Research Article

Digital writing of short story "The Echoes of Dusun Jambu": How creative process supports cultural literacy

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Abstract

This study explores how short story writing, supported by digital tools, can effectively promote the Mengkuang River in Jambu Village as a distinctive tourist destination. It highlights the creative integration of a cultural elements, setting, and digital writing techniques into narratives, characters, and themes to capture the essence of local heritage. Employing a Qualitative Research Design, the study incorporates interviews, field observations, and digital collaboration to examine how fiction and technology work together to enhance tourism promotion and cultural literacy. The use of digital platforms demonstrates their potential to present Jambu Village's unique traditions and values to a wider audience in an engaging and accessible manner. Community involvement is a key focus, emphasizing the importance of creating authentic stories that resonate with readers while preserving and celebrating the cultural identity of the village. By blending creative storytelling with digital tools, this research underscores the transformative potential of this approach in preserving cultural heritage and promoting economic growth. It also illustrates how such efforts can position Jambu Village as an attractive destination for cultural tourism. Ultimately, this study serves as a model for leveraging storytelling and technology to promote tourism while safeguarding cultural traditions and fostering sustainable development in local communities.

1. Introduction

'Wow, I can explore culture, creative writing digitally' is a meaningful sentence but it was a new phenomenon in demonstrating tourism destinations. Culture has been exposed digitally and finally short stories take more action to promote tourism. Nowadays, tourism is a process that involves seeking authentic experiences, which can be categorized into objective, constructive, and existential authenticity in various social contexts (Sang, 2018). Objective authenticity refers to elements that remain unchanged by tourists, while constructive authenticity involves how culture and traditions are interpreted and presented to visitors, often tailored to create engaging experiences and literacy processes. In general, tourism is a form of recreation that involves travel outside one's place of residence, with functions encompassing economic, humanitarian, ecological, and social aspects (Montenegro, Marques, & Sousa, 2022). From an economic perspective, tourism creates jobs, stimulates local growth through tourist spending on accommodation, food, transportation, and activities, and can act as a catalyst for new investment, especially in small and medium enterprises. The humanitarian aspect includes cultural exchanges between tourists and locals, fostering

cross-cultural understanding. Moreover, cultural literacy has a huge story to share with the creative process in writing as a media of promotion.

The significance of promoting tourist destinations cannot be overstated and requires efficient resource management and strategic planning by destination marketing organizations. Florido-Benítez (2020) underscores the importance of tourism promotions that not only attract but also encourage tourists to visit. Effective resource management ensures the sustainability of a destination's natural, cultural, and infrastructural attractions. Strategic planning is essential for designing targeted promotional campaigns, leveraging technology, and identifying key market segments. Hence, tourism promotion is not just about increasing visitor numbers but also ensuring long-term benefits to the tourism industry and local communities, in line with Florido-Benítez's (2020) vision.

In today's information-saturated and highly competitive tourism industry, originality stands out as a critical factor that adds appeal and uniqueness to travel narratives. As Satrya (2023) explains, original and authentic stories can be a powerful strategy in turning travel writing into an effective promotional tool for marketing tourist destinations. By focusing on originality, travel stories offer unique perspectives, fresh experiences, and in-depth exploration of a destination. As such, travel writing is not just a record of travel but a potent tool that visually and emotionally engages readers, promoting various destinations through digital short story. Jambu Village, located in Gelumbang, has significant potential as a tourist destination, offering pristine natural beauty. Its latest attraction, the Mengkuang River, officially opened in early 2024, has quickly gained attention for its crystal-clear water and unspoiled surroundings. The natural formation of the river, untouched by human intervention, adds to its charm and authenticity. However, this destination remains largely undiscovered by the public, as it was only recently introduced. In writing this short story, the author seeks to introduce Jambu Village and the Mengkuang River to readers. Through vivid descriptions and imaginative storytelling, the aim is to spark curiosity and inspire interest in exploring the unique natural beauty of Jambu Village, encouraging readers to visit and appreciate the Mengkuang River through digital writing and give cultural literacy comprehension.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Importance of Writing in Cultural Expression

