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Narrative ecology of “Antu Banyu” in digital pedagogy: Internalizing the Pancasila student profile in junior high school

Velly Oxtaria^{1*}, Ria Saputri², Purnawarman Purnawarman³

¹Department of Language Education, Universitas Nahdlatul Wathan Mataram, Mataram, Indonesia, vellygumay.06@gmail.com

²Department of Language Education, Universitas Nahdlatul Wathan Mataram, Mataram, Indonesia, d0805038602@unwmataram.ac.id

³Department of Language Education, Universitas Nahdlatul Wathan Mataram, Mataram, Indonesia, ppurnawarman10@gmail.com

*Corresponding Author: vellygumay.06@gmail.com

Abstract

This study describes how the folktale “Antu Banyu,” integrated into digital pedagogy, internalizes the values of the Pancasila Student Profile among seventh-grade students of SMP Nahdlatul Wathan, Mataram, with internalization empirically indicated through a shift in students’ reflective language from descriptive to analytical-evaluative, and the consistency of this shift across interviews, observations, and reflective essays. A qualitative case study design was employed to examine the narrative ecology of this South Sumatran folktale as it transforms within a multimodal digital ecosystem. Data were gathered from seven purposively selected participants, an Indonesian language teacher, the school principal, and five students of varied academic ability, through in-depth interviews, classroom observations across six sessions, and document analysis, then analyzed using the interactive thematic model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings reveal that (1) the shift of medium repositioned students from passive readers into active discourse producers within a new digital speech community; (2) digital interaction encouraged students to deconstruct the myth into rational ecological reasoning, indicating the Critical Reasoning dimension; and (3) discussing local narratives in digital spaces triggered cultural identity affirmation underpinning the Global Diversity dimension. Digital recontextualization expands the relevance of folklore despite digital infrastructure gaps and rigid pedagogical paradigms. The findings offer a model of local folklore recontextualization adaptable to other Indonesian schools.

Keywords: Digital Pedagogy, Educational Sociolinguistics, Folklore, Narrative Ecology, Pancasila Student Profile

1. Introduction

Education in the 21st century no longer stops at transferring knowledge from teacher to learner, but constitutes a process of cultivating whole human beings: intellectually capable, morally steadfast, and resilient in the face of changing times. Ki Hajar Dewantara’s philosophical notion of education as an effort to cultivate character, strength of mind, and physical health in harmony has been enshrined in National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, which outlines the goal of developing abilities and shaping the character and dignified civilization of the nation.

Reality on the ground shows that these ideals still face serious challenges. Symptoms of moral decline among students, violence between students, weakening respect, and a national-identity crisis driven by the rapid flow of global information, signal that character education has not yet functioned optimally. Today’s younger generation grows up in an environment saturated

with digital technology and tends to be more fluent in navigating social media than in reading textbooks (although this technical fluency does not automatically equate to critical digital literacy; Pangrazio & Selwyn, [2019](#)), and more familiar with global entertainment content than with the local wisdom inherited from their ancestors. The government has responded to this situation systemically through the Merdeka Curriculum and the Pancasila Student Profile (PSP) initiative, which encompasses six essential dimensions: faith and piety toward God Almighty and noble character, global diversity, mutual cooperation, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity (Kemendikbudristek, [2022](#)).

Within this framework, folklore, as both the nation's collective memory and a value capsule tested across generations (e.g., values of ecological caution and collective responsibility toward the environment, transmitted through a narrative mechanism of personifying natural threats as figures to be respected), holds pedagogical potential that is often overlooked. One meaningful South Sumatran folktale is "Antu Banyu" (Herleni, [2016](#)). This narrative is not merely a water-ghost story; it is an ecological narrative that harnesses fear as a mechanism of social control so that the community helps preserve the aquatic ecosystem. This pattern is consistent with a broader finding in geomythological and folkloristic scholarship that traditional narratives often encode empirically grounded environmental knowledge beneath a supernatural surface, rather than representing arbitrary invention (Masse et al., [2007](#)), and that such heritage survives and stays meaningful precisely because it is continually re-produced and re-narrated by each generation rather than passively preserved (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, [2004](#)). Mar'atusshalihah et al ([2024](#)) findings on the Sasak folktale Cupak Gerantang, which contains religious, nationalist, independence, mutual-cooperation, and integrity values, confirm that Nusantara's oral literary tradition, including "Antu Banyu," carries systematic pedagogical potential.

