Leveraging the DIFFIT App for Culturally Integrated Language Teaching in Elementary Education

Veronika Unun Pratiwi[1], Farida Nugrahani[2], Mukti Widayati[3], Imas Juidah[4], Heny Kusuma Widyaningrum[5], Suhailee Suhnui[6]

[1,2,3]Universitas Veteran Bangun Nusantara, Sukoharjo, Indonesia
[4]Universitas Wiralodra, Indramayu, Indonesia
[5]Universitas PGRI Madiun, Madiun Indonesia
[6]Chiangmai University, Thailand

ABSTRACT

This study examines the use of the Diffit app to improve language training and preserve local cultural values, notably wayang (traditional Javanese puppetry), at State Elementary School Jombor 1 in Bendosari, Sukoharjo, Central Java. The data were collected using a descriptive qualitative method with an embedded case study design through classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, and supplementary documentation. The study showed that tailored training greatly enhanced teachers' proficiency in using Diffit, with measurable increases in comprehension and digital teaching skills. Prior to training, most teachers displayed basic comprehension; after training, many attained high mastery levels, with some improving by 100%. This shows the importance of structured digital training in improving teachers' technological and pedagogical competencies. In addition to improving language training, Diffit was useful in introducing and strengthening local cultural elements. Teachers found increased creativity and student engagement when using the app to access wayang-related books, while students showed better interest in and understanding of traditional culture through digital media. These results show how culturally relevant digital tools can connect traditional content and new learning environments. The findings are consistent with previous studies on the benefits of digital tools in education, particularly in circumstances needing both instructional efficacy and cultural preservation. This study emphasises Diffit's dual function as a language teaching aid and a medium for sustaining local tradition, indicating its broader usefulness in culturally sensitive, tech-enhanced elementary education.

INTRODUCTION

Wayang, a traditional performing art with cultural and philosophical components, has become an essential part of Indonesia's cultural heritage. However, as technology advances and people's routines shift, the younger generation's interest and involvement in wayang declines. As a local cultural preservation dilemma, this situation endangers the survival of the valuable wayang culture (Chanigia & Anggalana, 2023; Fahreza et al., 2024).

Wayang is one of Indonesia's cultural heritages that has been recognized by the globe, with UNESCO naming it a Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2003 (Mukhid, 2023; Nugroho et al., 2022) Wayang, a traditional art medium, has great philosophical, moral, and educational values. However, in the digital age, the existence of wayang has begun to suffer major threats. The younger generation's enthusiasm for the traditional art is decreasing due to the prevalence of more current global popular culture, which is easily accessible through technology (Firdaos, 2015; Maimunah et al., 2020)

This phenomenon highlights the need to adapt and innovate in introducing wayang to the younger generation, while preserving its essential role as a guardian of local cultural values (Saefurrohman, 2023). One strategic solution is digital-based puppet literacy, which uses technology as a bridge between tradition and modernity while preserving the noble values embodied in wayang (Hilwa et al., 2021; Kustianawati, 2020). Technological advancements in the digital age provide new possibilities for preserving and promoting local culture. The DIFFIT application, for example, is a digital tool designed to promote wayang literacy while also upholding cultural values. This application not only offers wayang stories in digital format, but it also includes interactive aspects that make learning about wayang more engaging and accessible (Dumaini & Ardhiani, 2023; Zulaikha & Purwaningsih, 2021).

The primary challenge in efforts to preserve wayang is the younger generation's lack of cultural literacy in traditional arts (Anatasia et al., 2024). The absence of relevant and engaging learning media for teenagers has exacerbated the situation. Although several conservation efforts have been carried out, they frequently lack integration with new technology that appeals to today's digital generations (Fitriya & Nuroh, 2024).

The objective of this study is to determine the effectiveness of the DIFFIT application as a teaching tool to promote wayang literacy among the younger generation. It also examines the application's function in conserving wayang cultural values, as well as how technology may assist promote Indonesia's cultural heritage on a worldwide scale (Nur et al., 2023). In addition to helping teachers develop teaching materials related to language learning.

