

STRENGTHENING EARLY LITERACY BASED ON LOCAL CULTURE: DESIGN AND VALIDATION OF THE INTERACTIVE MULTIMEDIA “SI LEUNGLI” FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Intan Budi Komara^{1*}, Faisal Sadam Murrone², Linda Munawarti³, Intan Tri Agustin⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Pendidikan Indonesia. Jl. Dr. Setiabudi No.229, Bandung, 40154, Indonesia

* Faisalsadam21@upi.edu

Abstract. *This study was driven by the limited availability of basic literacy teaching materials that integrate local cultural values for students in Phase A of elementary school. The research aims to develop and validate the interactive multimedia “Si Leungli” as a digital medium to strengthen basic literacy through West Javanese folklore. Using the Design and Development (D&D) approach with the PPE (Planning, Production, Evaluation) model, the study ensured a systematic and iterative process. In the planning stage, learning objectives were formulated according to the Merdeka Curriculum’s Phase A outcomes, focusing on early reading, basic writing, and text comprehension within a cultural context. The production stage produced an interactive audio-visual flipbook that includes folklore stories, engaging illustrations, and literacy activities such as reading, word guessing, writing, and coloring. In the evaluation stage, three categories of experts subject matter, learning, and media validated the product using a Likert-scale instrument, yielding a 94.8% feasibility score (excellent category). The results indicate that integrating folklore into interactive media enhances engagement, reading interest, and moral values like empathy, cooperation, and responsibility. The study contributes to culture-based emergent literacy theory and offers contextual, character-building learning innovations for early-grade teachers. In practice, this innovation can support Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 4 on Quality Education by promoting inclusive, equitable, and responsive early literacy learning.*

Keywords: *Early Literacy, Local Culture, Interactive Multimedia*

INTRODUCTION

Early literacy is an important foundation for children's development in thinking, language, and creativity. UNESCO (Setyorini & Masulah, 2020), emphasizes that early literacy plays a major role in determining children's future academic success, while the 2018 PISA results show that Indonesian students' literacy skills are still below the country average (Schleicher, 2019). A number of studies emphasize the need for a culturally-based contextual approach. Andriani & Pratama, (2023) show that providing picture books and children's fiction increases people's interest in reading, Haerudin & Cahyati, (2018) find that storytelling based on folk tales is effective in instilling responsibility, courage, and hard work. Rahmawati et al., (2023) reveal the values of justice and empathy in Lutung Kasarung, Imran, (2024) emphasizes the importance of folklore in preserving regional languages. Hidayatullah et al., (2023) also highlight the need for folklore-based digital media to support children's emergent literacy. Musaddad et al., (2025) emphasize the effectiveness of digital flipbooks based on folklore in character development, Anggraini et al., (2022) demonstrate that integrating folklore into English textbooks enriches learning while strengthening students' cultural identity.

Empirical evidence shows the real impact of folklore on improving literacy. Handoyo et al., (2020) developed an Android-based motion comic called *Lutung Kasarung* that attracts children's interest and helps parents convey noble values. Prawiyogi et al., (2025) through a case study in Karawang, proved that the local folklore of Mbah Bongkok is able to instill empathy and social responsibility. Rahman et al., (2023) researched West Javanese folklore and found its contribution to the moral literacy of fourth-grade students. Maureen et al., (2022) proved that storytelling, both oral and digital, improves vocabulary, narrative comprehension, and literacy motivation in early childhood. Samaniah & Rukanda, (2025) added that the role of parents in telling the *Lutung Kasarung* folktale increases children's self-confidence, Abidin et al., (2023) emphasized that the integration of folklore with mixed reality strengthens students' cultural literacy, Zikri et al., (2024) which found that teaching materials based on folklore are more effective than standard printed books in improving the reading literacy and social awareness of elementary school students.

