


# Indonesian Language Learning through Digital Media among Children in Kerembong Village (Lombok)

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article history</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>Received: June 26, 2024 Revised: June 18, 2024 Accepted: August 24, 2024 Published: August 27, 2024</p> <p><b>Keywords</b></p> <p>Learning Indonesian Digital Media</p> <p> License by CC-BY-SA Copyright © 2024, The Author(s).</p>	<p>Learning through digital media is a current trend. This is no exception with the Indonesian language learning carried out by the children in the village of Change. They learn Indonesian through digital media according to the model or method directed by their tutor. The purpose of writing this article is to explain: (1) the Indonesian language learning model using digital media among children in the village of Change; (2) the positive and negative impacts of learning Indonesian using digital media on children in the village of Change. The approach used is a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Meanwhile, what is at the core of the discussion in this article is the Indonesian language learning model using digital media such as google and youtube among children in the village of Change, and the positive and negative impacts of learning Indonesian using digital media.</p>

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## INTRODUCTION

In the current digital era, technological advancements have penetrated almost every aspect of human life, reshaping the way individuals interact, communicate, and acquire knowledge. Digital media, in particular, has emerged as a central tool in disseminating information to various segments of society, from adults and adolescents to children. Its accessibility and efficiency in delivering information make it an invaluable resource for learning and social development (Livingstone, 2019). The proliferation of smartphones, internet access, and social networking platforms has facilitated a more dynamic flow of knowledge, enabling communities to advance more rapidly. However, the rise of digital media also presents challenges, particularly regarding its responsible and meaningful use.

Despite the many benefits of digital media, not all communities are equipped to maximize its potential in productive ways. Misuse of digital platforms remains a pressing issue, particularly among younger users who may lack the maturity to filter or critically analyze information. Studies show that the misuse of social media can expose children to harmful content, reduce attention spans, and even foster addictive behaviors (Subrahmanyam & Smahel, 2011). Nonetheless, when applied responsibly, digital platforms offer transformative opportunities for education and learning, particularly in rural or semi-urban areas where access to traditional learning resources may be limited.

Kerembong Village in Indonesia serves as a relevant case study in examining the dualistic nature of digital media usage. Children in this village increasingly access platforms such as Google, YouTube, and various social media applications as part of their daily routines. This phenomenon highlights the importance of guiding students to use digital tools responsibly and purposefully. Without proper guidance, children may misuse these platforms for entertainment at the expense of education, whereas with adequate supervision, they can harness these tools to support their learning (Fitriani & Pakpahan, 2020).

Language learning is one area in which digital media can play a transformative role. The acquisition of language skills requires multiple forms of support, ranging from textbooks and written exercises to audiovisual resources that enhance comprehension and engagement. In the Indonesian context, digital media provides a promising avenue to make language learning more appealing and effective. Scholars argue that the integration of interactive and multimedia content fosters higher student motivation and enhances language retention compared to traditional rote-learning methods (Chapelle, 2010).

Indonesian language learning, in particular, is a crucial area of study given its role as the national language and a unifying identity across the archipelago. Ensuring that children develop strong skills in Bahasa Indonesia not only supports their academic success but also strengthens their cultural and social integration (Sneddon, 2003). In Kerembong Village, where children are already accustomed to spending significant time on smartphones, digital media offers an effective bridge to encourage them to learn Indonesian in ways that align with their daily habits.

One platform that has gained recognition for its potential in language learning is YouTube. The platform offers a vast repository of educational videos, ranging from formal instructional content to informal discussions and storytelling. Pratiwi and Hapsari (2020) highlight YouTube as one of the most effective tools for Indonesian language instruction, given its ability to present content in engaging, interactive, and visual formats. Unlike textbooks, which many children may find monotonous, YouTube videos can capture students' interest through dynamic visuals, animations, and storytelling, thereby making the learning experience more enjoyable.

