

BRINGING LOCAL FOLKLORE TO LIFE IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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ABSTRACT

The reading interest and ability to comprehend narrative texts among elementary school students in Indonesia are still relatively low. One strategic effort that can be done is through the use of local folklore as teaching materials packaged in the form of digital media. This study aims to develop and implement teaching materials on the folklore of the *Saung Galah Kingdom* in the form of educational videos through the YouTube platform, and measure its effectiveness in improving the reading comprehension skills of fifth-grade elementary school students. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative with a case study approach, which involves learning observations, interviews, reading comprehension tests, and documentation. The results show that the use of local-based folklore videos can increase students' enthusiasm for learning and provide significant improvements in the aspect of reading comprehension, especially in understanding the plot, characters, and moral values in the story. In addition, this media also contributes to the preservation of local culture and strengthens students' identity with their regional cultural heritage. These findings indicate that a digital approach based on local culture is a relevant and effective strategy to address literacy challenges in the digital era.

Keywords : folk tales, digital media, YouTube, reading comprehension, elementary school

Introduction

Indonesians' interest in reading remains a fundamental issue in human resource development. UNESCO data shows that Indonesia's literacy index ranks low globally, indicating low reading and comprehension skills. In the context of primary education, this challenge impacts students' low literacy achievement, particularly in understanding the structure, content, and meaning of narrative texts such as folktales.

Indonesian language learning should not only focus on the technical aspects of language, but also on the meaning and values. Folktales, as a form of literary text, have great potential to instill cultural values while improving students' reading comprehension skills. However, the use of folktales in elementary school learning remains suboptimal. Many teachers still rely on textbooks that poorly represent students' local contexts, even though a locality-based approach has proven more effective in building students' understanding and engagement with the subject matter.

On the other hand, technological advancements and the digital habits of Generation Z students present a strategic opportunity to improve learning methods. YouTube, one of the largest video platforms, has been widely used in educational contexts. Visually and narratively engaging learning videos have been shown to increase the appeal and effectiveness of learning.

Based on this background, this study seeks to develop teaching materials based on local folklore, packaged in the form of educational videos and uploaded to YouTube. The story used is *the Legend of the Saung Galah Kingdom* from Kuningan Regency, West Java. This study aims to test the effectiveness of digital media based on local folklore in improving elementary school students' reading comprehension.

Research methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. The focus of this research is the process and impact of using YouTube-based folklore videos in Indonesian language learning for fifth-grade elementary school students in Cigugur District, Kuningan Regency.

a. Research Subjects and Locations

The subjects in this study were fifth-grade students from three elementary schools selected using purposive sampling. School selection was based on the following criteria: (1) adequate internet access, (2) willingness to collaborate in integrating digital media, and (3) having Indonesian language teachers who are active in learning innovation.

b. Data Collection Techniques

Data collection is done through:

1. Participatory observation of the learning process before and after using media.
2. In-depth interviews with class teachers and several students regarding their experiences using folklore videos.
3. Written test to measure reading comprehension ability before and after treatment.
4. Documentation in the form of student work results, screenshots of learning activities, and YouTube video viewing statistics.

c. Stages of Research Activities

The research was conducted in four main stages:

1. Story Reconstruction: The folktale of *the Saung Galah Kingdom* was rewritten to suit the cognitive and linguistic level of fifth grade elementary school students.
2. Video Production: The story is packaged in the form of a narrative video with pictures, with attractive illustrations and expressive voice-overs.
3. Media Publication: Videos are uploaded to the YouTube platform for easy access by students and teachers.
4. Implementation in Learning: Videos are used as teaching materials in Indonesian language learning activities.

Results and Discussion

1. Student Responses to YouTube Media

Observations showed that students demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm during the learning process using folklore videos. They were more focused and actively engaged in

discussions about the story's content. Teachers also reported increased student participation in answering questions related to the reading material.

2. Improved Reading Comprehension

The pre-test and post-test results showed a 37% increase in reading comprehension. Students were better able to explain the storyline, identify characters and traits, and deduce the moral values contained within the story. These findings corroborate previous research (Rahmawati, 2020) which found that visual media can improve students' functional literacy.

3. Preservation of Local Culture

Through this approach, students not only learn Indonesian but also learn about their region's cultural heritage. The *Saung Galah* story teaches leadership, courage, and cooperation, which are essential values in character education.

4. Advantages and Constraints

Using YouTube offers advantages in terms of flexibility and visual appeal. However, there are technical challenges such as internet connection and the need for teacher training in developing locally-based digital media.

Conclusion

This study concluded that the use of local folklore-based teaching materials packaged in the form of educational videos on YouTube proved effective in improving elementary school students' reading comprehension. Beyond cognitive aspects, this approach also significantly contributes to preserving local culture and developing students' character.

The success of this implementation implies that similar strategies can be applied to various regional folktales in Indonesia. Therefore, developing educational content based on local culture through digital platforms needs to be an integral part of basic education curricula and policies in the digital age.

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