



## Developing Community Culture-Based Storybooks Integrating QR Codes for Children's Writing Narrative Skills and Digital Well-Being

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**Abstract:** Children are one of the market segments that use gadgets for. They choose the gadgets caused of their attractive features and various conveniences they provide. Parents' current concerns are because gadgets have many effects. starting from decreased social interaction and emotional instability in children. Actually, gadgets have a positive side as long as they are used for positive matters. This study focuses on designing learning media in the form of story books with barcodes by linking local traditions of the Magelang community to reduce the negative impact of these gadgets. In addition, it is hoped that children have good narrative writing skills by connecting local Magelang wisdom. Local culture will find a place in the hearts of children through storytelling activities. In addition, they are also able to retell what is in their minds through writing. This research is a Research and Development (R&D) by Thiagarajan, through four stages including: Defining, Designing, Developing, and Disseminating. Results show that the QR code-based storybook successfully captured children's interest, encouraged more meaningful use of gadgets in learning, and improved participation in narrative writing. Moreover, the integration of cultural elements with interactive features helped guide children toward balanced digital experiences that support both literacy development and digital well-being.

**Abstrak:** Anak-anak merupakan salah satu segmen pasar yang menggunakan gadget. Mereka memilih gadget karena fitur-fitur menarik dan berbagai kemudahan yang ditawarkannya. Kekhawatiran orang tua saat ini adalah karena gadget memiliki banyak dampak negatif, mulai dari penurunan interaksi sosial dan ketidakstabilan emosional pada anak. Padahal, gadget memiliki sisi positif selama digunakan untuk hal-hal positif. Penelitian ini berfokus pada perancangan media pembelajaran berupa buku cerita dengan barcode dengan menghubungkan tradisi lokal masyarakat Magelang untuk mengurangi dampak negatif gadget tersebut. Selain itu, diharapkan anak-anak memiliki kemampuan menulis narasi yang baik dengan menghubungkan kearifan lokal Magelang. Budaya lokal akan menemukan tempat di hati anak-anak melalui kegiatan bercerita. Selain itu, mereka juga mampu menceritakan kembali apa yang ada di pikiran mereka melalui tulisan. Penelitian ini merupakan Penelitian dan Pengembangan (R&D) oleh Thiagarajan, melalui empat tahapan yaitu: Pendefinisian, Perancangan, Pengembangan, dan Penyebaran. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa buku cerita berbasis kode QR berhasil menarik minat anak-anak, mendorong penggunaan gadget yang lebih bermakna

*dalam pembelajaran, dan meningkatkan partisipasi dalam menulis narasi. Selain itu, integrasi unsur budaya dengan fitur interaktif membantu membimbing anak-anak menuju pengalaman digital yang seimbang yang mendukung pengembangan literasi dan kesejahteraan digital.*

**Keywords :** *Interactive story book, local culture, narrative writing skills, QR Code.*

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly influenced children's social, emotional, and literacy development. Prolonged exposure to gadgets and digital media may reduce children's opportunities to engage in meaningful face-to-face interactions with peers and their surrounding environment, which can consequently hinder the development of empathy, communication competence, and emotional self-regulation. Several studies have also indicated that excessive gadget use is associated with challenges in children's sociolect-emotional growth and interpersonal behavior (Ilma et al., 2021; Aviani et al., 2024). When the children use the technology excessively without parental supervision, many concerns arise. Therefore, researchers are working to address these negative impacts by incorporating cultural values and preventing the influence of technology use, particularly gadgets. (Munir et al., 2023).

For this reason, digital picture storybooks are increasingly seen as important educational tools because they merge visual imagery, narrative, and interactive technology into one learning platform, allowing children to participate more actively in the reading experience (Bus & Anstadt, 2021).

However, a majority of current studies emphasize on overall literacy enhancement and infrequently examines how such media may be methodically created to integrate local culture, enhance children's storytelling writing skills, and reduce unfavorable device utilize. The uniqueness of this research is found in the creation of an interactive tool supported by QR codes storybook grounded in local culture, designed to enhance literacy encounters while directing kids for better online habits.

The goals of this research is to make the learning activities using QR code-based on interactive storybook that highlights Magelang's local culture. Incorporating cultural heritage into learning materials is expected to nurture children's appreciation and pride in their traditions from an early age. Simultaneously, this approach contributes crucially to maintaining cultural identity in the face of accelerating globalization, which often influences local traditions, values, and social practices through the widespread circulation of global culture and digital media (Wahyuni et al., 2024; Munir et al., 2024).

The study specifically examines three aspects: (1) the structured Research and Development (R&D) process used to create the storybook, (2) its effectiveness in enhancing children's narrative writing skills, and (3) how the integration of QR codes and cultural content helps reduce excessive and unproductive gadget use.

