

Introducing English Literature as a Medium for Promoting Local Cultural Tourism through Digital Content

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ABSTRACT

Program pengabdian layanan masyarakat ini berupaya untuk menyajikan sastra Inggris sebagai kendaraan baru untuk memajukan pariwisata budaya lokal melalui media daring. Karena dunia masih dipengaruhi secara budaya oleh globalisasi, ada kebutuhan yang semakin meningkat untuk membekali masyarakat lokal, khususnya kaum muda, dengan cara-cara kreatif untuk melestarikan dan menyebarkan warisan dengan cara yang menarik. Dengan ekspresi sastra Inggris dan media internet yang disatukan, para siswa diundang untuk menulis puisi, cerita pendek, dan cerita yang mempromosikan pengetahuan lokal dan objek wisata. Kegiatan lapangan seperti praktik cerita berdasarkan pengalaman budaya yang sebenarnya dan kelas-kelas tentang sastra Inggris dan pembuatan konten daring merupakan bagian dari program ini. Produk akhir adalah karya sastra elektronik yang dapat diunggah di web di seluruh dunia, dan dimaksudkan untuk memasarkan budaya lokal kepada masyarakat global. Proyek ini tidak hanya meningkatkan keterampilan bahasa Inggris dan komputer masyarakat tetapi juga menanamkan kebanggaan terhadap warisan lokal dan identitas masyarakat.

This community service project endeavours to present English literature as a new vehicle for advancing local cultural tourism through online media. As the world remains culturally influenced by globalization, there is an increasing necessity to equip local communities, particularly youth, with creative means of conserving and disseminating heritage in a compelling manner. With English literary expression and internet media brought together, students are invited to compose poems, short stories, and stories that promote local knowledge and tourist attractions. Field activity like practice of the story based on actual cultural experience and classes on English literature and content creation online are part of the program. The end products are electronic literary pieces that can be posted on the world wide web, and they are meant to market local culture to the global community. The project not only improves people's English and computer skills but also instills pride in local heritage and community identity.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is blessed with abundant cultural heritage that ranges from local myths and traditional arts to tourist sites of history. The majority of these resources, however, remain poorly exposed, especially to the international world. The reason behind this is primarily due to the fact that there is insufficient culturally related information circulated in English and marketed on contemporary platforms (Wang & Li, 2023).

In today's digital era, digital storytelling has proved to be a strong medium of conveying cultural

identity in sustainable, interactive, and accessible ways (Zhang & Kim, 2023). International programs such as UNESCO's "Coding the Future" reflect how digital media can enable inclusive tourism and permit local communities to tell their own heritage stories (UNESCO, 2024).

Where literature, writing fiction, and digital content generation converge, one has the capability of making literary expression a functioning advertising tool. Literary genres like poetry, storytelling essays, and reimagining folklore can become true representations of indigenous culture, if delivered through blog posts, video, or social media platforms (Lasem Heritage Foundation, 2023). These events have also been encouraged in international events such as the Digital Storytelling Festival 2023, which demonstrated how creative writing improves cultural narratives (Europeana, 2023).

This school-community service project then aims to reveal English literature to be not merely a school study subject but also a creative instrument of local cultural tourism marketing. Equipping youngsters with literary skills and digital ones is fulfilling education and the continuity of cultural heritage and the local creative economy as well (Tuomi, Zheng, & Wang, 2023).

This community service program was started to respond to these needs through the use of English literature as a form of cultural expression and tourism promotion. It merges literary training with content creation, building the skill of participants—especially high school and university students—to produce pertinent and engaging content in English. The program also fosters local site discovery, tradition, and narrative, which are converted into literary and visual materials for global dissemination (Supriadi, et al. 2024).

METHOD

Approach

The approach used in this community service program is a participatory and educational approach that combines literary training, digital content development, and cultural exploration. Participants are directly involved in each stage of the process—from learning and practicing English literary writing to producing and publishing digital content. The program emphasizes empowerment, creativity, and community engagement.

This program also adopts a learning by doing method, in which participants will immediately apply the knowledge they acquire through hands-on activities, such as writing, recording, editing, and presenting their work.

Method of Implementation

The implementation of the program will be divided into several stages:

1. Preparation Stage
 - a. Partner Coordination
Identify and coordinate with community partners (schools, youth groups, cultural communities) in the selected area.
 - b. Material Development
Prepare training materials on English literature, creative writing techniques, and digital storytelling. Prepare supporting media such as slides, handouts, and writing examples.
 - c. Logistical Preparation
Arrange venue, equipment (projector, speakers, internet), and other logistics for field visits and digital practice sessions.
2. Training and Workshop Stage
 - a. English Literature & Creative Writing Workshop
Introduction to English literary genres (poetry, short stories, essays).
Techniques for writing descriptive, narrative, and persuasive texts in English.
Exploring cultural themes as the foundation for writing.
 - b. Digital Content Creation Workshop
Introduction to digital storytelling.
Basics of video recording, photo editing, and audio narration.
Using tools/apps for content production (e.g., Canva, CapCut, InShot, etc.).
Training on how to publish content through blogs, YouTube, and Instagram.

