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## DESIGNING LOCAL CULTURE-BASED CANVA NARRATIVES TO ENHANCE READING SKILLS FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** The study aimed to develop culturally relevant reading materials for eighth-grade students at one of the state junior school in Ponorogo, Indonesia, using Canva as a digital platform. The primary objective was to improve students' reading comprehension by integrating local cultural narratives, such as the stories of Reog Ponorogo and Lake Ngebel, into narrative texts. The research employed the ADDIE model to systematically design and implement these materials, with phases including analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. In the Analysis phase, student needs were assessed through questionnaires, revealing that students struggled with narrative structure and found traditional reading materials disengaging. The Design and Development phases involved creating visually engaging, culturally relevant narrative materials using Canva. The materials were then tested in the classroom, where students interacted with the

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content through reading tasks and quizzes. Findings showed significant improvements in students' engagement and reading comprehension. Over 80% of the participants reported that the materials were more relatable and easier to understand than traditional texts. The study concluded that integrating local culture into reading materials through digital platforms like Canva enhances both student motivation and learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** *Canva, local culture, narrative, reading skills*

## INTRODUCTION

Reading, one of the core language skills alongside listening, speaking, and writing, is fundamental to language acquisition and literacy development (Erdoğan, 2019; Kadel, 2020). Modern pedagogy emphasizes the integration of these skills to foster comprehensive language competence (Nielsen-Rodríguez et al., 2022; Wahyuni & Anhar, 2020), instead reading is often seen as the foundation of language learning. It enables learners to access, interpret, and internalize information from various texts (Grabe & Stoller, 2019; Walter, 2003) making it essential for academic success. In the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) instruction, especially in Indonesia, reading plays a dual role: it helps students understand English texts and enhances their linguistic and cognitive abilities (Goldenberg, 2020; Taboada Barber et al., 2020; Xu & Sun, 2019).

In Indonesia, teaching reading in English aims to equip students with the skills to process written information effectively, helping them engage with global content (Erdoğan, 2019; Gupta, 2019; Wahyuni & Anhar, 2020; Maruf & Halyna, 2023). English, as the global lingua franca, makes proficiency in reading critical for students to access academic literature and participate in global discussions (Jabeen et al., 2021; Zeng et al., 2023). Developing strong reading skills is not just a linguistic necessity but also an academic imperative for students to excel in their studies (Julita, 2024; Kane & Martin, 2024).

Reading exposes students to diverse content, expanding their perspectives and understanding of the world (Anggraini & Cahyono, 2020; Duke & Cartwright, 2021). The phrase "Reading is the window to the world" encapsulates its significance, as it allows learners to explore different cultures, histories, and ideologies (Levesque et al., 2019; Meretoja et al., 2022; Radway, 2022; Stein, 2019). However, the need to cultivate effective reading skills in Indonesian classrooms is often hindered by limitations in existing approaches (Maruf & Halyna, 2023; Pramana et al., 2021). Traditional reading materials are frequently disconnected from students' lived experiences, lacking cultural relevance and failing to engage their interest (Johnson et al., 2021; Krishan et al., 2020; Owens et al., 2020; Pucci et al., 2019).

One key issue is the reliance on standardized textbooks that focus on comprehension questions but offer little in terms of engaging, culturally relevant content (Larson et al., 2020; Parkhouse et al., 2019; Wynter-Hoyte et al., 2019; Yuan, 2023). As a result, students may struggle to connect with the material, leading to a lack of confidence and interest in reading (Barber & Klauda, 2020; Budjalemba & Listyani, 2020; Mason et al., 2023). Narratives can play a powerful role in the teaching process by making abstract concepts relatable and enhancing comprehension (Doan & Quyen, 2023; Florentina Robert & Syahtia Pane, 2020; Mayasari et al., 2021; Saputra & Muntasir, 2021). Through stories, students can connect emotionally with the material, develop empathy, and expand their cultural awareness (Henry & Thorsen, 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020; Särkelä & Suoranta, 2020). In language learning, narratives provide authentic linguistic input, helping students acquire vocabulary and grammar in meaningful contexts (Gao et al., 2023; Gutierrez Arvizu, 2020; Şentürk & Kahraman, 2020). Moreover, narratives stimulate creativity, imagination, and critical thinking, making learning more dynamic and reflective of real-world communication (Cleminson & Cowie, 2021; Ibda et al., 2023; Liveley et al., 2021; Sanchez-Lopez et al., 2020).