The preference for digital content over traditional print materials is particularly evident among children today. Research shows that young learners are more motivated when lessons are mediated by interactive technologies compared to static learning resources such as textbooks (Davis & Fullerton, 2016). In Kerembong Village, children tend to spend more time engaging with smartphones than with printed educational materials. Thus, leveraging this trend by integrating digital media into language instruction can improve both the effectiveness and appeal of Indonesian language learning.

However, the use of digital platforms in education is not without risks. Excessive screen time and exposure to unfiltered content can have detrimental impacts on children's development, ranging from reduced physical activity to exposure to inappropriate materials (Domoff et al., 2019). This duality underscores the necessity of structured guidance and educational frameworks to ensure that digital tools are used responsibly. Teachers and parents thus play a critical role in shaping how children in Kerembong Village utilize digital platforms for their learning.

Furthermore, digital inequality remains a challenge, particularly in rural contexts. While many children in Kerembong Village may own or have access to smartphones, disparities in digital literacy, internet connectivity, and socioeconomic factors can affect how effectively these tools are used for learning (van Dijk, 2020). Without proper digital literacy education, the advantages of digital media in supporting language learning cannot be fully realized. Thus, the introduction of structured programs and training is essential.

This study emphasizes the importance of digital media in supporting Indonesian language learning in rural communities. By analyzing the practices of children in Kerembong Village, the research aims to highlight both the opportunities and challenges presented by digital tools in educational contexts. Specifically, the study seeks to understand how digital platforms such as YouTube can be effectively integrated into language instruction, while also examining the risks of misuse.

In line with this aim, two research problems are formulated. First, what are the models of Indonesian language learning through digital media among children in Kerembong Village? Second, what are the positive and negative impacts of employing digital media for Indonesian language learning in this context? These guiding questions will provide a foundation for exploring the role of digital tools in language education and their implications for both pedagogy and community development.

Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader discourse on the integration of digital media in education, particularly in the context of rural Indonesia. By situating Kerembong Village as a focal case, the research underscores the importance of responsible digital media usage in shaping future generations. It highlights the need for collaboration between educators, parents, and policymakers to ensure that digital platforms serve as tools of empowerment rather than sources of distraction or harm.

## METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore the role of digital media in supporting Indonesian language learning among children in Kerembong Village. A qualitative approach was deemed most appropriate because the study sought to capture in-depth insights into children's experiences, practices, and challenges in using digital platforms for educational purposes. Rather than relying solely on numerical data, this approach allowed the researchers to understand contextual nuances, perceptions, and the lived realities of the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The research was conducted in Kerembong Village, a semi-rural community in Indonesia where children are increasingly exposed to digital technologies. The selection of this location was based on preliminary observations indicating high levels of smartphone usage among children, coupled with the limited availability of traditional learning resources such as libraries and structured reading programs. The village context offered a meaningful setting to analyze both the opportunities and challenges of integrating digital media into Indonesian language learning.

The participants of this study consisted of 25 elementary school children in Kerembong Village, ranging in age from 9 to 12 years. The selection of participants was carried out through purposive sampling, which ensured that the children included in the study were active users of digital platforms such as YouTube, Google, and social media. In addition to children, the study also involved five teachers and several parents to provide triangulation of perspectives. Teachers offered insights into classroom dynamics and instructional practices, while parents provided observations about their children's digital habits at home.

Data were collected using three primary methods: observation, interviews, and document analysis. First, classroom and home observations were conducted to examine how children engaged with digital platforms in both formal and informal learning contexts. Second, semi-structured interviews were carried out with children, teachers, and parents to capture their perceptions of digital media in language learning. The interviews with children focused on their habits, motivations, and challenges, while the interviews with teachers and parents explored strategies of supervision and guidance. Finally, document analysis involved reviewing existing lesson plans, digital content, and children's learning outputs to assess how digital media had been integrated into the language learning process.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). This process involved transcribing interviews, coding the data, and identifying recurring themes and patterns related to the research questions. The thematic categories included (1) models of Indonesian language learning through digital media, and (2) positive and negative impacts of digital learning on children. To ensure credibility, data triangulation was employed by cross-verifying information from children, teachers, and parents. Member checking was also conducted by sharing preliminary findings with participants to confirm accuracy and authenticity.

