

Developing a Digital Bilingual Storybook for Teaching English with The Insertion of Spirituality Value in Fifth Grade Students

¹Made Dharma Prananta, ²Luh Putu Artini, ³Kadek Sintya Dewi

^{1,2,3}English Education Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts
Ganesha University of Education

Corresponding e-mail: dharmad@student.undiksha.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to develop a digital bilingual storybook integrating spirituality values for Grade 5 elementary school students and evaluate its quality as an instructional medium for English language learning. This study employed a Design and Development (D&D) model adapted from Huhta et al. (2013), consisting of two stages: design and development. The design stage involved conducting a needs analysis through document analysis and interviews, whereas the development stage included designing the storyline, writing the story script, developing the prototype, and conducting expert validation. The digital bilingual storybook developed in this study is titled Jojo and His Amazing Body. Spirituality values were integrated through the storyline, dialogues, illustrations, and pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities. The product was evaluated by two experts in English pedagogy. The quantitative evaluation results showed that the two experts assigned scores of 149 and 148 out of 150, respectively, and both scores fell into the “Excellent” category. Furthermore, the qualitative feedback indicated that the developed storybook was relevant, engaging, visually appealing, linguistically appropriate for the students’ characteristics, and supportive of English language learning and the reinforcement of spirituality values. Therefore, the developed digital bilingual storybook was considered highly appropriate as an instructional medium for Grade 5 elementary school students while simultaneously promoting spirituality values.

Keywords: Digital bilingual storybook, English language learning, spirituality values, Grade 5 students, instructional media

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan buku cerita digital bilingual yang mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai spiritualitas untuk siswa kelas V sekolah dasar serta mengevaluasi kualitasnya sebagai media pembelajaran dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan model Design and Development (DnD) yang diadaptasi dari Huhta et al. (2013), yang terdiri atas dua tahap, yaitu tahap perancangan dan tahap pengembangan. Tahap perancangan meliputi analisis kebutuhan melalui studi dokumen dan wawancara, sedangkan tahap pengembangan mencakup perancangan alur cerita, penulisan naskah cerita, pengembangan prototipe, dan validasi ahli. Buku cerita digital bilingual yang dikembangkan dalam penelitian ini berjudul Jojo and His Amazing Body. Nilai-nilai spiritualitas diintegrasikan melalui alur cerita, dialog, ilustrasi, dan aktivitas pembelajaran, yang mencakup kegiatan pra-membaca, saat membaca, dan pasca-membaca. Produk yang dikembangkan kemudian dievaluasi oleh dua ahli dalam bidang pedagogi bahasa Inggris. Hasil evaluasi kuantitatif menunjukkan bahwa produk memperoleh skor total sebesar 297, yang termasuk dalam kategori “Sangat Baik”. Selain itu, masukan kualitatif menunjukkan bahwa buku cerita yang dikembangkan relevan, menarik, memiliki tampilan visual yang baik, menggunakan bahasa yang sesuai dengan karakteristik siswa, serta mendukung pembelajaran bahasa Inggris dan penguatan nilai-nilai spiritualitas. Oleh karena itu, buku cerita digital bilingual yang dikembangkan dinilai sangat layak digunakan sebagai media pembelajaran bagi siswa kelas V sekolah dasar sekaligus sebagai sarana untuk menanamkan nilai-nilai spiritualitas.

Kata kunci: buku cerita digital bilingual, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, nilai-nilai spiritualitas, siswa kelas V, media pembelajaran.

INTRODUCTION

Technological advances and globalization in the 21st century require education systems to focus not only on academic achievement but also on the development of communication skills, literacy, and other competencies relevant to future needs (Nur et al., 2024). In this context, English language learning in elementary schools has become increasingly important because it prepares students to navigate an increasingly interconnected global environment (Djoeaeriah & Hendra, 2023). English language learning today no longer emphasizes only the mastery of basic language skills, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking, but is also directed toward supporting 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration (4C) (Ratama et al., 2021).