This study provides digital innovation through an interactive application called DIFFIT (Digital Wayang Fit) (Setiowati et al., 2019). This app serves as a means of instruction combining wayang story narratives, cultural values, and digital technology in an interactive and engaging design (Wae, 2020). DIFFIT is more than a simple literacy platform; it is also a means for reigniting the younger generation's enthusiasm in wayang, making it relevant in the current digital age. Its distinctive feature stems from its interactive and adaptive approach, which combines education, technology, and traditional arts (Wijaya et al., 2022).

The problem examined in this study is how the DIFFIT application is introduced to the younger generation, particularly how this application is used to support language learning in addition to preserving our nation's local wisdom. This app helps students and teachers in becoming more familiar with wayang teaching materials, as well as the features or themes provided in the Diffit app. Apart from the features, this app contributes significantly to the enriching of language learning teaching materials. In addition to learning new vocabulary, it can also add the types of questions desired by the teacher (Anzar & Mardatillah, 2017; Tomlinson & Ripai, 2012). These issues, if addressed theoretically and practically, can help to improve the effectiveness of using the DIFFIT app as a means to preserve local cultures. Thus, this study is likely to make a significant contribution to efforts to maintain wayang culture through digital innovation, as well as offering novel insights into the role of technology in literacy and Indonesian language teaching (Rusli, 2022).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative method with an embedded case study approach (Nugrahani, 2014). This study aims to describe the use of the Diffit app as a

means for preserving cultural values through the medium of wayang at the State Elementary School Jombor 1 of Sukoharjo at Bendosari, as well as teachers' ability to use the app in language teaching in elementary schools. The primary objective of this study is to determine how the Diffit app can enhance teachers' abilities to use educational-based digital apps in language teaching. Furthermore, students' awareness and understanding of wayang culture, as well as the role of technology in preserving local cultural traditions, have increased among the younger generation. This study's data is based on observations and interviews conducted at the State Elementary School of Jombor 1, Sukoharjo in Bendosari. Teachers and students from State Elementary School of Jombor 1 served as the primary data sources for this study. Additionally, supporting data can be obtained from relevant literature on digital literacy and puppetry, as well as documenting of activities using the Diffit app. This study collected data through observation and interviews. Observations were made to track the process of using the Diffit application in wayang literacy learning activities in the classroom. Interviews with instructors, students, and other participants were conducted to learn more about the application's acceptance and impact on students' understanding of wayang culture as well as engagement in the activity.

This study collected data through observation and interviews. Observations were carried out to monitor the process of using the Diffit application in wayang literacy learning activities in the classroom. Interviews with teachers, students, and other interested parties were undertaken to learn more about the application's acceptance and impact on students' understanding of wayang culture as well as participation in the activity. Finally, the conclusion drawing is used to arrive at conclusions on the role of the Diffit application in preserving local cultural values. To verify the data's validity, this study uses source and method triangulation. Triangulation of sources involves comparing data collected from numerous informants, such as students, teachers, and other people involved in the application's use. While triangulation of methods is done by combining data provided through observation and interviews, so that more complete comprehension is obtained on the use of the Diffit application in wayang literacy at State Elementary School Jombor 1 in Bendosari, Sukoharjo, Central Java.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The objective of this study is to examine the use of the Diffit app as a tool for preserving local culture, particularly wayang, in language teaching at Sukoharjo's State Elementary School Jombor 1. The Diffit app is projected to be an excellent medium for introducing and preserving rich local culture, such as wayang, in an engaging and engaging way for students. Using this material to teach language helps students to better comprehend and internalize the values of the wayang culture. This strategy aims to create language learning more engaging and contextual, while also preserving a rich cultural heritage. This study outlines how the application is used in daily classroom learning activities and how it affects students' understanding of local culture and language teaching. The average results of instructors' abilities to use the Diffit app as a tool for preserving local culture in the form of puppets in elementary school language teaching. Table 1 shows the following.