The development of the storybook follows a Research and Development (R&D) approach, consisting of several stages: needs analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The development phases implemented in this study were intended to produce a learning product that aligns with students' educational needs while ensuring that each stage had undergone systematic evaluation and refinement to achieve appropriate quality standards for instructional use (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 2003). During the needs analysis, researchers assessed children's literacy levels, identified learning material requirements, and explored aspects of Magelang's local culture that could be incorporated into the stories. The study further explored the adverse consequences of excessive gadget use among children, including the risk of screen dependency and

declining social engagement, highlighting the importance of developing educational media that can provide healthier and more meaningful digital experiences for young learners (Farahiyah et al., 2024).

The design stage emphasized the creation of engaging stories tailored to children's developmental characteristics. Stories drew inspiration from Magelang's traditions, folklore, and indigenous wisdom principles. The visual components and linguistic characteristics of the content were deliberately crafted to align with children's developmental requirements and interests, enhancing the appeal and comprehension of the reading experience, thereby cultivating increased enthusiasm for reading among young learners (Philosophy & Endri, 2021).

A unique aspect of the storybook is the inclusion of QR codes located in particular areas. Through scanning these codes, kids can reach additional material like educational videos, animations, and interactive exercises.

The incorporation of multi-modal learning techniques has demonstrated an increase in student engagement and the creation of more significant educational experiences by merging visual, auditory, and interactive components within the educational process. This method allows learners to interact with content via various sensory pathways, enhancing understanding, motivation, and overall learning results in both online and in-person settings (Trifonova & Kiryakova, 2025; Luo, 2023).

The process of creating this product needed collaboration between different groups of people, including teachers, graphic artists, and technology experts. Combining contributions from people who understand the subject well, they create media, and handle the detailed technicalities as learning media that are informative, interesting, and can function well (Darmawan & Wuryandani, 2022; Hakim et al., 2022).

The implementation took place through tests in schools and community settings, aiming to see how kids and teachers responded. These tests

were important for figuring out how well the storybook improves students' reading skills, helps them write stories better, and broadens their understanding of different cultures by providing fun learning experiences (Munajah et al., 2019).

Munir et al., (2023) mention that using digital learning tools along with cultural values can enhance how kids participate and help them grow emotionally. Educational materials that are well-made and relevant to their culture can really improve students' reading and writing skills, as well as help them develop socially and emotionally (Abu et al., 2024; Iriani et al., 2022). These results correspond with the creation of the Magelang culture-focused interactive storybook in this research, which serves not only as a literacy resource but also as a vehicle for fostering values and character in young children. By adding QR codes to local cultural tales, the storybook shows how technology can lead to better learning outcomes, boosting children's storytelling skills and promoting healthy digital habits.

## **METHOD**

This study used a Research and Development (R&D) approach that follows Thiagarajan's 4D model. This model includes four steps: Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate.

The Research and Development (R&D) method was utilized in this study as it offers a systematic and repetitive framework for developing educational media that correspond with learners' requirements and current teaching expectations. By following structured phases like needs assessment, product development, validation, modification, and field evaluation, the R&D framework allows researchers to create educational tools that are both functional and effective in teaching. This approach is well-known for aiding the creation of creative educational products that can be consistently improved through user insights and actual classroom use, thus ensuring greater

relevance, effectiveness, and quality of learning in contemporary educational environments (Gustiani, 2019).

It's have any differences with the research before. The especially characteristic from this study is using the local traditional culture and connecting with digital technology. In other side this study try to integrate cultural literacy, writing narrative competence especially for elementary students.

The define stage, researcher do the preliminary study with some analysis for the students needs. Especially for their need about media of learning with using QR Code. The period of design phase focusing to organize the framework, material, and visual display of the educational media, incorporating QR Codes specifically to link printed cultural narratives to engaging digital elements.

Utilizing the Four-D (4D) development framework, encompassing define, design, develop, and disseminate phases, established an organized and methodical approach for creating effective educational media while maintaining the quality of the end product through ongoing validation and revision efforts (Rahayu Nita & Werdiningtiyas, 2020).

The phases of the 4D research and development model utilized in this research are depicted in Figure 1.



During the implementation, the researchers try to describe the method was utilized in the initial stage of the research to assess the real state of literacy education for elementary school pupils in Magelang City. This activity give the opportunities for the

researcher to express literacy skills of the students and can understanding the cultural values of Magelang city can be realization in their daily activities when they live in the society (Hasna et al., 2022; Toharudin et al., 2020).