At the elementary school level, particularly in fifth grade, students aged approximately 10–11 years are generally in the concrete operational stage. Therefore, instruction must be adapted to their developmental characteristics (Elmahasina & Nurhalisa, 2025; Wihartanti, 2022). Learning becomes more effective when it is connected to real-life experiences, visualizations, interactive activities, and situations closely related to students' daily lives. Consequently, student-centered learning and the integration of technology are essential for creating meaningful, engaging, and flexible learning experiences (Padmadewi et al., 2023).

However, the implementation of English language instruction in elementary schools still faces various challenges. Under the Merdeka Curriculum, English remains an elective subject, so its implementation depends on the readiness of each individual school. Based on interviews with fifth-grade teachers at several elementary schools, it was found that students' English proficiency remains varied, particularly in terms of vocabulary mastery, pronunciation, and writing skills. The learning materials used are still dominated by textbooks, which do not fully support contextual, engaging, and student-centered learning appropriate for elementary school students.

This situation highlights a gap between the demands of 21st-century learning and current teaching practices (Cahyani et al., 2024). On the one hand, English language learning is expected to develop communication, literacy, and higher-order thinking skills through innovative technology-based approaches. However, limitations in learning media and the suboptimal integration of character education mean that the learning process does not yet fully support the balanced development of students' competencies and character (Padmadewi et al., 2023).

One medium with the potential to address these needs is the digital bilingual storybook. This medium presents learning materials in both Indonesian and English and is enriched with visual illustrations and interactive digital features. Bilingual instruction can support language comprehension while fostering meaningful learning experiences and strengthening students' communicative and cognitive development (Ariantini et al., 2024; Loviyani et al., 2024). According to multimedia learning theory, students can understand information more effectively when verbal and visual elements are presented in an integrated manner (Mayer, 2002). Cognitive Load Theory further explains that well-structured materials can support comprehension without excessively increasing students' cognitive load (Sweller, 2011). In addition to supporting language development, the digital storybook provides opportunities to integrate character values contextually through situations closely related to students' daily experiences.

Previous studies have shown that digital storybooks can positively support elementary school learning. This medium has been reported to facilitate character development, reading and writing skills, vocabulary mastery, literacy, and students' English language proficiency (Fibriasari et al., 2021; Fridayanti et al., 2023; Maulidiya et al., 2024; Pratiwi et al., 2022). Other studies have also indicated that bilingual storybooks can contribute to more contextual and meaningful literacy and language learning experiences (Umar et al., 2023).

Nevertheless, a review of previous studies reveals that several research gaps remain. First, most previous studies have focused on language skill development or improving learning outcomes without fully integrating character education. Second, research on digital storybooks generally emphasizes specific character dimensions and does not explicitly refer to the Eight Dimensions of the Graduate Profile in the Merdeka Curriculum. Third, research integrating the Spirituality dimension into digital English language learning media for elementary school students is still scarce. Therefore, further research is needed to develop learning media capable of integrating English language learning, digital technology,

and the strengthening of spirituality values in a comprehensive manner.

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to develop a digital bilingual storybook that integrates the Spirituality dimension, one of the Eight Dimensions of the Graduate Profile under the Merdeka Curriculum, into English language learning for fifth-grade elementary school students and to evaluate the quality of the developed medium as a learning tool.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a design and development (D&D) research design based on Richey and Klein (2007). This method was chosen because it focuses on the process of designing, developing, and evaluating learning products to produce media that align with user needs and learning objectives. The product developed in this study is a digital bilingual storybook for English language learning that integrates spirituality values for fifth-grade elementary school students.

The research was conducted in several elementary schools, namely SD Negeri 1 Astina, SD Negeri 1 Paket Agung, SD Negeri 3 Banjar Tegal, and SD Negeri 3 Kaliuntu. The research participants consisted of four fifth-grade English teachers. The study focused on developing a digital bilingual storybook that integrated spirituality values.