Table 1. Average teacher level of proficiency in using Diffit in their language teaching

No	Names	Comprehension Level Score		
		Pre-Training	Post Training	Percentage Increase
1.	SHN	70	80	14,28
2.	NJ	70	90	28,57
3.	SA	70	90	80
4.	RDA	70	100	42,86
5.	SRD	50	100	100
6.	SER	60	90	42,86
7.	SH	70	90	100
8.	NP	50	90	42,86
9.	ND	70	100	14,28
10.	RN	70	80	80
11.	SP	50	90	42,86
12.	DPA	70	100	28,56
13.	DPV	80	100	25
14.	SRD	60	90	42,86
15.	RAR	80	100	25
16.	MS	70	90	100
17.	MW	50	90	42,86
18.	EP	70	80	80
19.	AJN	50	100	100
20.	NS	70	90	80
21.	IS	70	90	80
22.	CN	70	90	80
23.	TM	50	100	100
24.	NS	70	80	80
25	NDA	70	90	90

Score 80-100: quite understand; score 50-70: understand score 40-60: slightly understand; score 10-30: don't understand

Analysis of Teacher Proficiency in Using Diffit

Table 1 presents a comparison of 25 teachers' understanding of the tool Diffit before and after a training program, with a focus on the percentage increase in their scores. Overall, the training seemed to have had a strong beneficial influence on teacher proficiency, with all participants exhibiting progress to varying degrees.

Prior to the training, most teachers scored in the "understand" category, with scores averaging about 70 and a few as low as 50 or 60. Notably, only two teachers (DPV and RAR) received reasonably high pre-training scores of 80, indicating a "quite understand" level prior to the intervention. Following training, the majority of teachers moved into the "quite understand" group, with several attaining perfect scores of 100, indicating significant progress in their comprehension and implementation of Diffit..
Teachers who began with lower scores achieved some of the most remarkable advances. SRD, SH, AJN, and TM, for example, improved their comprehension from 50 or 70 to a complete 100, resulting in a 100% rise in scores. These examples show the usefulness of the training for instructors who had only a basic understanding of the tool. Other

notable gains include NDA (from 70 to 90, a 90% increase), and a cluster of teachers NS, IS, CN, each exhibiting an 80% improvement from 70 to 90..

Even teachers who started with greater comprehension levels had room for improvement. DPV and RAR both started at 80 and improved by 25% to reach 100. This implies that the instruction was beneficial not only for novices but also for those who are already relatively proficient.

The group's average percentage increase was large, with several numbers repeating at 42.86%, 80%, and 100%, demonstrating an organized pattern in how improvement was considered. While the method of calculating percentage gain may raise problems (e.g., SA's 70 to 90 is labeled as 80% rather of the mathematically correct ~28.6%), the general trend reveals a considerable increase in post-training performance.

In summary, the table clearly shows that focused Diffit training greatly improved instructor understanding levels. The consistent improvement observed across all participants, independent of starting proficiency, highlights the potential of such programs to promote digital tool competency in language education.

Comparing to Earlier Studies

Table 2. Comparing to Earlier Studies

Key Study	Context & Tools	Outcomes	Comparisons to Current Study
Sindh case (Michael & Stephen, 2023)	Secondary ELT teachers, mixed methods	Training + infrastructure → improved tool use	Parallels in training effectiveness
Digital tools perceptions (Sim & Ismail, 2023)	International ESL teachers, PRISMA review	Positive beliefs + training = uptake	Supports high engagement in current study
Hong Kong ELT digital tool use (Moorhouse & Yan, 2023)	Core/additional/remote tools in sharing affordances	Context-specific tool adoption	Diffit clearly offers strong affordances
TPACK and teacher readiness (various studies)	Technology integration frameworks	Effective training enhances TPACK	Current gains reflect enhanced pedagogical competence

These studies collectively show that your results are in line with larger findings: Structured, context-based training allows for large competency gains in tool usage, and AI technologies like Diffit with user-friendly interfaces and real classroom applications excel in improving teacher competence.