Theoretically, this study is grounded in the concept of narrative ecology, which views stories as living systems that continually interact with their environment. Operationally, this concept is traced through three analytical indicators: (a) "habitat" change, i.e., a shift in the medium and context through which the story is delivered; (b) adaptation, i.e., the adjustment of the narrative's form and function to the new medium; and (c) transformation, i.e., a change in the narrative's meaning or social function resulting from that adaptation process. Like an organism within a natural ecosystem, a narrative grows, adapts, mutates, and may even go extinct if it fails to respond to changes in its habitat. This conception of narrative as inherently reshaped by its medium is consistent with Bruner's ([1991](#)) argument that narrative is not a neutral vessel for pre-existing meaning but an active mode of constructing reality itself. In the digital era, narrative ecology faces a radical shift in medium: from personal oral transmission toward a multimodal digital pedagogical landscape that transcends geographic boundaries (Kress, [2018](#)), a shift that resonates with the broader move toward multimodal literacy pedagogy proposed by the New London Group ([1996](#)) and later extended into participatory digital culture by Jenkins et al ([2009](#)). Wahid and Ain ([2023](#)) assert that the digital reconstruction of folk literature is not merely a change of media but an ecological effort to preserve the relevance of traditional narratives amid the tide of modernization. Burnett and Merchant ([2020](#)) remind us that literacy practices in schools cannot be separated from the digital ecosystem that surrounds students' daily lives. Empirical evidence reinforces this direction: Mulbar et al ([2025](#)) found that the multimodal nature of science-based digital storytelling improves conceptual understanding and ecological concern among junior high school students, while Nasir et al ([2024](#)) systematic review of digital storytelling research from 2020–2024 identified consistent gains in critical thinking, media literacy, and emotional

engagement among students across educational levels.

Comparable patterns have been documented internationally: digital storytelling has been shown to reshape young learners' social interaction and collaborative meaning-making (O'Byrne et al., 2019), while digital comic adaptations of folktales have been found to strengthen children's ecoliteracy specifically (Hudhana et al., 2025). Studies on digital storytelling also show its impact on strengthening critical literacy and value expression. Adiyawati and Nuroh (2023) recorded significant improvement not only in technical writing aspects, but also in students' ability to express the ideas and values they hold. Mingga et al (2024) found that students learning through digital narrative media were more willing to voice critical perspectives, including questioning traditional values and recontextualizing them in their own language—a condition necessary for the growth of the Critical Reasoning dimension within the PSP. From an educational sociolinguistics standpoint, students' interaction with cultural texts is never neutral: every time a student reads or discusses a narrative from their ancestral land, they engage in a layered negotiation of identity. Pangrazio and Selwyn (2019) underscore that critical digital literacy includes the ability to understand how data and narratives shape social identity. This layered identity negotiation mirrors findings from other digital contexts, where digital media has been shown to function as an active site for cultural-identity development rather than passive consumption (McKenzie, 2022), and where online social networking discourse itself becomes an arena of intercultural negotiation (Chen, 2017); it also resonates with recent conceptualizations of global citizenship education as a lived, dialogic practice rather than an abstract curricular add-on (Bosio & Schattle, 2021; Franch, 2020; Helm et al., 2023), while Rahmadin et al (2024) found that educational values in Sasak folklore are effectively used in schools as long as they are adapted to students' characteristics—a finding that speaks directly to the urgency of the narrative's ecological adaptation. On the policy side, Aini et al.'s (2024) literature review reveals that implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) in many schools remains symbolic due to educators' shallow philosophical-pedagogical understanding.