The research procedure adapted the instructional material development model proposed by Huhta et al (2013), which consists of two main stages: design and development. During the design stage, a needs analysis was conducted to identify English language learning competencies, student characteristics, forms of verbal and nonverbal communication, language focus (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation), learning activities, and the integration of Spirituality values based on the Eight Dimensions of the Graduate Profile. The results of this stage were used as the basis for drafting the product blueprint. The development stage involved transforming the blueprint into a story script, a storyboard, and a digital bilingual storybook. The product was developed in Indonesian and English and was supported by visual illustrations and learning activities adapted to the characteristics of elementary school students. The media development process was supported by Canva and artificial intelligence (AI)-based technology to create a more interactive and engaging interface.

The research data were obtained from curriculum documents, educational policy documents related to the Eight Dimensions of the Graduate Profile, interviews with teachers, and expert validation results. The data collection techniques used in this study included document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and an expert evaluation sheet. Data obtained from the document analysis and interviews were analyzed qualitatively through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The content validity of the instruments was calculated using Gregory's formula, whereas the experts' product-evaluation scores were analyzed descriptively based on the criteria proposed by Nurkencana and Sunartana (1992). Open-ended expert feedback was analyzed using the Miles and Huberman (1994) model.

Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the needs for educational media development through seven key aspects, namely: (1) students' English proficiency; (2) the implementation of English language instruction; (3) the use of stories in instruction; (4) the application of character values; (5) the need for storybook media; (6) character building based on the Eight Dimensions of the Graduate Profile, particularly the Spirituality dimension; and (7) teachers' expectations regarding the development of digital bilingual storybooks. Based on the analysis results, a content validity score of 1.00 was obtained, which fell into the "very high" category. These results indicated that all instrument items were considered relevant by both validators; therefore, the instrument was considered suitable for use in the research data collection process.

The document study was conducted through an analysis of the Learning Objective Flow (ATP) and the fifth-grade English textbook, Unit 6: *Part of Our Body that Work Together*. This analysis aimed to identify learning objectives, language skills, relevant learning content, and opportunities for integrating spirituality values into the digital bilingual storybook being created. The analysis focused on three language-skill domains: listening and speaking, reading and viewing multimodal texts, and writing and presenting. It also examined themes and language functions appropriate to the students' characteristics. The document study matrix instrument used was validated by two experts and obtained a content validity coefficient of 1.00, which fell into the "very high" category.

Instrument validity testing and product quality evaluation were conducted through expert judgment involving experts to assess the suitability of the created product. This process aimed to identify the product's strengths and weaknesses and to obtain feedback as a basis for revision before the product is used in learning. The assessment was conducted using an evaluation form based on a 5-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1).

The evaluation instrument was designed based on several aspects reflecting the quality of the digital bilingual storybook, including: (1) Story Title, (2) Story Theme, (3) Relevance to General Competencies, (4) Relevance to Characteristics of Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL), (5) Character Integration (Spirituality Values), (6) Post-Story Activities, (7) Overall Content Quality, (8) Story Structure/Plot Design, (9) Language Use and Translation Accuracy, (10) Visual Illustrations and Layout Design, (11) Text Readability and Font Selection, and (12) Ease of Use/Accessibility. Each aspect consists of several indicators used to assess the extent to which the product meets the criteria for good, engaging learning media that is appropriate for fifth-grade elementary school students and capable of integrating spirituality values into English language learning.

Before being used to evaluate product quality, the instrument was first validated through expert judgment to determine its content validity. The validation was conducted by two experts who assessed the relevance of each item in the instrument. The assessment instrument consisted of 30 items. The content validity calculation results showed a coefficient of 1.00, which fell into the "very high" category. Thus, the instrument was deemed valid and suitable for evaluating the quality of the created digital bilingual storybook. Furthermore, the experts' assessment results were analyzed using quantitative descriptive methods to determine the product's quality level and served as the basis for revising the developed product.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study produced a digital bilingual storybook that integrates spirituality values into English language learning for fifth-grade elementary school students. In this study, spirituality values refer to the understanding and application of religious teachings through gratitude to God, maintaining health as a form of gratitude, helping family members and building harmonious relationships with others, praying, and caring for personal and environmental cleanliness. These values operationalize the Spirituality dimension of the Eight Dimensions of the Graduate Profile under the Merdeka Curriculum.