Traditional approaches to reading instruction often rely on standardized, decontextualized texts that prioritize language

mechanics over meaningful engagement (Loretto, 2019; Perez, 2023; Sewall, 2022; Maruf & Anjely, 2020). In such methods, students are typically exposed to generic content that lacks cultural or personal relevance, which can lead to disengagement and limited retention of material (Barbera et al., 2020; Coleman et al., 2024; Zuhri et al., 2021). These conventional models focus heavily on comprehension strategies and rote learning, emphasizing technical skills like vocabulary acquisition and grammar without fostering deeper connections between the text and the learner's lived experience (Islahuddin, 2023; Jin, 2024; Miolo et al., 2023; Rorintulus & Wuntu, 2023). In contrast, this current research introduces a more dynamic approach by developing local culture-based narrative reading materials using Canva, tailored specifically to the local cultural context. This innovative method not only addresses linguistic skills but also embeds cultural narratives that resonate with students' identities and backgrounds, creating a more immersive and meaningful learning experience (Maruf & Halyna, 2023; Purwantoro et al., 2021; Ulyah et al., 2021). By integrating visual design elements through Canva, the reading materials become more engaging and accessible, enhancing both student motivation and comprehension (A Rosydiyah, 2022; Maruf, 2023; Zuhri et al., 2021). This approach departs from the traditional reading models by emphasizing cultural relevance, personalization, and the use of digital platforms to create interactive and visually stimulating content, thus making reading both a cognitive and emotional experience.

According to Canva's website, the platform offers educational tools designed to boost creativity and teamwork among students of all levels. It is the only design tool needed in a classroom, helping to make learning more creative, visual, and engaging while also fostering collaboration. Benefits and examples of using Canva application's media in Reading Narrative Text in practice, students are expected to Understand texts that meet specific requirements. Traditionally, they would write an advertisement text in a notebook. However, with advances in technology, students can now use design tools like Canva to create these texts. After teachers show students how to make

promotional content, they can introduce Canva as a helpful tool for designing it.

Previous research has demonstrated that utilizing Canva-based local culture materials can offer a creative solution to make learning more engaging in the classroom. A study carried out by Yundayani (2019) who found that using Canva in educational settings increased students' creativity and engagement. The study highlighted that the platform's diverse templates and design tools enabled students to express their ideas visually, leading to a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Similarly, Le et al. (2023), investigating the effects Canva-based E-portofolio in L2 writing and students' attitudes concluded that Canva fosters a student-centered learning environment, allowing learners to develop critical 21st-century skills such as creativity, collaboration, and communication.

Canva's user-friendly interface and versatility as an online application make it particularly useful for both teachers and students, as noted by Santika et al. (2023) and Selvia Widiarti et al. (2024), they emphasized that Canva's design features help bridge the gap between traditional learning methods and the technological competencies needed in today's world.

In line with these findings, this research builds upon these studies by incorporating Canva-based materials grounded in local culture to develop narrative reading resources. While previous research has generally focused on the application of Canva to foster creativity and technological skills, my study specifically addresses the need for culturally relevant content in the classroom. Research by Siregar et al. (2023) shows that culturally relevant teaching materials can significantly enhance student engagement and comprehension. However, many schools in Indonesia continue to rely on generic, globally oriented reading materials that may not resonate with students' local cultural experiences, as also pointed out by Hanifa et al. (2024).

By integrating local cultural elements into Canva-based reading materials, this study seeks to address the gap left by previous research,

which has primarily focused on general pedagogical applications of Canva or culturally neutral content. Earlier studies, such as those by Yundayani (2019), emphasized the platform's role in fostering creativity and engagement, while Le et al. (2023) highlighted its impact on students' 21st-century skills in language learning. However, these studies lacked a targeted exploration of culturally embedded content as a means to enhance student motivation and comprehension. In response, this study expands the scope by embedding local cultural narratives, such as the legends of Reog Ponorogo and Lake Ngebel, into the learning process. This innovative approach not only makes the content more relatable and meaningful but also fills the void in culturally responsive pedagogy by providing a model that integrates localized content with modern digital tools like Canva.