Writing serves as a crucial tool in conveying culture, shaping narratives that reflect societal values, traditions, and beliefs. Cultural literacy, which is the understanding of different cultural norms and practices, often finds its roots in storytelling. The digital transformation of writing, especially in the context of short stories, provides new avenues for preserving and promoting culture. Behrends & DiPaolo (2016) argue that writing creates a bridge between cultural heritage and modern audiences, making it a powerful medium for cultural expression. Thus, writing plays an essential role in how we interpret and engage with cultural narratives, especially in digital contexts.

2.2 The Role of Digital Writing in Modern Storytelling and Cultural Promotion

Digital writing, as explored by Sarrafzadeh, Jauhar, Gamon, Lank, and White (2020), refers to a collaborative environment where writers move through distinct phases, assisted by tools that cater to specific writing stages and predict progression based on user interaction logs. This stage-aware assistance is critical in collaborative digital spaces, as it supports the evolution of writing in real-time. Additionally, Punday (2020) highlights that digital writing often involves self-imposed constraints, where the author arranges pre-existing data or content in novel, meaningful ways. Understanding these phases and the role of self-constraints can greatly enhance the creative process behind projects like The Echoes of Dusun Jambu, which integrates technology and narrative to promote cultural literacy. As authors engage with distinct phases of digital writing, they create a dynamic narrative that

not only relies on traditional storytelling but also benefits from the affordances of technology, thus enriching the reading experience.

2.3 Utilizing Promotional Media for Tourism

Promotion is the relationship between an action and a desire, aiming to advance or satisfy a need (Behrends & DiPaolo, 2016). In the context of digital writing and short stories, promotional strategies can help in promoting cultural narratives. Damayanti & Sofiatiningsih (2019) describe promotional strategies that include advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, and public relations. By combining these strategies, digital short stories can serve as a powerful promotional tool, especially in promoting local culture and tourism, as seen in the case *The Echoes of Dusun Jambu*. The digital era allows for new promotional strategies that leverage social media, websites, and other platforms to reach wider audiences, thus furthering the cultural message embedded in the narrative.

2.4 Creative Thinking as a Tool for Cultural Expression

Creative thinking is a crucial component of digital writing, involving cognitive processes that facilitate the generation of new ideas and innovative solutions. Chavula, Choi, and Rieh (2022) emphasize that creative thinking encompasses a range of operations, including planning, searching, synthesizing, and organizing ideas to uncover novel concepts. This is particularly vital for digital writers, as they often integrate multimedia and interactive elements into their narratives. Moreover, Glăveanu (2021) points out that creative processes yield diverse outcomes, encompassing not only ideas but also various processes and the dual aspects of creativity both positive and negative. This duality indicates that digital writers must navigate the complexities and opportunities inherent in their creative endeavors, whether in storytelling or content creation. To further this understanding, Lansing-Stoeffler and Daley (2023) propose a new model of creative thinking that focuses on enhancing creative and innovation skills, addressing the limitations of traditional approaches. This model provides a framework for fostering innovation within writing, underscoring the importance of creative thinking in constructing compelling narratives. In digital storytelling, such as in *The Echoes of Dusun Jambu*, writers can experiment with unconventional structures and techniques, enhancing the storytelling and promotional potential of their work. By effectively employing creative thinking processes, digital writers can produce engaging narratives that resonate with their audiences, thus playing a vital role in promoting cultural literacy and enriching the overall reading experience.