The phase of describing students ability in writing narratives, which involved structuring thoughts, recounting incidents, and conveying experien ces in writing. The activity is focusing the most important need to make a medium which can keep community of culture and understand the gaps in narrative skills instruction. The smartphone which used by the children's emphasizing the time spent and the kinds of content viewed (Monalisa et al., 2024; Mujiono, 2024; Nieveen, 1999; Munir, 2026)

In analyzing the story book promoted by children's, the research need to asses. It's done by accessing some measurement of engagement by asking and observing, In this evaluation, the researches can understand how the QR code can help the children literacy skills.

The approach which used with experimental methods can to utilizing to assess the efficacy of the created product. It's can understood that the QR Code can supporting, culture-oriented picture storybook can enhancing the ability and literacy of students (Sari & Abduh, 2022).

In another side to increase the literacy of the students, this research facilitate the student so that they develop their narrative writing competence, it's also make the structured story sequences, utilize suitable vocabulary, and convey ideas imaginatively based on the stories they encountered. This phase directly tackled the innovation and immediacy of the study by demonstrating that the product not only improved literacy but also reduced the adverse impacts of gadget usage.

There are several steps: 1) to analysis the need, study literature, conception of a QR Code-supported picture storybook model rooted in Magelang culture, test, revise of product models The summary, this product

can be used and effective. The methods of this research did systematically in the using for students (Gómez & Pagán-maldonado, 2017)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The modern era especially give the opportunity for the children to interacts with anyone (Zain et al., 2022). It is also for using the digital media in learning activities (Widodo et al., 2021). Consequently, the digital technologies have become an essential component of contemporary education, supporting both children's social development and learning processes in meaningful ways (Munir et al., 2024).

Illustration-rich digital learning platforms that focus on storytelling and include interactive elements can motivate children to delve into their imagination, create ideas, and enhance their capacity to articulate thoughts through narrative writing.

Aside from technological factors, integrating local culture into educational media for children is also important. Magelang, for example, possesses a rich cultural legacy through folklore, customs, legends, and local knowledge that can be turned into important educational assets. However, the integration of local cultural values into children's digital learning media remains relatively limited, despite its important role in strengthening cultural awareness and identity formation among young learners. Early exposure to culturally grounded educational content can help children develop a deeper sense of belonging, appreciation for local heritage, and emotional attachment to their community in the midst of rapid globalization and technological development (Najib & Dhieni, 2023; Bateman & Mitchell, 2023). Stories rooted in familiar surroundings also help children more naturally understand events, retell experiences, and construct narrative ideas.

Developing an illustrated story e-book based on local culture offers a relevant solution to current educational needs. This medium is designed not only to provide an

enjoyable reading experience but also to present cultural values in a contextual and child-friendly way. Illustrated storytelling activities can support children's understanding of ethical values while simultaneously strengthening their awareness of local traditions and cultural identity. Visual narratives combined with interactive storytelling encourage children to engage more actively with the content, improve language development, and foster emotional connections with the cultural experiences presented in the stories (Krauss & Rahim, 2020; Catala et al., 2023).

The e-book made by QR Code using . By using the QR Code scanning, they get videos, audio and other information inn increasing narrative skills of students. This method converts children from passive readers into engaged participants in the learning experience. Numerous research efforts have shown that incorporating interactive digital features in educational settings can greatly enhance children's motivation, curiosity, and engagement throughout the learning experience. Digital elements like the, interactive narratives games, simulations, and multimedia responses motivate learners to delve into content more thoroughly while keeping their focus and excitement for learning tasks. These interactive experiences also create more engaging and enjoyable learning atmospheres that support children's emotional and cognitive involvement in educational tasks (David & Weinstein, 2024; Liu, 2025).

Additionally, the activities accessed via QR Codes motivate children to recount stories and create brief narratives influenced by the reading resources.

Results from the small study indicated that the e-book effectively engaged children's interest. In contrast to traditional digital media typically utilized without specific educational goals, this interactive storybook encouraged children to participate more actively in reading endeavors. The narratives grew more captivating and approachable for children as they were paired with vibrant

illustrations and conveyed through straightforward, suitable language, allowing readers to track the plot more effortlessly and sustain their engagement during the reading experience (Setyaningsih et al., 2025).

The e-book is organized around various themes related to the local culture of Magelang, including a section entitled Legends and Folktales of Magelang for Children offers a collection of local tales that are rich in moral and cultural significance. Stories like the Legend of Mount Tidar, the tale of Kiai Langgeng, and the source of the name Magelang were selected due to their strong ties to the social and cultural surroundings of children (Pathology, 2022).

The featured from electronic book describe the characters that aligned with children's tastes. Each of page contain the narrative and aided for the kids to know the problem for the next. The electronic book containing an educated journal, it's started with the beautiful cover, table of contents, and the narrative based on Magelang culture which supported with QR codes (Libriani et al., 2023; Ratnasari et al., 2024).