In response to this gap, this study aims to develop narrative reading materials based on the local culture using Canva as a creative platform. Canva's intuitive design features make it an ideal tool for producing visually engaging, culturally rich reading content. By incorporating local cultural stories and elements, the reading materials are expected to be more relatable and stimulating for students especially students in junior high school. This study addresses the following questions: How can local culture-based narrative reading materials be developed using Canva? To what extent can these materials improve students' engagement and reading comprehension? By answering these questions, the research contributes to the growing body of literature on culturally responsive pedagogy in Indonesian schools, highlighting the importance of aligning educational content with students' cultural backgrounds.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study utilized the ADDIE model—an established framework in instructional design—to systematically develop culturally relevant narrative reading materials for eighth-grade students. The ADDIE model, with its five distinct phases (Analysis,

Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation), provides a robust structure that allows for iterative refinement and alignment with educational goals (Almelhi, 2021; Ganefri et al., 2020). The flexibility and adaptability of this model make it ideal for addressing the specific needs of the target audience while incorporating local cultural content. By applying this systematic framework, the research ensures that the instructional materials not only meet the curriculum objectives but also engage students through a culturally immersive approach, as supported by previous studies conducted by Budoya et al.(2019) and Handrianto et al. (2021).

### **Participants and Settings**

The study was conducted at SMPN 2 Kauman Junior High School in Ponorogo, Indonesia, involving 27 eighth-grade students from class 8-D. This school, located in a culturally rich region of East Java, provided the ideal setting for the exploration of local cultural narratives in educational contexts. The participants, aged between 13 and 14, represent a typical demographic in Indonesian public schools, where English is taught as a foreign language. The students' existing familiarity with local legends, such as the origins of Reog Ponorogo and the legends of Lake Ngebel and Golan Mirah, was crucial in shaping the culturally embedded narrative reading materials developed in this study.

### **Instruments**

To gather data and assess the students' needs, a closed-ended questionnaire was designed, comprising 13 carefully constructed statements with binary "yes" or "no" responses. The questionnaire was divided into two key sections: the first set of eight statements (No. 1 to 8) focused on the students' familiarity with and preferences for narrative texts, probing their engagement with story structure, character development, and thematic relevance. This aspect was crucial in identifying the students' current exposure to and comfort with narrative reading. The second set of statements, from nine through

thirteen, concentrated on the students' needs concerning the design and presentation of reading materials, specifically addressing their preferences for culturally relevant content and visually engaging formats.. This instrument enabled the researcher to quantify student responses and systematically analyses the data to ensure the instructional materials met the learners' needs. Additionally, Canva was employed as a digital tool for designing the visually engaging narrative texts, further enhancing the instructional delivery.

### **Procedure**

The research adhered to the structured phases of the ADDIE model. Initially, the Analysis phase involved a thorough needs assessment, where data from the student questionnaires were used to determine gaps in comprehension and engagement with narrative texts. In the Design phase, the content layout, including narrative structure and visual design, was mapped out, with a focus on integrating local cultural themes. The Development phase entailed creating the narrative materials using Canva, ensuring that they were visually appealing and pedagogically sound. In the Implementation phase, these materials were introduced in the classroom to test their effectiveness in enhancing narrative comprehension. Finally, the Evaluation phase involved both formative and summative assessments to refine the materials based on student feedback and performance, allowing for further improvement before wider implementation.

In Analysis Phase the research began by analysing the learning goals outlined in the Independent Curriculum (Learning Outcome) set by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of Indonesia. Specifically, Phase D of the curriculum emphasized narrative texts as essential for enhancing communicative competence, requiring students to articulate their thoughts and experiences fluently in English. A preliminary test conducted with eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Kauman Ponorogo identified key challenges, including limited vocabulary and difficulties comprehending narrative text structures. These findings highlighted a need for culturally relevant,



engaging learning materials that support vocabulary acquisition and reading skills.