3. Field Practice Stage
Participants will be guided to:
Visit one or more local cultural tourism sites.
Observe and document unique aspects of the site (history, traditions, local legends, etc.).
Write short literary works (e.g., short story, travelogue, poem) in English based on the site.
Create digital content (photo essays, videos, digital stories) to accompany their literary work.
4. Presentation and Publication Stage
Participants will present their literary and digital works in a mini-exhibition or online showcase.
Works will be uploaded on social media platforms or community blogs to reach wider audiences.
A small competition may be held to appreciate the best creative outputs.
5. Evaluation and Follow-Up Stage
Conduct participant feedback sessions to assess the effectiveness of the training.
Collect and analyze responses through questionnaires or interviews.
Plan follow-up actions such as mentoring, publication, or development of a permanent online platform (e.g., a dedicated blog or YouTube channel for local culture promotion).

Timeline

The program is planned to run over 3 to 5 days, depending on the availability and readiness of the target community. A detailed schedule can be adjusted but typically follows this structure:

Day	Activity
Day 1	Opening, English Literature Workshop
Day 2	Creative Writing and Digital Content Workshop
Day 3	Field Visit and Content Creation
Day 4	Content Finalization and Publication
Day 5	Presentation, Feedback, and Closing Ceremony

Tools and Media

Laptops, smartphones, and internet connection
Projector and sound system
Creative writing materials (modules, worksheets)
Content creation apps (Canva, CapCut, InShot, etc.)
Social media/blog accounts for publishing output

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this program demonstrate that English literature can indeed serve as a valuable tool for promoting local cultural tourism through digital content. By combining literary creativity with modern digital tools, the project successfully bridged cultural gaps and connected local heritage with a broader, global audience.

The Role of English Literature in Cultural Promotion

Among its contributions is the successful utilization of English language skills in communicating native narratives. Being a lingua franca from all over the globe, English is the center for expanding cultural stories. Application of literary elements, including narrative structure, imagery, and metaphor, made the material not only informative but emotionally appealing as well (Ariyanti, 2016; Hughes, 2005). Literary narrative, as participants explained, provided cultural value to online text, making mundane tourist promotions inviting cultural messages.

Additionally, the success of this practice also gave credit to the hypothesis developed by Zhang & Kim (2023) as they highlight putting focus on the aspect that digital media art is a proper medium of cultural information conveyance. The project also proved that blending art of storytelling with digital technology enhances the capacity of the local citizens to control their own culture promotion as well as strengthen tighter identification towards their own tradition.

The Impact of Digital Storytelling on Tourism

The shift towards digital storytelling in tourism promotion has proven to be beneficial. As Europeana (2023) highlights, digital storytelling offers tourists and audiences an immersive experience that traditional advertising cannot provide. In this project, participants not only showcased cultural

sites but also shared the stories behind these locations, adding layers of meaning that went beyond simple visual attractions.

Moreover, the global appeal of digital content is undeniable. By incorporating English literature and multimedia formats, the project attracted international attention, proving that digital storytelling can break down geographical and linguistic barriers. As noted by Tuomi et al. (2023), the integration of digital tools and cultural storytelling supports sustainable tourism development by attracting visitors who are interested in authentic, community-driven experiences.

Sustainability and Future Prospects

This project established the foundation for subsequent projects, which were focused on sustainable cultural tourism marketing. The long-term contribution of this project may be the establishment of a digital database of local customs and folklore, which can be utilized for educational purposes and posterity. The project also offers useful lessons on the potential of cooperation between local communities, schools, and web platforms in the development of creative cultural tourism projects (Wang & Li, 2023).

As Suyanto (2017) posits, incorporating culture into language studies not only boosts language skills but also improves cross-cultural understanding, which is critical in local tourism development in the current digital era. This project proved how education spaces can engage locals and students effectively in culture conservation and boosting tourism through today's modern technology.

Challenges and Limitations

Notwithstanding the success of the program, there were some limitations. One of the key constraints was the relative lack of digital resources in some areas, which impacted the quality of content produced by some users. Further, even as social media sites allowed for far reach, sometimes there were issues in holding audiences' interest over the long term, as digital content needed to be refreshed constantly in order to hold viewers' attention (Robin, 2008).

CONCLUSION

This project emphasizes the potential for transformation of the integration of English literature and new media for local culture and tourism promotion. By empowering local communities and youth, the project provided a new voice to cultural narrative that appeals to both domestic and international publics. It also emphasizes partnership and capacity building for the purposes of ensuring cultural heritage conservation and sustainable marketing through innovative channels.

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