The needs analysis conducted through teacher interviews and document analysis identified several issues in Grade 5 English language learning. Students demonstrated varied English proficiency, particularly in vocabulary mastery, pronunciation, and writing skills. The existing learning materials were predominantly textbook-based and did not fully provide contextual, engaging, and student-centered learning activities. In addition, spirituality values had not been explicitly integrated into the available English learning materials. These findings served as the basis for designing the developed product. Bilingual texts, simple sentence structures, familiar vocabulary, and visual illustrations were used to support students' comprehension and engagement. The content was aligned with the topic of body parts and health, while spirituality values were embedded in the storyline, dialogues, illustrations, and pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities.

The product was developed based on two main aspects: learning components and learning media characteristics, as illustrated in Figure 1. The learning components consisted of general competencies (A1), verbal and nonverbal communication (A2), domains (A3), typical tasks (A4), values or character (A5), and strategies and task implementation (A6). Meanwhile, the learning media characteristics comprised technology (B1), story content (B2), the spirituality-based Graduate Profile (B3), and deep-learning principles (B4). All components were integrated through simple language, visual illustrations, learning activities, and contexts related to students' daily lives.

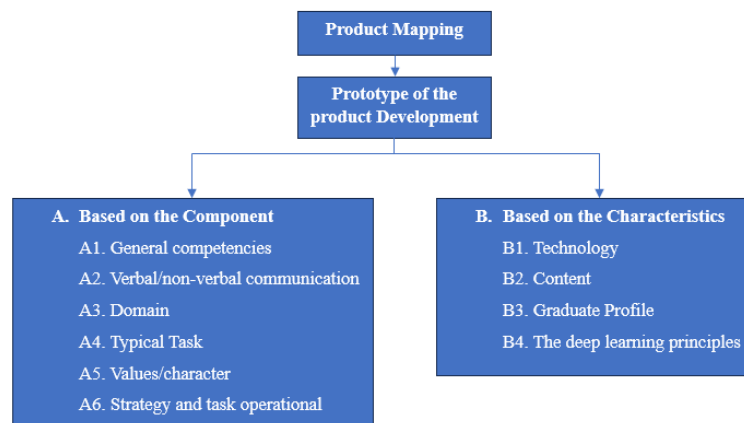


Figure 1. Product Development Framework

In terms of learning components, the product was developed based on six components, including general competencies (A1), verbal and nonverbal communication (A2), domains (A3), typical tasks (A4), values or character (A5), strategies and task implementation (A6). General competencies are designed to support English communication and literacy skills. Verbal and nonverbal communication is realized through the use of simple dialogues, visual illustrations, and bilingual presentation. Domains and typical tasks are implemented through pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities. Meanwhile, values and character are realized through the incorporation of spirituality in the form of gratitude, maintaining health, helping family, and praying, while task strategies and implementation are designed to increase student engagement during the learning process.

In terms of media characteristics, the product was developed based on four components: technology (B1), story content (B2), spirituality-based graduate profile (B3), and deep learning (B4). The technological aspect is realized through the use of a digital bilingual storybook format that combines text and visual illustrations. The story content is structured contextually and closely aligns with the experiences of elementary school students. The spirituality-based graduate profile is integrated through the cultivation of positive behaviors and harmonious relationships with God, other people, and the environment. Meanwhile, deep learning is implemented through activities that encourage active student participation and reflection.