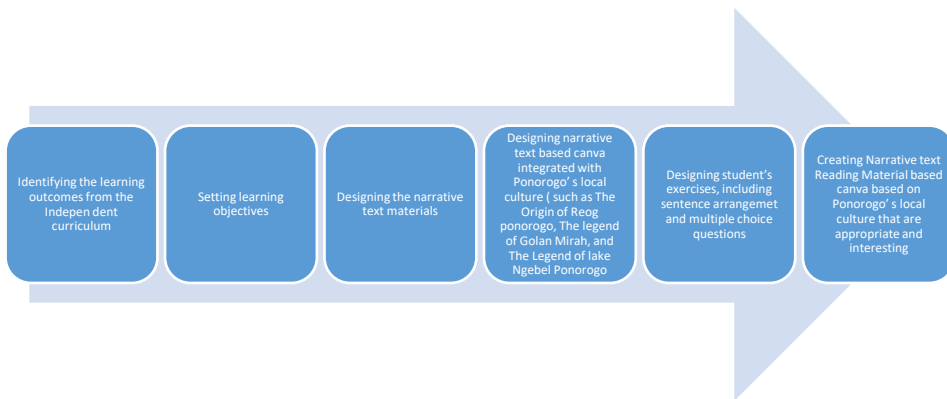
Based on the analysis, clear learning objectives were established, focusing on improving students' ability to read and comprehend narrative texts. The design of the instructional materials centralizes on using Canva to create visually engaging and culturally relevant content, integrating well-known local legends like "The Origin of Reog Ponorogo," "The Legend of Golan Mirah," and "The Legend of Lake Ngebel Ponorogo." These narratives were carefully selected to align with both linguistic and cultural learning outcomes, aiming to foster students' engagement with narrative structures while reflecting their cultural identity. Exercises were also designed to reinforce narrative comprehension and grammar skills.

In the Development phase, the researchers developed the Canva-based narrative reading materials. The narratives were not only culturally contextualized but also visually enriched to enhance student engagement. Canva's design tools were utilized to create interactive, visually appealing materials that made the texts more accessible and appealing to students. Exercises such as sentence arrangement tasks and comprehension questions were integrated into the materials to test understanding and promote critical thinking. The development process underwent a rigorous validation phase, where experts in English language education and curriculum design reviewed the materials to ensure their pedagogical soundness, cultural relevance, and alignment with the Independent Curriculum's literacy goals. This validation helped refine the content to better meet students' needs for interactive and culturally resonant learning materials.

In the Implementation Phase, the developed materials were introduced in the classroom, where students engaged with the Canva-based narrative texts during English lessons. This phase allowed the researchers to observe how students interacted with the culturally rich, visually enhanced narratives, and how the digital platform improved their motivation and engagement. Students participated in various classroom activities, such as group discussions and individual reading

tasks, using the materials to practice narrative comprehension and communicative skills in English. The digital format and local culture-focused content made the learning process more dynamic and interactive.

In Evaluation Phase, both formative and summative assessments were conducted to measure the effectiveness of the materials in improving students' engagement and comprehension. Feedback from teachers and students was collected to refine the materials further. By integrating Ponorogo's local culture and using Canva as a digital tool, the study successfully met its goals of enhancing both student motivation and language proficiency, demonstrating the potential of culturally contextualized digital materials in language instruction. The following figure describes the procedure of developing local culture-based Canva narratives



**Figure 1.** The procedures of designing Canva -based narrative reading material

### Data Collection

Data was collected using the 13-question closed-ended questionnaire administered to 27 students. Responses were recorded, quantified, and analysed to identify key areas where students faced challenges with narrative text comprehension and English language proficiency. In addition to the questionnaires, observational data were gathered during the classroom implementation phase, which consisted

of three sessions each lasting 80 minutes. These sessions included formative assessments in the form of quizzes and comprehension exercises designed to evaluate students' ability to identify key narrative elements like orientation, complication, and resolution. Student performance in these tasks, coupled with their feedback, provided the necessary data to assess real-time engagement and interaction with the Canva-based materials. These insights informed the evaluation of the instructional intervention's effectiveness and guided future modifications. Student performance in reading comprehension tasks, coupled with their feedback, provided the necessary data to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional intervention and inform future modifications.