A striking research gap is the scarcity of studies that position folklore as a narrative ecology; prior research (Mar'atusshalihah et al., 2024) has generally mapped the structure and moral messages of folklore in a static, descriptive manner, but has not yet examined how such narratives adapt when shifting medium into a digital ecosystem, the specific gap that the concept of narrative ecology fills in this study, a cultural communication entity that must adapt to its environment to remain relevant. This gap mirrors a pattern noted in the broader indigenous-knowledge-in-education literature, where systematic reviews report that most studies still document local knowledge as static curricular content rather than as a system that adapts through new pedagogical media (da Silva et al., 2023; Druker-Ibáñez & Cáceres-Jensen, 2022). The dominant literary analysis remains static, limited to descriptively examining structure and moral messages, and overlooks the dimension of ecological transformation: how traditional narratives evolve as they shift habitat from orality to the digital landscape. Without such transformation, the values within “Antu Banyu” risk becoming an artifact of the past that fails to engage with today's students' critical reasoning (Burnett & Merchant, 2020; Kress, 2018).

Unlike previous studies that analyzed folklore in a structural-moralistic manner without considering its digital transformation, this study positions “Antu Banyu” as a dynamic narrative ecology within a digital pedagogical ecosystem. By combining an educational-sociolinguistic perspective with the PSP framework, this study offers a model of local folklore recontextualization that can be adapted by other schools in Indonesia. Specifically, this study

answers four questions: (1) how does the Indonesian language teacher integrate folklore using digital technology; (2) which PSP dimensions are internalized; (3) what are the supporting and inhibiting factors; and (4) what is the principal's perspective on the program. The first question traces the process of narrative-ecology adaptation at the level of pedagogical practice; the second and third questions examine that transformation through the lens of the PSP and the supporting/inhibiting ecosystem factors; while the fourth question situates the principal's perspective as a marker of institutional legitimacy for that transformation, so that together, the four questions collectively map the narrative-ecology cycle from practice to policy.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design, as this design allows for in-depth, naturalistic exploration of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2018). The unit of analysis is the cultural communicative interaction of learners at SMP Nahdlatul Wathan, Mataram. The analytical framework combines the concept of narrative ecology (Burnett & Merchant, 2020) to dissect the transformation of the story's medium, with PSP indicators (Kemendikbudristek, 2022) to examine the internalization of character values.

2.2 Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at SMP Nahdlatul Wathan, Mataram City, West Nusa Tenggara Province, during the even semester of the 2023/2024 academic year, based on three considerations: the school has fully implemented the Merdeka Curriculum; there is an Indonesian language teacher actively integrating digital media into folklore instruction; and the school has a strong cultural identity as an institution rooted in Islamic values and local Lombok wisdom. Thus, this site is methodologically relevant for examining the dialogue between tradition and digital modernity; the school's distinctive characteristics were also taken into consideration when reading the transferability of the findings to other school contexts.

Participants numbered seven, determined through purposive sampling based on the relevance of their knowledge and the depth of their experience regarding the phenomenon under study (Creswell & Poth, 2018), consistent with the information-rich-case logic underpinning purposeful sampling more broadly (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2015). The composition of students covered variation in academic ability (high, medium, low), categorized based on the previous semester's Indonesian-language report-card scores and the subject teacher's recommendation, and gender, to represent classroom diversity. Data saturation (Morse, 2015) was achieved after the fourth student interview and confirmed by thematic redundancy in the fifth student interview. Saturation was determined by comparing the codes and themes emerging in each new transcript against those previously identified; in the fifth student interview, all emerging codes were already encompassed within the four established themes without yielding any substantively new subtheme, and data collection with the student group was therefore concluded. This threshold is consistent with empirical benchmarks reported elsewhere in qualitative research, where thematic saturation for relatively homogeneous participant groups is typically reached within a comparable range of interviews (Guest et al., 2006; Hennink et al., 2017), and was cross-checked using the code-based saturation-reporting logic proposed by Guest et al (2020). The participant profile is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Research Participant Profile