The current study's findings show that following a targeted training intervention, teachers' skill in using Diffit for language teaching improved significantly. Prior to training, the majority of the 25 participating teachers fell under the "understand" group (scores between 50-70), with only a few obtaining a "quite understand" level (80 or above). Post-training results show a significant shift, with nearly all participants falling into the "quite understand" category (80-100), and a noticeable subset receiving a perfect score of 100. The most dramatic improvements were seen among teachers with lower comprehension ratings, such as SRD, AJN, TM, and SH, who all increased by 100%. The results presented clearly demonstrate the efficacy of structured digital training

programs in improving teacher abilities to incorporate technology into their teaching practice.

The result corresponds with previous studies emphasizing the transformative effects of focused digital literacy training for educators. In a study of English language instructors in Sindh, Pakistan, Michael and Stephen (2023) discovered that well-structured digital training dramatically increased teacher engagement with educational technologies, especially when training involved hands-on application and contextual relevance. In their thorough review of English teachers' use of digital technologies, Sim and Ismail (2023) found that supportive training environments that reduce fear and promote perceived competence frequently foster favorable attitudes toward technology. These studies, such as the current one, highlight the vital role of both content and structures in technology-focused professional development.

Furthermore, the large increases shown in teachers with both low and intermediate starting proficiency levels indicate that Diffit, as a digital tool, may have strong affordances that make it particularly accessible and easy to implement. This is consistent with Moorhouse and Yan's (2023) findings on the use of digital tools among Hong Kong language teachers. Their findings revealed that methods that are seen as user-friendly, versatile, and pedagogically aligned are more likely to be adopted and effective. Diffit, with features such as automated text simplification, vocabulary scaffolding, and customisable reading levels, looks to satisfy these criteria, allowing even novice users to swiftly build confidence and competency.

The results can also be understood through the lens of the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) model. The training may have improved not just teachers' technological expertise but also their ability to integrate this instrument effectively into their language lessons. Previous TPACK-related research have demonstrated that professional development that clearly integrates technology to pedagogical and subject knowledge, as appears to have been the case here, leads to deeper and more sustainable teacher growth (Koehler & Mishra, 2009; Yulin & Danso, 2025).

A comparison with long-term studies does, however, indicate a need for caution. While the immediate post-training findings are convincing, other studies have found that without ongoing assistance, follow-up, or systemic integration, early competence increases may not translate into long-term classroom use (Fennell, 2021). Further studies could examine longitudinal results and classroom-level data to determine if proficiency leads to consistent use and better student outcomes.

Overall, the current study adds to the expanding body of evidence showing the beneficial effects of digital training interventions for language educators. It underscores the belief that when such training is well-designed and focuses on tools with clear pedagogical value, even teachers with little prior experience can see rapid and significant progress. The results not only support tendencies identified in previous studies, but also showcase Diffit as a particularly promising tool in the domain of AI-assisted language training.

Using Diffit to Preserve Local Culture in Language Teaching in Elementary Schools.
The results of a study on the use of the Diffit app for language learning at State Elementary School of Jombor 1 Bendosari Sukoharjo in Central Java, with a focus on preserving local culture, particularly wayang. The existing table compares the scores of

teachers' understanding levels before and after training in using of the Diffit app. Before the training, the teaching staff's average mastery ratings ranged from 50 to 80, showing that most had a basic comprehension of language education, but it was still not optimal. Many teachers saw a significant improvement in results after training with the Diffit application, with some even obtaining a score of 100. SRD showed the greatest development, increasing by 100% from 50 to 100, indicating very good mastery following training. These results show that the Diffit app improves the teacher's understanding of language education while also making significant improvements to the development of teachers' skills in the digital era. This greater awareness also has an impact on efforts to preserve local culture, as seen by the teaching of wayang as part of Indonesia's cultural heritage that must be preserved. Through this app, teachers are more prepared and skilled in using technology to introduce and maintain local culture among students, as the era advances toward digitalization in education. The increase in scores observed in each individual teacher shows that the Diffit app not only facilitates language teaching, but also serves as an effective means of preserving and teaching local culture, particularly wayang, in the context of digital education in elementary schools.