### **Data Analysis**

Data was collected using a 13-question closed-ended questionnaire administered to 27 students. Responses were recorded, quantified, and analyzed to identify key areas where students faced challenges with narrative text comprehension and English language proficiency. The intervention was conducted across three classroom sessions, each lasting 80 minutes, during which students engaged with Canva-based narrative reading materials. To assess the effectiveness of the instructional intervention, formative assessments were employed, including quizzes and comprehension exercises designed to evaluate students' ability to identify key narrative elements such as orientation, complication, and resolution. These assessments were complemented by observational data gathered during classroom activities, focusing on real-time student engagement and interaction with the materials.

Student performance in these tasks was evaluated against predefined criteria, such as accuracy in identifying narrative elements and active participation during discussions. Additionally, qualitative feedback collected from students provided further insights into their learning experiences, contributing to a comprehensive assessment of the instructional intervention's impact.

## FINDINGS

In the Analysis phase, the researchers conducted a thorough needs assessment to better understand the specific requirements of eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Kauman Junior High School in Ponorogo regarding narrative reading materials. A total of 27 students from class 8-D participated in this study. To gather data, a closed-ended questionnaire was administered, consisting of thirteen carefully designed statements with binary "yes" or "no" response options. This format was chosen to ensure clarity and ease of response, while also allowing for quantifiable data that could be systematically analyzed.

**Table 1.**

*The questionnaire result*

No	Questions	Students' Response	
		Yes	No
1.	Do you find it difficult to understand English reading materials provided in class?	26	1
2.	Do you have difficulty understanding the structure of narrative texts (e.g., identifying the orientation, complication, and resolution)?	27	0
3.	Do you struggle to identify the characters, settings, or themes in the narrative texts you read?	25	2
4.	Are you able to understand the language features used in narrative texts (e.g., past tense, descriptive language)?	1	26
5.	Do you often find it hard to construct your own narrative text (e.g., organizing ideas into a clear story)?	24	3
6.	Does the narrative text in your current English textbook help you understand the stories better?	3	24
7.	Would you prefer reading narrative texts that include local cultural stories from Ponorogo?	25	2
8.	Do you think you would better understand narrative texts if the material was presented in a visually engaging format, like Canva?	26	1
9.	Are you familiar with the origin story of Reog Ponorogo?	27	0
10.	Have you heard or read about the Legend of Lake Ngebel?	27	0
11.	Are you familiar with the Legend of Golan Mirah?	27	0

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12.	Do you think learning about these local legends through English narrative texts would help improve your reading skills?	25	2
13.	Would you be more engaged in reading if the narrative texts were based on Ponorogo's local culture and presented through Canva?	27	0

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### **Design Phase**

In the design phase, the insights gained during the analysis were transformed into a blueprint for the creation of culturally relevant narrative reading materials. The design was centralized on leveraging Canva, a versatile digital platform, to create visually appealing and pedagogically sound materials. The design focused on aligning the narrative texts with local cultural themes to foster deeper student engagement. Special attention was given to ensuring that the materials were accessible to students with different levels of English proficiency, utilizing visual aids, multimedia elements, and culturally familiar contexts to support language acquisition and comprehension. The design also incorporated interactive elements such as embedded quizzes and comprehension exercises to encourage active learning and self-assessment. This phase was crucial in shaping the structure and layout of the materials, ensuring that they were not only culturally responsive but also aligned with the educational objectives of narrative text learning.