Code	Role	Gender	Academic Ability	Note
G1	Grade VII Indonesian Language Teacher	Female	—	Class teacher
KS	Principal	Male	—	Policy holder
S1	Grade VII Student	Female	High	Purposive
S2	Grade VII Student	Female	High	Purposive
S3	Grade VII Student	Male	Medium	Purposive
S4	Grade VII Student	Female	Medium	Purposive
S5	Grade VII Student	Male	Low	Purposive

2.3 Data Collection Technique

Data were collected through three complementary channels, forming robust triangulation. First, individual semi-structured interviews with all participants lasting 30–60 minutes, recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim; the interview guide was developed based on the research aims and its content was validated through consultation with the supervising lecturer; the interview grid comprised four main foci aligned with the four research questions (the digital integration process, emerging PSP dimension indicators, supporting/inhibiting factors, and policy perspective), and content validation was carried out by checking each question item's alignment with these foci before use in the field. Second, classroom observation was conducted across six sessions with the observer in a non-participant position, using a structured observation sheet to record teacher–student interaction patterns and spontaneous moments of meaning negotiation. Third, document study covered a review of the Grade VII Indonesian Language Teaching Module, the Merdeka Curriculum Phase D Learning Outcomes, and a sample of student task portfolios related to folklore, including reflective essays; a total of five reflective essays (one per student participant) were analyzed, selected based on the completeness of their response to the reflective prompt given, and coded using the same coding scheme as the interview data.

2.4 Data Analysis and Trustworthiness Technique

Data analysis followed Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2014) interactive thematic analysis procedure through three simultaneous stages: data condensation by summarizing, coding, and sorting relevant data from transcripts and field notes (initial codes were formed inductively from verbatim transcripts using descriptive coding, consistent with the general thematic-analysis logic described by Braun and Clarke (2006); codes with similar meanings were then grouped into subthemes, and these subthemes were subsequently consolidated into four main themes through analytic discussion between the researcher and the supervising lecturer, as a form of investigator triangulation to resolve interpretive disagreements); data display in the form of narrative description and thematic matrices; and conclusion drawing and verification. Data trustworthiness was ensured through source triangulation (comparing data from the teacher, principal, and students) and method triangulation (comparing interview, observation, and document data). Member checking was conducted by confirming the interpretation of findings with the teacher and the principal, following recommended practice for strengthening the credibility of qualitative interpretation through participant validation (Birt et al., 2016; González-Salgado et al., 2022).

Direct member checking with students was not formally conducted due to ethical considerations regarding the additional participation burden on child participants, though the credibility of the interpretation of student data was safeguarded through source triangulation (comparing student statements with classroom observation and reflective essays) and indirect confirmation through the teacher, who is familiar with students' daily classroom conduct.

2.5 Ethical Clearance

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles governing research involving human participants, including minors. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the school principal as the institutional policy holder, and written informed consent was obtained from the Indonesian language teacher and from the parents/guardians of all student participants; age-appropriate verbal assent was additionally obtained from the student participants themselves. Participants' identities were protected through the use of codes (G1, KS, S1–S5) throughout the manuscript, and no personally identifying information was published. Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without consequence.

3. Results and Discussion

Thematic analysis of the interview, observation, and document data produced four main themes answering the four research questions. A summary of themes and subthemes is presented in Table 2. Each finding is supported by verbatim participant quotations to remain grounded in empirical data.

Table 2

Themes and Subthemes of the Thematic Analysis

Theme	Subtheme	Description	PSP Dimension
T1	Medium Transformation into Multimodality	Students' shift from passive readers to active discourse producers through digital discussion forums	Creativity; Independence
T2	Deconstructing Myth into Ecological Logic	Students reinterpret "Antu Banyu" from a supernatural entity into a rational ecological metaphor	Critical Reasoning
T3	Cultural Identity Affirmation in Cyberspace	Students link local values to global environmental issues (SDGs, climate change)	Global Diversity
T4	Learning-Ecosystem Factors	Support from the Merdeka Curriculum (P5) and barriers of the digital divide and teachers' rigid paradigms	Implementation Context