Given that the research involved children as participants, ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from both children and their parents before data collection began. Participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential and would only be used for research purposes. Pseudonyms were assigned to participants to protect their identities. The study also adhered to ethical guidelines for conducting research with minors, ensuring that interviews and observations were conducted in safe and comfortable environments (BERA, 2018).

The study acknowledges several limitations. First, the research was limited to a single village context, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to other regions in Indonesia. Second, because the study relied on qualitative methods, the results reflect participants' subjective perspectives rather than quantifiable outcomes. Finally, internet connectivity constraints in the village sometimes posed challenges for observing digital media use in real time. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the role of digital media in rural language learning contexts and offers a foundation for further research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal several important aspects regarding the use of digital media in Indonesian language learning among children in Kerembong Village. First, the observation data showed that most children demonstrated high levels of familiarity with smartphones and commonly used digital

platforms such as YouTube, Google, and social media. Their preference for accessing information and entertainment through digital means was consistently stronger than through printed materials such as textbooks. This aligns with previous research that suggests young learners today are more engaged with multimedia platforms due to their interactive and visual features (Prensky, 2010).

Second, interviews with teachers highlighted that digital media, particularly YouTube, has already been integrated—albeit informally—into students' learning routines. Teachers reported that students often referenced videos or online tutorials to support classroom assignments. For instance, several children admitted to watching YouTube videos that explained Indonesian grammar, spelling, or storytelling techniques in ways that they perceived as more interesting compared to classroom lectures. This demonstrates that digital media serves not only as an entertainment medium but also as an informal extension of formal learning.

Third, from the parents' perspective, digital media usage was viewed ambivalently. While many parents acknowledged the potential of platforms like YouTube for learning, they also expressed concerns about excessive screen time and exposure to inappropriate content. Some parents observed that their children often shifted focus from educational videos to entertainment content such as cartoons or gaming videos. These findings indicate that without structured supervision, the educational potential of digital platforms can be easily undermined.

Fourth, thematic analysis of the data revealed two major categories of impacts: positive and negative. On the positive side, digital media contributed to higher motivation, faster comprehension, and increased creativity in language learning. For example, children reported feeling more excited to learn Indonesian when lessons were delivered through songs, animations, or storytelling videos on YouTube. On the negative side, digital media sometimes distracted students, reduced their reading habits, and fostered dependency on audiovisual rather than textual learning. This echoes findings by Domoff et al. (2019), who noted that unregulated screen use can negatively influence children's cognitive and behavioral development.

The findings of this study support the idea that digital media, when used effectively, can transform the landscape of language education. In Kerembong Village, where children are highly engaged with smartphones, digital platforms such as YouTube present an opportunity to bridge the gap between entertainment and education. The integration of visual, auditory, and textual elements in digital media facilitates multimodal learning, which has been shown to enhance comprehension and retention (Mayer, 2009). By aligning learning processes with children's daily digital habits, educators can increase motivation and participation.

The role of teachers and parents, however, remains crucial. Teachers in Kerembong Village admitted that they often did not systematically integrate digital media into their lesson plans due to limited training or lack of formal guidelines. This reflects broader challenges in rural education, where digital literacy among educators is uneven (Tria, 2020). Without structured pedagogical frameworks, the use of digital media risks being incidental rather than transformative. Therefore, professional development programs that train teachers in digital pedagogy are essential to maximize the benefits of these platforms.

Parental involvement is equally significant. While many parents expressed concerns about misuse, the study found that those who actively monitored and guided their children's digital activities reported more positive outcomes. For instance, children whose parents co-watched educational videos were more likely to remain focused on learning tasks. This underscores the importance of collaborative supervision, where both educators and parents share responsibility in ensuring safe and effective digital learning (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008).