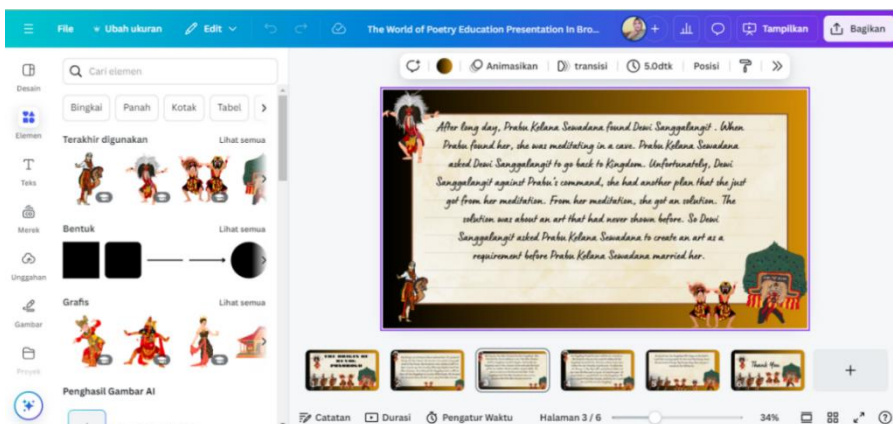
### **Development Phase**

The development phase saw the actual creation of the culturally contextualized narrative reading materials using Canva. Building on the design blueprint, the materials were developed to include vivid illustrations, culturally relevant narratives, and multimedia enhancements. Canva's user-friendly interface allowed for the seamless integration of text, images, and interactive components, creating a dynamic and engaging learning experience for students. The development process prioritized the visual and interactive elements, ensuring that the materials catered to both visual and kinesthetic

learners. Additionally, the narratives were carefully crafted to maintain the integrity of Ponorogo's cultural heritage while being pedagogically structured to highlight key narrative elements such as orientation, complication, and resolution. The digital format of the materials made them flexible and adaptable for various teaching settings, whether in physical classrooms or online learning environments.

At this stage of development, the narrative reading materials remain in the form of a prototype, incorporating the initial design elements. The researcher utilized Canva to create these narrative reading materials, drawing heavily on aspects of Ponorogo's local culture. The following outlines the techniques employed in the development process:

- 1) The researchers designed engaging and culturally relevant narrative reading materials using Canva, carefully integrating elements of Ponorogo's local wisdom to ensure the content is both appropriate and captivating for students. The materials were crafted to reflect the region's heritage, focusing on design, content, and language to create a seamless blend of cultural authenticity and educational value. These materials aim to foster a deeper cultural connection while enhancing students' reading comprehension skills. The following images show the process of designing local culture-based narrative in Canva.



	
<p>The narrative reading text material 1</p>	<p>The narrative reading text material 2</p>
	
<p>Vocabulary Notes</p>	<p>Generic Structure of Narrative Text Material</p>
	
<p>The Social Function of Narrative Text</p>	<p>Language Feature of Narrative Text Material</p>

Figure 2. Creating narrative reading material using Canva

## 2) Creating lesson plan using narrative reading based on Ponorogo's local culture.

Table 2.

### *Lesson Plan*

CHAPTER I	NARRATIVE TEXTS
Learning Outcome	By the end of Phase D, students are expected to have the ability to communicate and reason appropriately according to purpose, context, social, and academic settings.
Component of Achievement	<b>Reading - Understanding</b> Students are able to read and respond to texts containing structures and grammar they have learned, with familiar themes from their daily lives. They can identify and evaluate information with specific details from various texts. These texts may take the form of written or visual media that they often encounter in their environment. Students identify the purpose of the text and begin to infer the main information contained within it.
Keywords	Narrative texts, verb 2 (past tense), regular and irregular verbs
Time Allocation	2 lesson hours (1 session)
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	
MAIN LEARNING OBJECTIVE (TP 8.1).	Students are able to identify the function, structure, and linguistic features of personal narrative texts in written and oral forms to create a simple and clear narrative text based on their experiences, according to its usage context.
<b>Sub-Learning Objectives</b>	
1.	Students are able to determine the structure of narrative texts by identifying ideas and information regarding the topic, setting, characters, and events.
2.	Students are able to identify linguistic features, including past tense, conjunctions, time sequence words, and descriptive language.



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3. Students are able to comprehend the relationship between text structure and linguistic features based on the topic, setting, characters, events, and context.
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### **Implementation Phase**

The implementation phase involved piloting the Canva-based narrative reading materials in an actual classroom setting. This phase served as a critical testing ground to observe how the students engaged with the culturally relevant content and the interactive features of the materials. Initial observations indicated a marked increase in student interest and participation, particularly when interacting with the narrative texts that resonated with their cultural background. The visually enriched format of the materials, along with the interactive quizzes and comprehension exercises embedded within the texts, significantly enhanced student engagement. Students exhibited a greater willingness to participate in discussions and demonstrated an improved ability to identify narrative structures compared to traditional textbook materials. The digital nature of the materials also facilitated a more flexible and interactive learning environment, allowing for both individual and collaborative activities.