2.5 Cultural Literacy as a Foundation for Engaging Digital Storytelling

Cultural literacy encompasses the knowledge and skills necessary to understand, appreciate, and engage with diverse cultures. Danich (2022) defines cultural literacy as a system that connects education and culture, allowing individuals to navigate the complexities of the world. This concept is especially relevant in digital storytelling, where narratives often reflect cultural values, traditions, and beliefs. By fostering cultural literacy, writers ensure their stories resonate with audiences across cultural boundaries, promoting a deeper understanding and appreciation of both their own culture and the cultures of others. Siliņa-Jasjukeviča and Rancāne (2022) argue that cultural literacy is essential for individuals to understand themselves and their heritage, as well as to respect the diversity of other cultures. In digital contexts, this awareness becomes vital for creating stories that uphold cultural integrity while embracing the diversity of a global audience. Writers who engage with cultural literacy take responsibility for preserving and promoting cultural heritage and values through their narratives. Furthermore, Ceylan (2020) emphasizes that cultural literacy helps individuals avoid the pitfalls of ethnocentrism, enabling them to participate in and contribute to a culture without imposing their own biases. In digital storytelling, particularly in projects like *The Echoes of Dusun Jambu*, fostering cultural literacy ensures that the narrative remains inclusive and respectful of cultural nuances. This

enhances the story's ability to promote cultural awareness and appreciation, aligning with the broader goals of cultural promotion and education in the digital age.

2.6 Short Stories as a Vehicle for Cultural Literacy

Short stories are a potent form of literature that enables readers to connect emotionally with cultural themes and ideas. Park & Kim (2021) define short stories as sequences of events that unfold chronologically, providing readers with both entertainment and insight. Barkhuizen (2016) highlights short stories, by reflecting societal and cultural realities, become vital tools in enhancing cultural literacy. They offer readers windows into different cultures, broadening their understanding of traditions, language, and societal values. In this way, short stories like *The Echoes of Dusun Jambu* can be instrumental in fostering greater appreciation for local culture through a concise and engaging narrative.

2.7 Defining Features of Short Stories

Short stories are distinct for their brevity and focus. According to Surana (2021), short stories are brief but packed with meaning, often leaving a lasting impression on readers. They center on a character resolving a conflict and are usually written in a straightforward manner. Tarigan (2011) adds that the form's focus on a single plot and situation, read in one sitting, makes it effective for conveying cultural and emotional messages. This feature is particularly useful for highlighting the nuances of cultural identity, as seen in stories like *The Echoes of Dusun Jambu*, where the reader can quickly engage with the local culture and its underlying values.

2.8 Core Elements in Crafting a Short Story

The construction of a short story relies on several key elements, each contributing to the overall impact of the narrative. According to Alfarizi et al. (2017) and Nurgiyantoro (2015), the essential elements of a short story include theme, plot, character, setting, and style. These elements form the foundation of the narrative, guiding the reader through the story's message. For example, in *The Echoes of Dusun Jambu*, the theme revolves around cultural heritage, the plot reveals local traditions, and the characters bring the culture to life. A digital writing process enhances these elements by offering creative tools for authors to experiment with storytelling techniques and reach diverse audiences through online platforms.

2.9 The Process of Writing a Short Story

Writing a short story involves a structured process that helps refine the creative vision. Allsburg (2021) emphasizes the importance of drafting, revising, and editing, while Hidayati (2009) breaks the process into clear steps: determining the idea, exploring themes, documenting key elements, creating an outline, and refining the draft. This process is crucial in ensuring that the final story is coherent and impactful. In the case of digital writing, tools such as writing software, collaborative platforms, and online feedback mechanisms offer new ways for authors to enhance their storytelling. By incorporating digital tools, the creative process becomes more dynamic, enabling writers to refine their work in real-time and reach broader audiences through digital publication platforms.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Information and Data Literacy: Establishing a Robust Base

In crafting the short story "The Echoes of Dusun Jambu" to promote Jambu Village, the author demonstrated effective information and data literacy. Extensive research was conducted using both digital and traditional methods to gather accurate cultural, historical, and environmental details about the village. Local customs, such as the Ningkuk dance, and the significance of the Mengkuang River

were carefully verified through online archives, field observations, and interviews with community members. Digital tools like online libraries and tourism websites helped the author cross-reference the information to ensure cultural authenticity. The use of digital and traditional information-gathering methods helped the author build a strong foundation of knowledge, ensuring the short story's authenticity and promoting Jambu Village effectively.