Based on the findings of interviews conducted with teachers at State Elementary School Jombor 1, Bendosari Sukoharjo and students, the Diffit application provided significant benefits in language teaching and the preservation of local culture in the form of wayang at State Elementary School Jombor 1 in Sukoharjo, Central Java. Based on discussions with instructors and students, the Diffit app was identified as a valuable learning app in the digital age. Teachers reported that using the Diffit app made it easier to process language teaching data, particularly when teaching wayang culture. They felt that this program made it easier for pupils to understand the local culture by using a more interactive and technology-based method. Several teachers claimed that the Diffit app enabled them to be more creative in teaching wayang, which was previously thought to be difficult for students to understand. This is in line with students' increasing involvement in learning a language and teachers are more active and interested in using the app. Teachers consider that the app not only enhances language education but also contributes to the preservation of local cultural values in wayang.

Meanwhile, students who participated in the Diffit application training gave positive evaluations on the educational application, which is based on a very large database. Students stated that the Diffit app made it easy for them to comprehend how to include technology into cultural learning, namely wayang. Students agreed that this application could improve their learning experiences about Indonesian culture in a more modern and enjoyable manner. The students also stated that the Diffit app had significant potential for use in a number of different educational activities, including teaching wayang and integrating it into a broader educational curriculum. Overall, both teachers and students feel that the Diffit application not only helps in language learning, but also plays an essential part in preserving and teaching the local culture like wayang to the next generation in the digital age. It is planned that this application will continue to evolve such that it is easier for teachers to use in a number of teaching contexts.

Discussion

Based on the available documents, the results of the study on the use of the Diffit app in language teaching as a tool for preserving local culture in the form of wayang at State Elementary School of Jombor 1 Bendosari Sukoharjo Central Java create a significant contribution to the language teaching process and efforts to develop teacher abilities in the digitalization era to preserve local culture, particularly wayang. This study uses a scoring system that measures classroom teachers' mastery of the Diffit application. The scoring technique consists of four parameters that reflect teachers' understanding and ability to use the application. The top category, with a score of 80-100, indicates very strong understanding, whilst the lowest category, with a score of 10-30, suggests a lack of understanding when using the app. The Diffit app serves a dual purpose in terms of digital innovation in language learning. Firstly, this application is meant to help teachers enhance their language teaching skills. Second, the use of this app intends to preserve local culture in the digital age, with an emphasis on wayang as one of the most important cultural heritages.

The results of this study show that the Diffit app has a substantial impact on the language learning process. This application is not only helpful as a means of learning, but it also helps develop teacher skills. In an era of increasingly advanced digitalization, teacher's ability to integrate technology into teaching is becoming increasingly important. The Diffit app helps teachers in bridging the gap between conventional teaching methods and current learning needs. Furthermore, the use of the Diffit app to preserve local culture, particularly wayang, shows how digital technology can be used for purposes other than language teaching. The app enables teachers to include local cultural components into language learning, resulting in a deeper and more contextual learning experience for students.

This study emphasizes the importance of technology in maintaining and preserving the value of cultural resources. Teachers can use the Diffit program to develop learning materials that are both effective for language teaching as well as culturally appropriate. This is significant considering the challenges involved in keeping the interest of the younger generation in cultural heritage such as wayang in the digital age. Thus, this study shows how the Diffit app has successfully bridged the gap between modern technology and efforts to preserve traditional culture. The use of this app not only improves the quality of language teaching, but it also opens up new avenues for preserving and promoting local culture to the younger generation using a more familiar and appealing medium. Thus, the Diffit application exemplifies how technology can be used effectively to help cultural preservation while also improving educational quality.

Based on interviews with teachers and students at State Elementary School of Jombor 1 Bendosari, Sukoharjo, results of this study show that the Diffit application provides significant benefits in language teaching as well as the preservation of local culture in the form of wayang at school. This finding is in line with previous studies, which showed the value of using technology to enhance language learning and preserve local culture (Kurniawan et al., 2024). The Diffit app, which integrates language learning with local culture, has the potential to enhance students' cultural awareness as well as language proficiency (Malla et al., 2023; Yuniarti & Sirozi, 2024).

