioms	Political Ideologies
1	Kembabal in Udtuan	Being a good leader
2	Mangasela I aleb nin	Being a good leader

### "Kemabaal sa udtuan" (Greedy)

The idiom criticizes the **power-hungry** individual, emphasizing the importance of responsible leadership. It reflects the **Maguindanaon view** that leaders should serve the community, not act out of selfish ambition. It serves as a reminder to leaders to prioritize the **welfare of others** over personal gain.

Islam warns against the misuse of power. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

*"The leader of a people is their servant."* (Sunan Abu Dawood 2858)

This idiom reflects the Islamic ideal of leadership rooted in service and humility.

### "Mangasela i alebin" (Datu/Leader)

Referring to a **Datu** (chief or leader), this idiom emphasizes the **moral qualities** expected of leaders, such as **wisdom**, **integrity**, and **responsibility**. The idiom highlights the community's expectation that those in power should **serve the people** with respect and fairness, guiding them with compassion and authority.

This idiom emphasizes the qualities of a good leader. The Qur'an advises:

*"Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice."* (Surah An-Nisa 4:58)

It highlights the expectation of fairness and integrity in leadership.

## Cultural Values

Cultural Values refer to the shared beliefs, norms, and principles that shape the behaviors, attitudes, and traditions of a community. These values influence how individuals interact, make decisions, and contribute to society. In the context of Maguindanaon idioms, cultural values emphasize intelligence, wisdom, and continuous

learning as essential traits. They reflect the community's appreciation for critical thinking, problem-solving, and intellectual growth, reinforcing the belief that knowledge and mental sharpness are fundamental to personal and collective progress.

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**Table 2.5.** Cultural Values of Magindanaon Idioms

Count	Magindanawn Idioms	Cultural Appreciation
1	Molad I itungan	1. Intelligence
2	Utek na bulinaw	1. Having enough knowledge
3	Matebpul I utek	1. Having a sharp mind

**"Molad i itungan"**

*(Smart)*

The idiom refers to an individual who is **broad-minded** and intellectually capable. It encourages the **value of intelligence**, critical thinking, and decision-making. It reinforces the idea that **wisdom** and **problem-solving** are highly valued in the community.

Intelligence and wisdom are valued in Islam. The Qur'an says:

*"Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" (Surah Az-Zumar 39:9)*

This idiom emphasizes the importance of seeking knowledge and using intellect wisely.

**"Utek na bulinaw"**

*(Stupid)*

This idiom critiques a lack of intelligence or slow thinking, urging people to develop their cognitive abilities. It stresses the **value of education** and **intellectual growth**, encouraging individuals to enhance their mental capacity and actively engage in learning.

The idiom critiques ignorance, aligning with the Islamic encouragement of learning. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

**Discussion**

**Maguindanaon idioms** analyzed in this research are rich with cultural, moral, spiritual, social, political, and intellectual values, which not only reflect the community's worldview but

*"Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim." (Sunan Ibn Majah 224)*

It stresses the importance of continuous learning.

**"Matebpul i utek"**

*(Weak)*

"Dull brain" refers to someone who lacks sharpness in thinking. It promotes the **importance of critical thinking** and **mental agility**, suggesting that individuals should seek to improve their cognitive abilities and **engage in continuous learning** to better solve problems.

This idiom encourages intellectual growth, reflecting the Qur'an's emphasis on thinking deeply:

*"Do they not reflect upon themselves?" (Surah Ar-Rum 30:8)*

It teaches the value of improving one's mental abilities.

also serve as tools for reinforcing societal norms and preserving collective wisdom. These idioms convey deep insights into the expectations and behaviors valued by the Maguindanaon people, offering a powerful lens through which we can

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understand their way of life. Each group of idioms—categorized according to its moral, social, spiritual, political, and cultural significance—illustrates how language functions as both a reflection and a shaper of community values.

The **moral value idioms** emphasize personal conduct and ethical principles. For example, the idiom "*Di mapaulan sa timos*" ("unbeatable") highlights the value of **resilience** and **perseverance** in overcoming challenges, while "*Di maluto pagyawn*" ("not fully cooked") critiques dishonesty by symbolizing how external appearances can deceive. Idioms like "*Pebpilandok*" ("lying") and "*Malendo i lima*" ("thief") reinforce the moral importance of **honesty**, **integrity**, and **respect** for others' property. These idioms reflect **Cultural Linguistics** (Sharifian, 2017), where language serves as a repository for moral lessons that are passed down through generations, guiding individuals in their social interactions and personal conduct.