However, there is still a gap in the availability of literacy teaching materials based on folk tales at Phase A level. Existing teaching materials are still dominated by generic texts and have not integrated West Javanese legends such as *Sangkuriang*, *Lutung Kasarung*, and *Ciung Wanara*. Imran, (2024) highlights the limitations of teachers in storytelling using regional languages, Hidayatullah et al., (2023) emphasizes the absence of age classification in digital media based on folk tales. Anggraini et al., (2022) also shows that there is still a lack of studies analyzing the content of local folk tales in Indonesian EFL textbooks. This condition confirms the need to develop contextual, enjoyable, and age-appropriate literacy teaching materials based on West Javanese folk tales. Innovative media such as the flipbook by Musaddad et al., (2025) and other interactive models can be a solution to foster literacy skills while preserving local culture.

Based on this description, this study focuses on efforts to integrate West Javanese folklore into early childhood literacy teaching materials and examine its effectiveness in improving early literacy skills and strengthening character based on local culture. The strength of this study lies in the use of interactive multimedia (text, audio, visuals, and digital activities) specifically designed for Phase A, so that folk tales are not only presented in print, but also in a more dynamic, interesting format that is in line with children's learning styles in the digital age. Thus, the objective of this research is to produce a contextual and applicable multimedia literacy teaching material model that can bridge the need for literacy mastery with the strengthening of cultural identity from an early age.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a Design and Development (D&D) approach with a PPE (Planning, Production, Evaluation) development model adapted from Richey dan Klein (in Pradanasty et al., 2024). This approach was chosen because it provides a systematic framework for producing teaching materials. This model was chosen because it provides a systematic framework for producing valid, contextual, and appropriate multimedia teaching materials for early childhood development characteristics. The research procedure was conducted sequentially through three stages. (1) The Planning stage included needs analysis and literature review highlighting the limitations of local culture-based early literacy teaching materials in Phase A. The results of the needs analysis were used to determine relevant West Javanese folk tales, such as Si Leungli, to design the content structure, literacy indicators, and character values to be integrated into the multimedia (text, visual illustrations, audio, and interactive activities). (2) The production stage, interactive multimedia teaching materials were developed using Canva and FlipHTML5 applications to facilitate the process of designing attractive visuals, audio narration, and interactive features to train early reading and writing skills. The resulting products enable children to learn through integrated visual, auditory, and kinesthetic experiences. (3) The Evaluation stage is an expert validation process consisting of three categories of assessment: subject matter experts, media experts, and language experts to assess the suitability of the content, design, and language used in the product.

The research data consists of quantitative and qualitative data obtained from expert validation using a Likert scale-based assessment sheet. Quantitative aspects were analyzed using descriptive percentage analysis to determine product feasibility, while qualitative aspects were analyzed through a review of comments and suggestions for improvement provided by validators. The interpretation of the validation results refers to the assessment categories as shown in Table 1. Multimedia products are considered feasible for use if they obtain a feasibility score of $\geq 81\%$ with a category of "Very Good". The data analysis process was carried out by converting the score for each indicator into a percentage, then interpreting the results based on the research objective, namely to produce valid and contextual early literacy teaching materials based on West Javanese folk tales. The validation data was also used as formative feedback in the product revision stage so that the final product met the feasibility criteria for implementation in the next stage of research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The first stage of this research was planning, which involved formulating learning objectives and indicators based on the learning outcomes in the Phase A Elementary School Education curriculum. The second stage was production, which involved designing teaching materials using the Canva application and developing them into audio-based flipbooks to make them interactive. The third stage was evaluation, which involved assessments by subject matter experts, learning experts, and media experts.

1. Planning

Based on the analysis of learning outcomes (CP) for Phase A Elementary School Pancasila Material on the Bhineka Tunggal Ika Element, the learning objectives are focused on strengthening literacy aspects of reading and writing through activities such as reading folk tales, reading simple words, and practicing basic writing skills. The indicators are aligned with the activities contained in the teaching materials, such as listening to stories, naming simple words, completing letters, matching words with pictures, and coloring characters.