Incorporating local cultural values into every narrative emerged as a vital advantage of this educational medium. Kids not only appreciated the reading activities but also learned about local customs, ethical lessons, and regional history. By integrating culturally relevant digital content and regional cultural stories, the e-book assisted children in developing a deeper bond with their cultural identity while fostering an appreciation for local customs and values from a young age (Rafita & Juwita, 2024; Maula & Malik, 2024; Zulhermindra, 2023). Furthermore, in a language classroom, providing topic interest can build students' happiness (Munir, 2026). Simultaneously, storytelling and writing tasks offered children chances to creatively convey their thoughts while enhancing their narrative writing abilities (Zulhermindra, 2023).

From this study we know this storybooks have a significant effect as a learning media which can give the

understanding around the local culture and increase students literacy. .




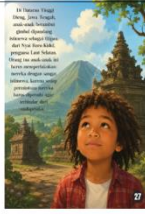


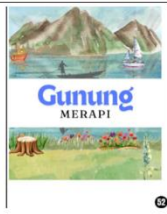



By interaction with the QR Code features, students can improve the structure of ideas, creating chronological sequences, and articulating story elements in writing. Although the storybook's content is generally suitable, various visual elements needed adjustment and improvement. The original cover design seemed too simple and not attractive to today's children's preferences. Similarly, the table of contents was displayed in a simplistic style that was devoid of visual appeal. Specific pages—especially pages 27, 28, 31, 52, and 56—showed flaws in visual layout and illustration quality. Certain illustrations appeared motionless, less emotive, and not entirely in harmony with the emotional tone of the narratives. These limitations diminished the emotional bond that could have been established through visual storytelling.

Incorporating expert insights and findings from the small trial, various changes were made to improve the book's visual layout. The revamped cover embraced a vibrant and lively design that represented Magelang's cultural essence while captivating young audiences. The table of contents was redesigned with a more attractive format, ornamental visuals, and improved readability. Moreover, multiple illustrations were redesigned into more dynamic and vibrant scenes. Characters were re-imagined with more distinct facial expressions and fluid body movements, while environments were enhanced with cultural and contextual elements pertinent to the narratives. These enhancements led to a more engaging reading experience and boosted children's interest in delving deeper into the book.

The results indicate that incorporating Magelang's cultural values into QR code-enabled children's storybooks can function not just as a means of safeguarding local culture but also as a creative literacy resource in the digital age. The integration of local knowledge, attractive visual aesthetics, and interactive technology was successful in

mitigating the adverse impacts of passive device usage by guiding children towards learning activities. Simultaneously, the storybook facilitated the enhancement of children's narrative writing abilities via significant and captivating learning opportunities. This research highlights the necessity of creating literacy resources that are culturally relevant, visually appealing, and suited to the learning traits of today's children.

The revisions made to the e-book are illustrated in the figure 2 below.

2	Table of contents		
3	Page 27		
4	Page 28		
6	Page 52		
7	Page 56		

Teachers can use these storybooks not just for reading, but also to inspire creativity and generate ideas for writing activities. Stories that include cultural values from Magelang connect well to what kids experience in their everyday lives, which helps them understand the stories better and retell them in writing. This way, students get to learn about their local culture while also enhancing their skills to arrange ideas clearly and express them well in their stories.

At the beginning of classes, educators can direct learners to read the stories collectively and then utilize the QR Code functions to access animated visuals, audio storytelling, or additional insights regarding the characters and environments. The combination of visual and digital components increases students' enthusiasm and concentration while learning. Subsequently, educators can give straightforward writing assignments like recounting the plot in their own expressions, crafting different conclusions, or detailing favorite characters in narrative sections. These exercises assist students in enhancing sentence structure, vocabulary usage, and the capability to logically relate events in their writing.

The activity in classroom showed that the educator connecting group discussions to improve their critical thinking skills and competencies in communicating, and writing skills. So, the writing abilities through combined activities that include reading, observing, discussing, and writing. As a result, education focuses not only on academic success but also on nurturing creativity, character growth, and children's appreciation of their local culture.

### CONCLUSION

The books contain local culture habits in Magelang. In other side, QR codes can help the children with interactive

educational resources like animated visuals, audio narrations, and extra content related to stories, enhancing the learning experience and making The interactive storybook it's also on the growth of children's narrative writing abilities. Students demonstrated enhanced skills in idea generation, plot organization, event sequencing, and articulating their thoughts more assuredly in writing. Using local cultural themes helped kids relate the stories to what they see and feel in their own lives, making it easier and more fun for them to write. Moreover, the interactive parts made students more excited and involved in their lessons, which helped them participate more in writing activities.

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