3.1 Recontextualizing Folklore: From Orality to Digital Multimodality

Observation results on the learning ecosystem at SMP NW Mataram show that the shift of the "Antu Banyu" story's medium into a multimodal digital format, a blend of text, visual elements, and an asynchronous discussion forum, appears to indicate a shift in students' position. In traditional narrative ecology, students tend to be passive readers; in the digital pedagogical landscape, the online discussion forum becomes a new and living speech community, this forum meets the criteria of a speech community because its members share interaction norms (online discussion etiquette), a distinctive linguistic repertoire (contemporary terms and style for

discussing folklore), and a shared communicative purpose (producing counter-discourse on the “Antu Banyu” narrative), rather than merely being an incidental digital discussion space. Students do not merely consume the narrative but actively produce counter-discourse, compare versions of the story they know from their families, and reproduce the story in a contemporary linguistic style. This finding aligns with Kress’s (2018) argument that the multimodality of digital text enables ongoing recontextualization of meaning. The class teacher stated the following.

“I was surprised myself. Children who are usually quiet in a conventional classroom turn out to be the most active writers once there is an online discussion forum. They compare the Antu Banyu story with the water-ghost stories from their own grandmothers’ villages.” (G1)

G1’s statement confirms that the digital medium opens a more democratic space for participation compared to the conventional classroom—a phenomenon known in educational sociolinguistics as the expansion of learners’ communicative repertoire (Burnett & Merchant, 2020). This shift is also consistent with the broader multiliteracies paradigm, which holds that literacy pedagogy must expand beyond print to accommodate the multimodal, participatory forms of meaning-making that young people already practice outside school (New London Group, 1996; Jenkins et al., 2009). The forum’s function as an emergent community bound by shared norms and purpose is compatible with community-of-practice theorizing, in which identity and learning are co-constructed through sustained participation rather than transmitted top-down (Farnsworth et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2017), and with evidence that a well-facilitated online discussion space can elevate learners’ cognitive presence beyond what face-to-face exchange typically allows (Kanuka & Garrison, 2004). Similar shifts toward active meaning-making have been documented among younger learners engaging in digital storytelling elsewhere (O’Byrne et al., 2019).

3.2 Sociolinguistic Meaning Negotiation: Transition from Myth to Ecological Critical Reasoning

One finding that stands out for the depth of its evidence is the way students negotiate the meaning of the figure of “Antu Banyu.” Through in-depth interviews, most students revealed that they consciously shed the mystical interpretation long attached to the story and unpacked it as a sociolinguistic metaphor deliberately created by their ancestors for pragmatic purposes. A high-ability female student stated as follows.

“Our grandmothers back then didn’t know terms like water pollution or dangerous undercurrents, so they used Antu Banyu to make us afraid and not damage the river. That’s their way of teaching ecology, sir.” (S1)

A medium-ability male student added an equally reflective perspective.

“If you think about it, the water ghost makes sense. Rivers in the old days really were dangerous—strong currents, crocodiles, disease. Our ancestors just didn’t have the scientific vocabulary, so they used a story.” (S3)

Both quotations constitute a genuine manifestation of the Critical Reasoning dimension: students deconstruct the myth into rational ecological logic without losing respect for ancestral wisdom. This interpretation is further confirmed by classroom observation, in which a similar argumentation pattern (linking mystical elements to rational-ecological explanations) was repeatedly observed during online discussion sessions, and by students’ reflective essays, which consistently contained a shift from mystical description to causal-ecological explanation, thereby reinforcing the indication of the Critical Reasoning dimension in question. This finding confirms Burnett and Merchant’s (2020) framework that a well-designed digital environment encourages

individuals to question narrative authority and seek connections between text and their social reality. This result also aligns with Mingga et al (2024) finding that digital narrative media fosters students' courage to voice critical perspectives on traditional values. Students' move to decode the water-ghost figure as an encoded ecological warning is also consistent with geomythological scholarship, which argues that many traditional narratives preserve genuine environmental observation beneath a supernatural surface rather than representing simple invention (Masse et al., 2007). In this sense, what the students performed was less a rejection of the narrative's authority than what Bruner (1991) calls the narrative construction of reality: reinterpreting inherited story-material through a new explanatory frame while keeping its social function intact, an ongoing act of meaning-making rather than passive inheritance (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004).