After the validation stage, the research advanced to the field trial phase, which aimed to assess the effectiveness and practical utility of the developed instructional media. This trial was conducted in a single 80-minute session, during which the researcher implemented the media in a real classroom setting. Prior to the trial, the researcher prepared a detailed lesson plan to ensure that the learning activities were structured, efficient, and aligned with the intended educational outcomes. The trial took place at SMP Negeri 2 Kauman Ponorogo, involving 27 students from the eighth-grade D class.

The next phase is the implementation stage, where the narrative reading materials, having been validated and deemed suitable for classroom use, were applied in a real educational setting. The researcher introduced the narrative text reading materials, based on Ponorogo's local culture, to the students. This implementation took

place across three sessions on July 23, 24, and 29, 2024, with each session lasting 80 minutes (2 Lesson Hours). The teaching process followed a pre-designed lesson plan to ensure an organized and effective learning experience. After students engaged with and observed the media, the researcher distributed questionnaires to gather student feedback on the narrative text reading materials grounded in Ponorogo's cultural heritage, assessing their reception and effectiveness.

### **Evaluation Phase**

In the evaluation phase, both formative and summative assessments were conducted to gauge the effectiveness of the newly developed materials. Formative assessments, such as quizzes and comprehension exercises, were administered during the implementation phase to monitor ongoing student progress. Summative assessments, including post-implementation surveys and feedback questionnaires, provided additional qualitative data on student engagement and learning outcomes. Over 80% of the students reported that the new materials were easier to understand and more enjoyable compared to traditional texts. The evaluation also revealed a deeper connection between the students and the content, as many expressed pride in engaging with stories that reflected their own cultural heritage. This sense of cultural connection not only fostered greater engagement but also contributed to improved cognitive retention and comprehension. The evaluation phase confirmed the success of the materials in meeting both pedagogical goals and student needs, highlighting the potential for broader application in similar educational contexts. The researchers conducted a final evaluation by distributing questionnaires to the eighth-grade D students at SMP Negeri 2 Kauman Ponorogo, a junior high school in Ponorogo, Indonesia. These questionnaires were specifically designed to assess the narrative reading materials created using Canva. The evaluation focused on three key aspects: media presentation, content quality, and usability. The closed-ended questionnaire, offering "yes" or "no"

responses, was structured into three sections: six statements addressing the media display, three statements evaluating the material itself, and two statements examining the usability of the media. This approach provided a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness and user experience of the developed narrative reading materials.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study demonstrate that integrating local cultural narratives into reading materials, facilitated by digital tools like Canva, significantly enhances both student engagement and comprehension. By grounding the content in familiar cultural contexts, students felt more connected and motivated, which led to improved participation and interaction during classroom activities. This cultural connection, paired with Canva's multimedia capabilities, allowed for a richer and more dynamic learning environment. The study also highlights how culturally responsive pedagogy, supported by digital tools, can bridge the gap between students' lived experiences and academic learning, making educational content more meaningful and relatable.

By integrating local cultural elements into Canva-based reading materials, this study seeks to address the gap left by previous research, which has primarily focused on general pedagogical applications of Canva or culturally neutral content. Earlier studies, such as those by Yundayani (2019), emphasized the platform's role in fostering creativity and engagement, while Le et al. (2023) highlighted its impact on students' 21st-century skills in language learning. However, these studies lacked a targeted exploration of culturally embedded content as a means to enhance student motivation and comprehension. In response, this study expands the scope by embedding local cultural narratives, such as the legends of Reog Ponorogo and Lake Ngebel, into the learning process. This innovative approach not only makes the content more relatable and meaningful but also fills the void in

culturally responsive pedagogy by providing a model that integrates localized content with modern digital tools like Canva.