Table 1. Formulation of Learning Objectives Based on CP

Learning Outcomes	Learning Objectives	Learning Objective Indicators
Students are able to identify and appreciate their identity based on gender, hobbies, language, religion, and beliefs in their home and school environments.	Children show an interest in literacy by listening to West Javanese folk tales, recognizing the relationship between the characters in the stories and themselves, writing simple words, and trying to write them down through activities such as underlining, completing, and matching words with pictures.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children focus on listening to folk tales read by the teacher. 2. Children name characters from the stories they read. 3. Children relate the characters' traits in the stories to themselves. 4. Children name simple words related to the stories. 5. Children underline or complete letters in simple words. 6. Children match words with corresponding pictures. 7. The child colors pictures of

		characters/objects with joy..
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2. Production

The multimedia teaching material developed is in the form of a West Javanese folk tale entitled Si Leungli and the Kind-Hearted Child. This teaching material consists of a cover, story content, and interactive activities, such as reading, writing, guessing words, matching pictures, and coloring.



Figure 1. Cover of Phase A Elementary School Literacy Multimedia Teaching Materials “Si Leungli and the Kind-Hearted Child”

Figure 1 shows the cover of the multimedia literacy teaching material developed in the form of a Sundanese folk tale entitled “Si Leungli and the Kind-Hearted Child.” The cover is designed in bright blue and green tones, featuring a child on the riverbank interacting with an ornamental fish named Si Leungli. This illustration is in line with the Production stage of the PPE model, which is to produce child-friendly teaching materials that combine simple text, cheerful colors, and contextual visual elements. The presence of the text balloon “Hello, let's be friends!” adds an interactive aspect that supports the research objective of presenting more lively and communicative multimedia-based teaching materials.



Figure 2–3. Contents page of the story “Si Leungli and the Kind-Hearted Child”

Figures 2 and 3 show the beginning of the folk tale Si Leungli and the Kind-Hearted Child. This page depicts a young child who lives a simple life in a village, is kind-hearted and helpful, and meets a colorful little fish in the river that can talk. The short narrative combined with expressive illustrations of the child and the fish serves as an early literacy bridge, making it easier for children to connect words with images. The bright visuals, text layout in speech bubbles, and simple language style are the result of the design stage of the PPE Production model, with the aim of adapting the material to the cognitive development of Phase A elementary school children.

The content of the story on this page substantially represents the integration of reading and writing literacy with the instillation of local cultural values as described in the research introduction. The presence of a child character who likes to help others and a friendly fish character not only introduces West Javanese legends but also internalizes the values of empathy and responsibility. This is in line with the findings of Haerudin & Cahyati (2018) that storytelling based on folk tales is effective in instilling character, while also supporting the research objective of producing contextual, enjoyable, and meaningful multimedia teaching materials for Phase A elementary school children.



Figures 4–5. Interaction Page between the Child and Si Leungli

Figures 4 and 5 depict the continuation of the story as the little boy and Si Leungli become friends. The narration “Hello, let's be friends!” shows the fish inviting the boy, who happily accepts. The illustrations show the child's happy expression and the fish's dynamic movements, reinforcing the visual and emotional aspects of the story. This display shows how multimedia teaching materials combine short texts, expressive images, and simple dialogues to stimulate the narrative understanding of Phase A elementary school children.

This page also represents the moral values that we want to instill, namely the importance of friendship and togetherness. The narrative that Si Leungli always accompanies and comforts children when they are sad is in line with the research objective that emphasizes the integration of reading and writing literacy with character education. In terms of method, this presentation is an implementation of the Production stage in the PPE model, which is to process West Javanese legends into teaching materials that are interactive, enjoyable, and relevant to children's emotional development. This supports the description in the introduction that folk tales are effective as a means of fostering empathy, responsibility, and positive social attitudes in Phase A elementary school children.