**Social value idioms** emphasize the importance of unity, respect, and interpersonal relationships within the community. The idiom "*Pikit a sulit*" ("inseparable"), symbolizing the strength of close relationships, reflects the Maguindanaon belief in **solidarity** and **cohesion**. This is consistent with **Sociolinguistics** (Labov, 1972), which suggests that language is a mechanism for reinforcing social structures and group identity. Similarly, "*Baw na onta*" ("camel smell") underscores the significance of **personal hygiene**, while "*Papedtibpon sa buwaya*" ("fight the crocodile") teaches **prudence** by warning against futile efforts and encouraging wise decision-making. These idioms help maintain **social harmony** and foster respect for shared community values.

The **spiritual value idioms** reflect the deep **Islamic** faith that permeates Maguindanaon society. The idiom "*Nawma na ukol*" ("destiny struck") conveys the belief in **divine will** and the **afterlife**, reinforcing the idea that death is a

natural part of God's plan. Similarly, "*Mibpanggi sa maputi*" ("someone died") and "*Kagkaputi na uwak*" ("impossible") symbolize the spiritual understanding of life's transience and the **belief in God's omnipotence**. These idioms emphasize the importance of **faith** and **resignation** to divine will, aligning with **Whorf's (1956)** theory that language reflects underlying cultural and spiritual beliefs.

The **political value idioms** offer insights into the Maguindanaon community's expectations for leadership and governance. Idioms like "*Kemabaal sa udtuan*" ("power-hungry") critique the pursuit of power for personal gain, highlighting the value of **ethical leadership** that prioritizes the welfare of the community over individual ambitions. The idiom "*Mangasela i alebin*" ("big knees") refers to a **Datu**, emphasizing the qualities of **wisdom**, **integrity**, and **responsibility** that are expected of leaders. These idioms reflect **Critical Discourse Analysis** (Fairclough, 2001), suggesting that language plays a key role in maintaining power dynamics and promoting ethical leadership.

Finally, the **cultural value idioms** reflect the community's **intellectual** and **moral standards**, emphasizing the importance of **critical thinking**, **wisdom**, and **self-improvement**. The idiom "*Molad i itungan*" ("broad-minded") celebrates intellectual capacity, while "*Utek na bulinaw*" ("anchovy brain") and "*Matebpul i utek*" ("dull brain") critique those who lack mental sharpness, underscoring the value placed on education and mental agility. These idioms align with **Cognitive Linguistics** (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), where metaphors are used to represent abstract qualities such as intelligence, shaping the community's approach to intellectual and personal growth.

In conclusion, the 25 Maguindanaon idioms analyzed in this study illustrate the profound role of language in preserving and transmitting cultural values. These idioms serve not only as tools for communication but also as instruments for maintaining social order, teaching moral lessons, reinforcing spiritual beliefs, and guiding

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leadership. Through these expressions, the Maguindanaon people continue to pass down their worldview, ensuring that future generations remain connected to their cultural heritage. By examining these idioms through the frameworks

of **Cultural Linguistics**, **Metaphor Theory**, **Sociolinguistics**, and **Critical Discourse Analysis**, we gain a deeper understanding of how language shapes and reflects the community's collective

## Implications

The research on **Maguindanaon idioms** has significant implications for educational research, particularly in language preservation, cultural awareness, and moral education. The study emphasizes the importance of integrating **Maguindanaon idioms** into the curriculum, especially in areas where the language is spoken. By incorporating idioms into language and cultural studies, educators can help students appreciate their linguistic and cultural heritage, ensuring that younger generations stay connected to their roots. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of both the language and the values embedded in it, and further research could explore the development of educational materials that include idioms and their cultural contexts to enhance language learning.

Additionally, the research highlights the role of idioms in promoting **cultural awareness** and **intercultural education**. Exposing students to idiomatic expressions from different languages encourages respect for diversity and enhances understanding across cultural boundaries. In multicultural classrooms, using idioms can promote empathy and encourage students to reflect on their own cultures while learning

about others. The study also shows how idioms can be used to teach **moral values** such as honesty, perseverance, and unity. By analyzing idioms like "*Di maluto pagyawn*" ("not fully cooked") and "*Pikit a sulit*" ("inseparable"), educators can instill ethical lessons in students, reinforcing the importance of truthfulness, resilience, and community cohesion.

Furthermore, the research points to the potential of idioms in **language revitalization efforts**. Idioms are a vital part of a language's cultural heritage, and their inclusion in educational settings can support the preservation and revitalization of endangered languages. This approach can ensure that both the language and the cultural values it represents continue to thrive. Additionally, using idioms in the classroom can foster **cross-generational learning**, allowing students to connect with their elders and preserve traditional knowledge. Future research could investigate the effectiveness of idioms in promoting **critical thinking** and **problem-solving skills**, as understanding idiomatic expressions requires students to think deeply about language, culture, and meaning.

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