These findings have broader educational implications, particularly for language learning contexts. By incorporating local cultural content into educational materials and utilizing digital platforms like Canva, educators can create more inclusive and engaging learning environments. The success of this approach suggests that culturally relevant materials not only enhance cognitive engagement but also promote better retention and comprehension of complex narrative elements. Future research should explore the scalability of this model across different cultural contexts and its long-term effects on language acquisition and literacy development, potentially offering a roadmap for integrating culturally responsive pedagogy with modern educational technology.

This targeted approach aligns with the findings of previous studies, such as those by Budoya et al. (2019), which emphasize the importance of assessing learners' specific needs to create more effective instructional materials. By providing detailed explanations for each of the questionnaire's thirteen statements, the researcher sought to ensure that the assessment comprehensively covered both narrative structure and material design. The ultimate goal was to align the development of the Canva-based reading materials with the students' expectations, learning styles, and cultural context, thereby enhancing both engagement and comprehension. This needs-based assessment method reflects a key principle in instructional design, as highlighted by Carroll et al. (2021); Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) and Stanja et al. (2023) that understanding the learner's needs is fundamental to the success of any educational intervention.

A thorough needs analysis was conducted to assess the specific requirements of students in relation to narrative texts and reading materials. This was achieved through the administration of a detailed student needs questionnaire, which was designed to explore two key areas: the students' understanding of narrative text structure and features, and their preferences for reading materials. The results from

the questionnaire revealed that a number of students still faced significant challenges in comprehending the general structure of narrative texts, particularly with regard to recognizing key elements such as orientation, complication, and resolution, as well as understanding the specific language features that define narrative writing. Additionally, students expressed difficulty in organizing and constructing narrative texts independently, indicating a need for more targeted instructional support in these areas.

In the aspect of reading material, the questionnaire results showed a clear preference for learning resources that incorporate local cultural elements. Students overwhelmingly agreed that learning narrative texts through culturally relevant content, particularly using Canva as a design tool, would enhance their comprehension and engagement. They highlighted the importance of having access to complete English narrative texts rooted in their local Ponorogo culture, as this not only made the material more relatable but also helped bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. This aligns with previous studies, such as those by Handrianto et al. (2021) and Budoya et al. (2019), which emphasize the significance of culturally responsive pedagogy in improving student outcomes, particularly in language learning.

In response to these findings, the researcher set out to develop narrative reading materials specifically tailored to the needs of these students. Using Canva as the primary platform, the materials were designed to incorporate stories and themes from Ponorogo's rich cultural heritage, providing students with a familiar context that would facilitate deeper understanding of narrative structures and enhance overall literacy skills. This approach not only supports previous research on the importance of localized content in language learning but also innovates by integrating modern digital tools to create visually engaging and interactive learning resources, further supporting students' comprehension of narrative texts.

## CONCLUSION

The study demonstrated that integrating local culture-based narrative reading materials through Canva significantly enhanced both student engagement and reading comprehension. By embedding culturally relevant stories, such as the legends of Reog Ponorogo and Lake Ngebel, the reading materials became more relatable and meaningful for students. This connection fostered a deeper understanding of the texts, as students were able to link their personal and cultural experiences with the learning material, thus enhancing their motivation and comprehension. The use of Canva, with its visually rich and interactive design features, further contributed to this engagement by transforming traditional text-based learning into a more dynamic, visually appealing, and interactive experience.

However, the study also presented certain limitations. One key limitation was the relatively small sample size of 27 students from a single school in Ponorogo, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research should involve a broader and more diverse participant pool, encompassing students from different schools and regions, to determine whether these results can be replicated in varying cultural contexts. Moreover, the study focused on short-term effects, measuring immediate improvements in engagement and comprehension. Future studies should extend the research period to assess the long-term impact of culturally relevant materials on students' reading skills and overall language acquisition.

Additionally, while Canva proved effective in this context, it is important to consider the role of technology accessibility and digital literacy, which may vary across educational settings. Schools with limited technological infrastructure could struggle to implement such tools effectively. Therefore, further investigation into the challenges and solutions related to technology integration in under-resourced schools is necessary. In conclusion, this study underscores the potential of combining digital tools with culturally contextualized content to enhance student learning. Expanding research to include a wider participant base, longer-term studies, and addressing technological

barriers will be essential for further validating and refining these educational innovations.

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