Figures 6–7. Children's Kindness and Happiness Score Pages

Figures 6 and 7 show the narrative of Si Leungli helping the child find food, as a form of mutual friendship. The illustrations emphasize the happy expressions of the child and the fish dancing in the water, showing the dynamic of a relationship full of kindness. The use of simple text in the dialogue balloons reinforces the moral message while making it easier for

Phase A elementary school children to understand the content of the story. This reflects the principle of multimodal literacy, which combines text, images, and cultural context to support early reading and writing skills.

The narrative on this page emphasizes that kindness brings happiness, as shown in the sentence, "Because of the child's kindness, Si Leungli grew fonder of him. The child's life also became happier." The presentation of this moral value is in line with the research objective of integrating West Javanese folk tales as a means of strengthening literacy and character education. In terms of method, this presentation is an implementation of the Production stage in the PPE model, where the story content is chosen because it is relevant to children's needs to learn literacy while building positive social attitudes.



Figures 8–9. Reading Activities Based on the Story of Si Leungli

Figures 8 and 9 show the transition from storytelling to reading activities. The left page concludes the story with a moral message that friendship, mutual assistance, and togetherness make the child and Si Leungli stronger. Meanwhile, the right page displays reading activities in the form of simple word recognition: fish, child, river, village. The combination of text and concrete images makes it easier for children to connect written symbols with visual objects, a strategy that is appropriate for the early stages of literacy development.

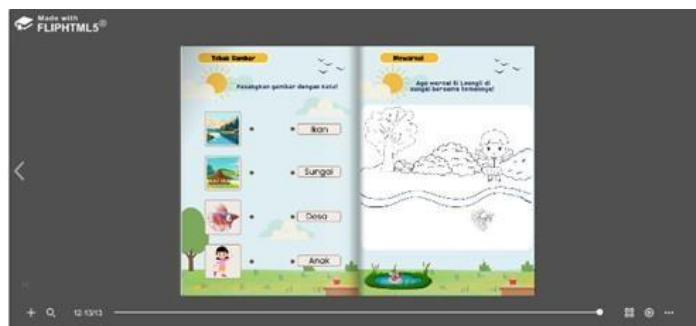
This activity also reflects the application of the Production principle in the PPE model, which is to develop interactive and child-friendly multimedia teaching materials. By linking vocabulary taken directly from the story content, these teaching materials foster phonetic, vocabulary, and contextual comprehension skills. In addition, the bright visual design and character illustrations enhance the appeal, in line with the research objective of presenting contextual, enjoyable, and culturally relevant multimedia-based literacy teaching materials.



Figures 10–11. Writing and Word Guessing Activities

Figures 10 and 11 show the follow-up activities that focus on writing and word recognition skills. The left page contains writing activities, where children are asked to trace and copy simple words such as ikan (fish), anak (child), sungai (river), and desa (village). The dotted line design provides scaffolding so that children can practice their fine motor skills while understanding the shape of letters. This is in line with the principle of emergent literacy, which is to provide opportunities for Phase A elementary school children to practice writing in a fun atmosphere.

The right page presents word guessing activities by completing the missing letters. For example, “I...an” for ikan (fish) and “D...sa” for desa (village). This activity integrates reading skills, letter recognition, and simple logic, encouraging children to think critically in the context of language. In terms of method, this activity is a form of Production implementation in the PPE model, as it develops multimedia teaching materials that not only present stories but also include interactive reading and writing exercises. The visual design, consistent with the previous characters and stories, keeps children connected to the cultural context of West Java.



Figures 12–13. Picture Guessing and Coloring Activities

Figures 12 and 13 show closing activities in the form of picture guessing and coloring. The left page presents exercises matching pictures with words such as fish, river, village, and child. This activity is designed to strengthen the relationship between written symbols and visual representations, thereby supporting early reading skills. The right-hand page provides

space for children's creativity with activities such as coloring the character Si Leungli and the river background, which also trains fine motor coordination and artistic expression.