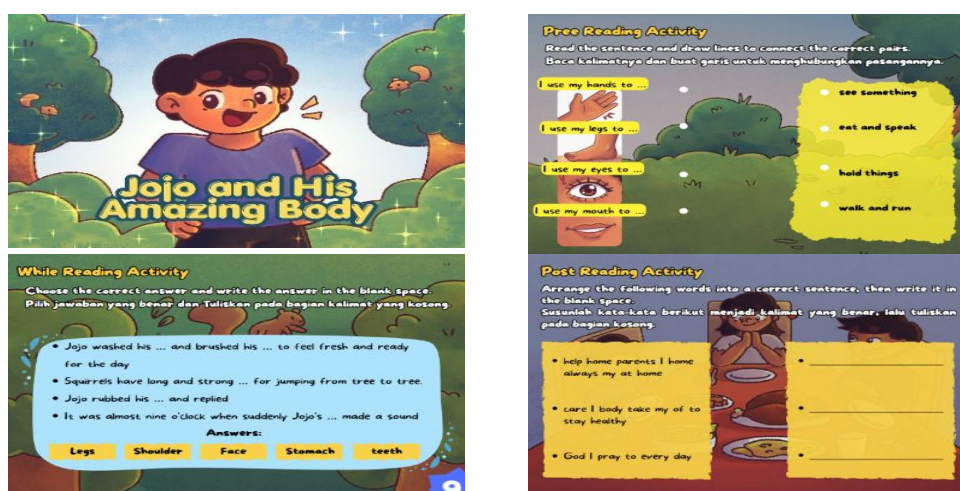


Figure 2. Examples of Typical Learning Tasks

Overall, spirituality values have been successfully integrated into the product through simple language, illustrations, learning activities, and real-life contexts. The final product consists of pre-reading,

while-reading, and post-reading stages that support English language learning while reinforcing spirituality values. The product was evaluated by two TEYL and TEFL experts using an evaluation instrument consisting of 30 items to assess aspects of content, language, visual design, integration of spirituality values, and its suitability for use in English language learning in fifth grade elementary school classrooms.

Table 1. Distribution of Expert Evaluation Scores

Evaluator	Very Good (5)	Good (4)	Moderate (3)	Bad (2)	Very Bad (1)	Total Score
Expert 1	29	1	0	0	0	149
Expert 2	28	2	0	0	0	148

Data analysis was conducted by calculating the ideal mean (Mi) and ideal standard deviation (Sdi) to determine the evaluation criteria. The assessment instrument consisted of 30 items on a 1-5 Likert scale, resulting in a maximum score of 150 (5×30) and a minimum score of 30 (1×30). Next, the ideal mean (Mi) was calculated using the formula $Mi = \frac{1}{2} (\text{maximum score} + \text{minimum score})$, yielding a value of 90. The ideal standard deviation (Sdi) was calculated using the formula $Sdi = \frac{1}{3} (Mi)$, resulting in a value of 30. These Mi and Sdi values were then used as the basis for interpreting the product evaluation results.

Table 2. Product Quality Criteria

No	Formula	Criteria
1	$X \geq Mi + 1.5 Sdi$	Excellent
2	$Mi + 0.5 Sdi \leq X < Mi + 1.5 Sdi$	Good
3	$Mi - 0.5 Sdi \leq X < Mi + 0.5 Sdi$	Average
4	$Mi - 1.5 Sdi \leq X < Mi - 0.5 Sdi$	Below Average
5	$X < Mi - 1.5 Sdi$	Poor

The evaluation results show that the first evaluator scored 149 and the second evaluator scored 148 out of a maximum score of 150. Based on the product quality classification by Nurkancana and Sunartana (1992), both scores fall within the range of $X \geq 135$, thus falling into the “Excellent” category. These results indicate that the developed product meets very high-quality standards.

Qualitative data were collected through open-ended responses from two experts in the fields of Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) and Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), and then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman (1994) model.

Discussion

The evaluation results showed that the developed digital bilingual storybook received positive responses in several aspects. In terms of content, the material was deemed relevant to the English learning objectives for fifth-grade elementary school students because it integrated topics such as body parts, health, nutritious food, and gratitude to God, all of which were closely related to the students’ experiences. From a linguistic perspective, the use of simple sentences and familiar vocabulary was considered appropriate for the characteristics of elementary school-aged learners, thereby supporting their understanding of the material. In terms of character education, spirituality values were found to be contextually integrated through the storyline and learning activities, such as gratitude for a healthy body, the awareness that the body is a gift from God, maintaining health as a form of gratitude toward God, and the practice of praying together as a family. Additionally, the visual design and digital presentation were deemed engaging, aiding in the understanding of the story’s content and maintaining student engagement throughout the learning process. It material also support for online learning or blended learning (Melati, 2025).