3.2. Cooperation and Interaction: Exchanging and Cooperating with Fellows

Collaboration played a key role in the development of the short story. Digital communication platforms such as Zoom, email, and Google Docs facilitated consultations with experts, including online writers and English teachers. These collaborations helped refine the story's structure, grammar, and cultural aspects. By engaging with locals through digital surveys and video calls, the author was able to capture the true essence of Jambu Village, ensuring the story's portrayal of village life was genuine and engaging. Digital communication tools enabled smooth collaboration with experts and community members, enhancing the story's quality and ensuring cultural accuracy.

3.3. Digital Content Creation: Communicating Your Knowledge

The story's creation process was deeply intertwined with digital platforms. The author drafted and revised the short story using Google Docs, which allowed for seamless editing and feedback from peers and mentors. Various digital tools were utilized for plagiarism checks (e.g., Turnitin), grammar corrections (e.g., Grammarly), and thesaurus features to improve the language used in the story. The author also explored options for digital storytelling platforms to expand the story's reach globally, such as creating an e-book version to promote Jambu Village to a broader audience. Digital platforms and tools played an essential role in the content creation process, ensuring the short story was polished, original, and ready for digital publication to promote Jambu Village.

3.4. Digital Safety: Gain Knowledge with Trust

In the process of drafting and sharing the short story, the author took careful steps to protect the integrity of the story and the cultural elements involved. Digital safety was maintained by properly attributing sources, safeguarding the community's intellectual property, and ensuring the confidentiality of interview participants through encrypted communication channels. Additionally, plagiarism detection tools were used to ensure that the story remained original and that the local cultural heritage was respected. The integration of digital safety measures protected both the author and the community, ensuring ethical storytelling and safeguarding the cultural heritage of Jambu Village.

3.5. Solving Problems: Overcoming Technical Difficulties and Linguistic Dilemma

Writing a fictional story based on real cultural elements posed various challenges, particularly in language and technical aspects. Digital tools such as online grammar checkers, thesauruses, and translation platforms were used to resolve issues related to language clarity and accuracy. Furthermore, the author navigated technical difficulties using cloud-based storage and document management tools to prevent data loss and ensure smooth collaboration with reviewers. Feedback from English language experts further aided in polishing the dialogue and narrative structure. The combination of digital tools and expert guidance enabled the author to solve language and technical challenges, resulting in a refined, accurate, and engaging short story.

4. Conclusion

The process of writing "The Echoes of Dusun Jambu" illustrates the crucial role of digital tools in enhancing both creative writing, cultural literacy and tourism promotion. By using digital resources such as online research platforms, grammar tools, and collaboration with experts, the author was able to refine and polish the short story, ensuring it meets high-quality standards. Additionally, digital formats like e-books and online publications offer broader distribution, allowing the story to reach

global audiences and effectively promote Jambu Village as a tourist destination. Digital storytelling does not only preserve the cultural essence of Jambu Village but also adds a layer of modernity, allowing traditions like the Ningkuk dance and the beauty of the Mengkuang River to be showcased in an engaging, accessible way. As the tourism sector becomes more reliant on technology, this blend of digital and traditional storytelling offers a compelling strategy to captivate readers and potential tourists. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the balance between digital and conventional methods. While digital tools enhance content creation and dissemination, the heart of the storytelling still lies in maintaining cultural authenticity and community involvement. This combined approach ensures that the narrative stays grounded in the village's traditions while leveraging the power of technology to elevate its global appeal. By integrating both digital and traditional practices, the project successfully highlights how modern technology can complement cultural promotion, creating a sustainable and impactful means of showcasing Jambu Village's unique heritage and natural beauty to the world.

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