These two activities emphasize the function of teaching materials as interactive multimedia that combines reading, writing, and visual skills. In terms of methodology, this section is the result of the Production and Evaluation stages in the PPE model, as it combines West Javanese folklore with practical exercises and has been validated by media and learning experts. Pedagogically, this activity is in line with the research objective of providing contextual and enjoyable teaching materials, while instilling local cultural values in the literacy process at Phase A Elementary School.

3. Evaluation

To assess product feasibility, validation was carried out by three categories of experts: material, learning, and media. The assessment results are summarized in Table 3 below. There is an introduction before the other experts.

Table 2. Expert Validation Questionnaire Assessment

No	Validation	Feasibility Test Results	Category
1	Material Expert	95,00	Very Good
2	Learning Expert	97,00	Very Good
3	Media Expert	94,00	Very Good
Average Feasibility Test Results		95,30	Very Good

In terms of content, subject matter experts gave it a score of 95%, which is excellent. This assessment shows that the West Javanese folklore content is in line with Phase A literacy learning outcomes, especially in terms of introducing children to simple vocabulary, narrative flow, and character values. The subject matter experts also noted that some vocabulary should be simplified and reflective questions should be added at the end of the story so that children can connect the content of the reading with their daily experiences. This input is in line with early literacy theory, which emphasizes the connection between text and children's real lives, making learning more meaningful and contextual.

In terms of learning strategies, the learning expert validation received the highest score of 97%. This figure confirms that the activities in the teaching materials, ranging from reading, writing, completing letters, matching words with pictures, to coloring, are considered to be very

much in line with the principles of early childhood development. The activities offered are considered capable of providing a holistic learning experience, covering cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development simultaneously. Learning experts also added that each activity should be accompanied by brief guidelines for teachers, so that implementation is more focused and consistent in various classroom contexts. This input is important because it supports the principle of teacher-based learning as a facilitator, while ensuring that the activities designed are correct.

In terms of visual appearance, media experts gave it a score of 94%, which is excellent. This assessment shows that the teaching materials are considered very attractive in terms of color, illustrations, typography, and layout. The cheerful and illustrative visuals are seen as capable of attracting children's attention, maintaining their focus, and increasing their motivation to read and write. However, media experts suggest that the font size be enlarged in some parts to make it more reader-friendly for children who are still in the pre-reading stage. In addition, the suggestion to add an audio version (story narration) further emphasizes the importance of multimedia aspects, so that teaching materials can be used multimodally through text, images, and sound. This is in line with the research objective which emphasizes the development of multimedia-based teaching materials, not just printed materials.

Overall, the validation results from the three experts, with an average score of 95.3%, indicate that this product is in the excellent category and is suitable for use. The high validation score shows that the teaching materials developed successfully address the gaps identified in the planning stage, namely the lack of West Javanese folk tale-based literacy teaching materials at the Phase A level of elementary school. Furthermore, the input provided by the experts further strengthened the quality of the product, both in terms of language simplification, the preparation of guidelines for teachers, and the strengthening of multimedia aspects by adding audio. These results also confirm the contribution of research in providing teaching materials that are contextual, enjoyable, and relevant to the needs of children in the digital age.

Thus, expert validation not only serves as a measure of feasibility, but also provides direction for further development to improve the product. This well-validated West Javanese folk tale-based multimedia literacy teaching material is expected to become an alternative learning strategy for Phase A elementary school teachers. This product not only supports the development of children's basic literacy skills, but also internalizes local cultural values from

an early age, in line with the research objective of bridging literacy needs with the preservation of national cultural identity.