From a technical perspective, the product was considered practical, easy to use, and accessible via various digital devices. Overall, the results of the qualitative evaluation indicate that the created digital bilingual storybook is suitable for use as an English learning medium for fifth-grade elementary school students and has the potential to support character development through the integration of spirituality values.

The results of the study indicate that the digital bilingual storybook *“Jojo and His Amazing Body”* is suitable in supporting English language learning while integrating spirituality values for fifth-grade elementary school students. This integration is evident in the storyline, as well as in the pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities, and in the product design, which is contextually tailored to the characteristics of elementary school students.

The first finding indicates that spirituality values were successfully integrated through learning activities and story contexts closely tied to students’ daily lives. The values fostered include relationships with God, relationships with other people, and relationships with the environment. The integration of these values was achieved not only through narrative but also through reflective activities that encouraged students to connect their learning experiences with real life. These findings align with educational policy directions that position spirituality as a key dimension in shaping graduate profiles through meaningful learning experiences (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2025). The results of this study also reinforce the findings of Mynaryathy and Wijayanti (2023), which indicate that digital storybooks can support the integration of character education. However, this study offers a distinct contribution as it specifically integrates the dimension of spirituality into English language learning through a bilingual approach and structured learning activities.

The second finding indicates that the developed digital bilingual storybook supported a more contextual English language learning process that was easier for students to understand. The use of bilingual text, simple sentence structures, visual illustrations, and situations that are relevant to students’ experiences helps them understand the material and connect the use of English to their daily lives. This finding aligns with Cameron’s (2001) view that children find it easier to understand a language when it is learned through meaningful contexts. The use of visual illustrations supports Mayer’s (2002) multimedia learning theory, which emphasizes that the combination of verbal and visual information can enhance understanding and help reduce students’ cognitive load. These results also support previous studies indicating that technology-supported English learning media can increase student engagement and facilitate language learning (Apsari et al., 2023).

The third finding relates to the quality of the developed product. The evaluation results indicate that the digital bilingual storybook received an *“Excellent”* rating based on expert assessments of content, language use, visual design, integration of spirituality values, and technical aspects. This finding strengthens previous studies indicating that well-designed digital learning media can improve learning quality, accessibility, and student participation in English language learning contexts (Diantari et al., 2023; Triananda et al., 2023).

The integration of pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities was found to support student engagement and strengthen understanding of the learning material. This finding aligns with Huhta et al (2013), who emphasize the importance of integrating learning and communication activities in the development of instructional materials. The results of this study also reinforce the findings of Maulidiya et al (2024), which indicate that digital storybooks can enhance students’ understanding through the support of visual elements. Nevertheless, the evaluators provided several recommendations for improving readability and developing supporting features so that the product can continue to be adapted to the learning needs of elementary schools. Overall, this study indicates that the creating of digital bilingual storybooks integrating spirituality values has the potential to serve as an alternative learning medium that not only supports the development of English language skills but also strengthens character education through learning experiences

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to develop a digital bilingual storybook integrating spirituality values into

English language learning for fifth-grade elementary school students and to evaluate its quality as an instructional medium. The results showed that spirituality values were integrated through the storyline, interactions among characters, illustrations, and learning activities based on the Graduate Profile framework. These values were presented contextually through situations closely related to students' daily lives, thereby supporting meaningful learning. The product was developed through systematic stages, including product mapping, story development, revision, and finalization. The resulting digital storybook used simple language, engaging illustrations, and interactive activities appropriate for elementary school-aged English learners. Based on the expert evaluations, the product received an "Excellent" rating in terms of content relevance, language use, visual design, technical quality, and the integration of spirituality values. Therefore, *Jojo and His Amazing Body* was considered suitable as an instructional medium for supporting English language learning while reinforcing students' spirituality values in a contextual manner. Future studies should examine the practicality and effectiveness of the storybook through classroom implementation involving teachers and students.

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