3.3 Cultural Identity Affirmation in Cyberspace: Strengthening the Global Diversity Dimension

The third finding reveals an intriguing paradox: in an era when the internet is often blamed as an engine of cultural homogenization, the presence of local narratives within the digital ecosystem instead sparks strong cultural identity affirmation. Thematic analysis of students' reflective essays shows an ability to contextualize the "Antu Banyu" warning alongside global environmental issues such as climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A high-ability female student wrote the following in her reflective essay.

"Antu Banyu is actually the same as the 'Save Our Rivers' movement that exists in the world today. The only difference is our ancestors already did it hundreds of years ago in their own way." (S2)

The principal offered an institutional assessment that reinforces this finding.

"This program aligns with NW's vision—shaping a generation rooted in Islamic values and local wisdom, yet able to compete and engage in dialogue with the global world. I see the children becoming even prouder of their own culture when it is brought together with technology." (KS)

Sociolinguistically, the use of local references within a globally oriented digital space shows students' conscious effort to preserve their cultural "voice" so it is not submerged by the tide of external cultural dominance (Pangrazio & Selwyn, 2019). This is the essence of the Global Diversity dimension: standing firmly on local cultural roots while extending one's thinking toward the context of global citizenship. More specifically, students' statements aligning "Antu Banyu" with the global "Save Our Rivers" movement reflect elements of reflection and responsibility toward global issues within the Global Diversity dimension, whereas mere affirmation of local cultural pride, without explicit connection to cross-cultural or global issues, does not by itself demonstrate fulfillment of that dimension. This pattern parallels findings that digital media, rather than eroding cultural rootedness, can actively support identity development among young people navigating between local and global reference points (McKenzie, 2022), and that online social spaces themselves become sites of intercultural negotiation (Chen, 2017). It also resonates with recent conceptualizations of global citizenship education as a lived, dialogic practice rather than an abstract curricular add-on (Bosio & Schattle, 2021; Franch, 2020; Helm, Baroni, & Acconcia, 2023). Students' framing of "Antu Banyu" alongside the global "Save Our Rivers" movement is consistent with evidence that narrative framing of local environmental wisdom can be an effective vehicle for environmental campaigning at a wider scale (Primayanti & Puspita, 2022), and that narrative-based approaches to environmental content more generally

strengthen both emotional engagement and attitude change compared with fact-only delivery (Morris et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2022).

3.4 Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Implementation

Three main supporting factors were identified from the data. First, alignment with Merdeka Curriculum policy: implementation of folklore-based digital pedagogy gained structural support through the P5 requirement, which provides curricular flexibility so that integrating local narratives into digital platforms carries strong legitimacy. Second, students' cognitive readiness in an environment familiar with digital technology, accustomed to processing information that blends text, audio, and visuals simultaneously, tentatively indicate an emerging multimodal literacy, accustomed to processing information that blends text, audio, and visuals simultaneously, so this cognitive readiness accelerates adaptation and allows them to move directly into the stage of critical analysis. Third, sociocultural proximity (local affinity): some students with South Sumatran family backgrounds, or who knew similar stories from their home environment (this family-background information was obtained from an opening interview question about how the student came to know the "Antu Banyu" story, and has been added to the relevant participant description without compromising identity anonymity), carried a latent emotional resonance that sparked authentic intrinsic engagement.