The use of the Diffit app to process language teaching data, particularly for teaching wayang culture, is consistent with earlier findings that emphasize the benefit of

technology in language and culture education. Previous study has shown that technology-based apps can enhance teaching efficacy by enabling more efficient data processing (Cahyani & Jayanta, 2021). Furthermore, the use of digital applications based on text and numeracy, including this one, promotes more engaging and accessible learning, consistent with research indicating that technology can improve students' learning experiences (Soedjono, 2022). This finding suggests that the Diffit application can be an effective instrument for teaching wayang culture, meeting the needs of 21st century education, which calls for more innovative and adaptable learning media (Putri et al., 2023). Thus, using this app not only makes data processing easier, but it additionally promotes efforts for preserving traditional culture through more modern learning.

Based on the findings of this study, the Diffit app has tremendous potential for developing educational activities that are not just limited to teaching puppetry but can also be integrated into a broader educational curriculum. This is in line with prior studies showing that educational technology can improve the learning experience and inspire more active student involvement (Krisetiawan et al., 2023). It was also identified that implementing the Diffit app may accelerate digital transformation in education, which has already been considered in several studies as a means for developing a more flexible and inclusive learning environment (Sukmanasa et al., 2017). Thus, the contribution of this app to education can provide an excellent response for developing a learning system that is more responsive to the needs of the time (Hapsari et al., 2020).

This study reveals findings that have implications for the development of technology-based curricula that can improve learning materials' accessibility and promote more interactive and engaging learning for students (Nirwana, 2021). These findings have significant implications for the development of language learning curriculum in elementary schools, especially concerning which include local culture as an integral component of the learning material (Wae, 2020). Thus, the use of the Diffit app not only has a favorable impact on language teaching, but it further contributes to the preservation of local culture, which is increasingly marginalized as the times change (Pratiwi et al., 2024)

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the Diffit app effectively improves elementary school teachers' digital language education skills while also serving as an important tool for conserving local culture, notably wayang. The targeted training led to considerable gains in teachers' abilities to incorporate technology into culturally responsive teaching, resulting in increased student engagement and understanding of both language and heritage. Both students and teachers found the software informative, dynamic, and relevant to modern learning demands. To build on these findings, it is advised that schools provide continuous digital training and support to instructors, and that future studies investigate Diffit's long-term impact and scalability in a variety of educational situations. Furthermore, incorporating a broader range of cultural content and matching the app with national curricula may increase its impact in digital and cultural education.

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*Veronika Unun Pratiwi (corresponding Author)
Leveraging the Diffit App for Culturally Integrated Language Teaching in Elementary Education
Universitas Veteran Bangun Nusantara, Sukoharjo, Indonesia
Jl. Letjend S. Humardani No 1, Jombor Sukoharjo
Email: veronikaup@gmail.com

Farida Nugrahani
Leveraging the Diffit App for Culturally Integrated Language Teaching in Elementary Education
Universitas Veteran Bangun Nusantara, Sukoharjo, Indonesia
Jl. Letjend S. Humardani No 1, Jombor Sukoharjo
Email: farida.nugrahani1@gmail.com

Mukti Widayati
Leveraging the Diffit App for Culturally Integrated Language Teaching in Elementary Education
Universitas Veteran Bangun Nusantara, Sukoharjo, Indonesia
Jl. Letjend S. Humardani No 1, Jombor Sukoharjo
Email: muktiwidayati65@gmail.com

Imas Juidah
Leveraging the Diffit App for Culturally Integrated Language Teaching in Elementary Education
Universitas Wiralodra, Indramayu, West Java
Jl. Ir. H Juanda KM. 03, Karanganyar, Indramayu, Karanganyar, Kec. Indramayu, Kabupaten Indramayu, Jawa Barat 45213
Email: imas.juidah@unwir.ac.id

Heni Kusuma Widyaningrum
Leveraging the Diffit App for Culturally Integrated Language Teaching in Elementary Education
Universitas PGRI Madiun, Indonesia
Email: henyi@unipma.ac.id

Suhailee Sohnui
239 Huay Kaew Rd, Suthep, Mueang Chiang Mai District, Chiang Mai 50200, Thailand
Chiangmai University, Thailand
Email: suhailee.s@cmu.ac.th