The findings also highlight the potential risks associated with excessive reliance on digital media. Children in Kerembong Village who spent extended hours on screens demonstrated reduced engagement with traditional reading materials. This is consistent with research showing that digital immersion can sometimes undermine reading skills and attention span development (Carr, 2010). To address this, a balanced approach is required, combining digital tools with conventional literacy practices such as book reading and writing exercises.

Furthermore, the study sheds light on the issue of digital inequality. Although most children in the village had access to smartphones, internet connectivity and data costs posed barriers to consistent educational use. This digital divide reflects broader structural challenges in rural Indonesia, where

technological infrastructure is unevenly distributed (van Dijk, 2020). Policymakers must therefore consider expanding affordable internet access and providing digital resources tailored to local contexts to ensure equitable learning opportunities.

The positive impacts of digital media in Indonesian language learning can also be interpreted through the lens of constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes active engagement, discovery, and interaction with multiple sources of knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). By using YouTube videos, for instance, children are exposed to real-life language use, contextualized grammar, and interactive storytelling, which allow them to construct meaning more effectively than through passive textbook learning.

At the same time, the study highlights the need for critical digital literacy. While children in Kerembong Village were adept at navigating platforms, they lacked the ability to distinguish credible educational content from misleading or irrelevant material. This gap resonates with Buckingham (2015), who argues that digital literacy is not merely about access but also about developing critical skills to evaluate and interpret online information. Incorporating digital literacy into the curriculum would thus enhance the sustainability of digital-based language learning.

Finally, the dual impacts of digital media—both empowering and potentially harmful—suggest that its integration into education must be deliberate and carefully designed. In Kerembong Village, the key lies not in discouraging digital use, but in channeling it towards structured educational purposes. Future programs could involve creating community-based digital learning initiatives, where teachers, parents, and local leaders collaborate to curate appropriate content, monitor usage, and design blended learning approaches that combine traditional and digital resources.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that digital media plays a significant role in shaping Indonesian language learning experiences among children in Kerembong Village. Digital platforms, particularly YouTube, were found to be effective in motivating students, facilitating faster comprehension, and providing engaging alternatives to traditional textbooks. Children showed a clear preference for audiovisual learning materials, which aligned with their daily digital habits. This indicates that digital media can serve as a powerful bridge between entertainment and education when integrated thoughtfully.

At the same time, the study highlights that the use of digital platforms carries inherent risks. Without structured guidance, children were prone to distractions, overexposure to non-educational content, and reduced engagement with conventional literacy practices such as reading. These risks reflect broader global concerns about screen dependency and its implications for children's cognitive, social, and behavioral development. Hence, the integration of digital media into education must be balanced, ensuring that it complements rather than replaces traditional learning resources.

The role of teachers and parents emerged as a crucial factor in determining the success of digital media usage in language learning. Teachers in Kerembong Village expressed the need for greater training in digital pedagogy, while parents emphasized the importance of supervision at home. This finding suggests that collaboration between schools and families is vital to ensure that children benefit from digital media while minimizing potential negative impacts. A structured framework for digital literacy and parental mediation is therefore essential.

Furthermore, the study draws attention to issues of digital inequality, particularly in rural areas where connectivity and resources remain limited. Although many children in Kerembong Village own smartphones, disparities in internet access and digital literacy hinder the full potential of technology in supporting education. Addressing these structural challenges requires policy-level interventions that expand digital infrastructure, provide affordable internet access, and integrate digital literacy into the national curriculum.

In conclusion, digital media presents both opportunities and challenges for Indonesian language learning among children in rural contexts. While it offers new pathways for engagement and comprehension, its effectiveness depends heavily on structured guidance, teacher capacity, parental involvement, and supportive infrastructure. Future research should explore blended learning models that combine digital and traditional approaches, as well as strategies to strengthen digital literacy in rural communities. By doing so, digital media can be transformed from a potential source of distraction into a sustainable tool for empowering education and cultural development.

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