DISCUSSION

Experts confirms that the Si Leungli and Anak yang Baik Hati multimedia teaching materials are in the excellent category and are suitable for use in Phase A. This validation is consistent with recent research that confirms the importance of developing digital technology-based interactive media in improving early childhood literacy. Purnamasari, (2023) shows that multimedia-based interactive media developed using the ADDIE model has been proven to improve children's reading, writing, and communication skills. This supports the findings of this study, in which multimedia teaching materials not only facilitate reading, writing, and word guessing activities but are also designed according to children's developmental stages, thereby increasing motivation and learning effectiveness.

shows that multimedia-based interactive media developed using the ADDIE model has been proven to improve children's reading, writing, and communication skills. This supports the findings of this study, in which multimedia teaching materials not only facilitate reading, writing, and word guessing activities but are also designed according to children's developmental stages, thereby increasing motivation and learning effectiveness. Aulia et al., (2025) emphasize that visual literacy through picture books can strengthen the relationship between text and images, expand vocabulary, and stimulate children's imagination. The presence of bright and expressive illustrations in the Si Leungli and The Kind-Hearted Child teaching materials makes this medium easier for children to understand and is in line with Piaget's theory that visual representation is an important foundation in early literacy development.

Coloring and tracing letters represent the enactive stage, illustrated stories represent the iconic stage, while reading simple words represents the symbolic stage. Vygotsky emphasized the role of social interaction in language development through the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Activities featured in teaching materials such as reading together, thickening letters, and matching words with pictures are forms of scaffolding that enable children to learn further with the guidance of teachers or parents. Simatupang et al., (2025) showed that the Kamishibai visual-based storytelling method can improve children's ability to understand story content, appreciate reading, and retell stories with the help of social interaction. Thus, this teaching material product not only strengthens cognitive literacy but also children's social-language functions.

Coloring and tracing letters represent the enactive stage, illustrated stories represent the iconic stage, while reading simple words represents the symbolic stage. (Pujiariani & Cathrin, 2025) state that interactive multimedia improves students' early reading skills because it systematically integrates text with visuals. In other words, this interactive media helps children transition from concrete experiences to abstract understanding more naturally.

The concept of visual literacy is also an important aspect. Aulia et al., (2025) found that visual literacy strategies through picture books are proven to be effective in increasing children's interest in reading, vocabulary, and creativity. Aristizábal-Cardona & Ortiz-Medina Purnamasari, (2023), emphasize that visual-based communication builds children's critical awareness from an early age. In the context of the Si Leungli and Anak yang Baik Hati teaching materials, the use of communicative illustrations with simple text has proven to be relevant for building children's interest in literacy. However, challenges have also been found in the literature. Mendes et al., (2022) warn of the risk of children becoming dependent on digital media if its use is not properly regulated.

Overall, this discussion confirms that the high validation of Si Leungli and The Kind-Hearted Child multimedia teaching materials is not only in line with the cognitive development theories of Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bruner, but also consistent with recent research findings that emphasize the importance of visual literacy, interactive multimedia, and multimodal storytelling in improving early childhood literacy. This research makes a tangible contribution in the form of a culturally contextual, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate teaching material model, while bridging the gap between early literacy needs and the preservation of national cultural identity.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the interactive multimedia teaching material "Si Leungli and the Kind-Hearted Child" developed through the PPE (Planning, Production, Evaluation) model is proven to be valid and suitable for use in early childhood literacy learning. The validation results from three categories of experts showed an average score of 95.3% in the excellent category, indicating that this teaching material meets the aspects of content feasibility, learning strategies, and media. This product not only enriches literacy activities through reading, writing, word guessing, picture matching, and coloring, but also integrates local cultural values relevant to strengthening children's character. Thus, this study contributes to the development of a contextual, enjoyable, and adaptive local culture-based literacy model for children in the digital age.

Phase A elementary school teachers are advised to utilize multimedia teaching materials based on folk tales as a meaningful literacy learning strategy and a means of internalizing local cultural values from an early age. Future researchers can expand this study by testing the effectiveness of the product in larger classes and developing further digital innovations such as augmented reality (AR) or interactive animation to enrich children's learning experiences. In addition, the results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for policymakers in encouraging the development of regional culture-based literacy teaching materials in various elementary schools in Indonesia.

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