On the other hand, three inhibiting factors also emerged. First, the digital divide: disparities in device and internet-network access hindered online discussion and risked creating a hierarchy of participation in the classroom—only students with adequate access could contribute fully to the digital narrative ecology. Second, the rigidity of educators' pedagogical paradigm: some teachers still carry a conventional paradigm into the digital space and tend to shut down critical discussion because they view "myth-deconstructing" interpretations as deviating from the traditional moral-value norm, when in fact that very interpretation is the most pedagogically valuable. Third, the risk of meaning reduction within the multimodal landscape: the visual appeal of digital media can divert students' attention from the actual sociolinguistic and ecological message; without consistent critical-reasoning guidance from a facilitator, this narrative ecology risks being reduced to mere entertainment consumption. This finding aligns with Aini et al.'s (2024) observation that P5 implementation often stops at a symbolic level when educators' pedagogical capacity does not transform accordingly. The rigidity described here is also consistent with international evidence that teachers' underlying pedagogical beliefs, more than infrastructural access alone, determine whether digital tools are used to support surface-level tasks or genuine student-centered inquiry (Ertmer et al., 2012). The supporting role of Merdeka Curriculum policy corroborates comparable findings that anchoring character-strengthening projects in locally rooted narrative material substantially deepens value internalization (Fauziah et al., 2023), while the risk of static, non-adaptive treatment of local knowledge identified here echoes systematic-review evidence that most indigenous-knowledge integration in schools still stops short of treating that knowledge as a living, adaptable system (da Silva, Pereira, & Amorim, 2023; Druker-Ibáñez & Cáceres-Jensen, 2022). Digital formats beyond discussion forums, such as folklore-based digital comics, offer one such adaptable pathway and have specifically been shown to strengthen ecoliteracy among school-age learners (Hudhana et al., 2025). A limitation of this study lies in its scope, which focuses on a single school with a single folktale, so generalization of the findings must be undertaken cautiously through contextual transferability.

4. Conclusion

Based on in-depth interview data, classroom observation across six sessions, and document study, this study answers the four research questions as follows. First, the transformation of the “Antu Banyu” narrative ecology into the digital pedagogical landscape proves to be not merely a change of format but a revival of function: a traditional narrative that was once monological gains new life when it moves to a digital platform that allows students to speak, question, and create their own meaning. Second, the process of digital interaction genuinely fosters the Critical Reasoning and Global Diversity dimensions, the two PSP dimensions most difficult to instill through conventional approaches, as seen in students’ deconstruction of the myth and their ability to link local values with global issues. Third, local wisdom and digital technology are not opposing poles but mutually reinforcing partners when brought together through appropriate pedagogical design. The main challenges, digital infrastructure inequality and rigid pedagogical paradigms, remind us that educational transformation demands a transformation in the mindset of all actors: teachers, principals, and policymakers alike. Theoretically, this study enriches the discourse on narrative ecology with empirical evidence that folklore can function as a dynamic character-education instrument through sociolinguistic recontextualization in digital spaces; practically, this finding offers a model adaptable by other schools whose main components include: (1) selecting local folklore relevant to students’ environmental/social context, (2) transforming the medium into a multimodal digital platform that enables active discourse production, and (3) explicit critical-discussion facilitation by the teacher to guide myth deconstruction toward PSP dimensions; as an initial practice framework, these components still require further testing in different school and folklore contexts before they can be claimed as a generalized model in Indonesia, a country rich in local folklore.

Future research is recommended to broaden its scope with a variety of folktales from different regions, explore other PSP dimensions, and develop more standardized instruments for measuring value internalization so that cross-context comparisons can be made more systematically. Indonesian language teachers are also advised to design explicit critical-discussion facilitation scenarios so that the visual appeal of digital media does not reduce the depth of narrative meaning.

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Author Contribution

V.O contributed to the conceptualization, data collection, analysis, and preparation of the original manuscript. R.S contributed to the methodological development, interpretation of the findings, and critical revision of the manuscript. P.P contributed to the theoretical analysis, manuscript review, and refinement of the final version. All authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

AI Declaration

Generative artificial intelligence tools were used solely to assist with language editing, grammatical refinement, and improvement of the clarity and readability of the manuscript. AI tools were not used to generate research data, conduct data analysis, or make substantive interpretations of the findings. The authors reviewed and verified the final manuscript and take full responsibility for its content.

Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study consist primarily of interview transcripts, classroom observation field notes, and student reflective essays/portfolio documents involving minors. Due to ethical considerations and the need to protect participants' privacy and confidentiality, the complete dataset is not publicly available. De-identified data may be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to institutional and ethical approval.

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