

Canva-Based Folklore Transformation to Improve Students' Poetry Writing Skills

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Abstract: This classroom action research examined how Canva-based folklore transformation improved senior high school students' poetry writing skills. The study responded to students' persistent difficulty in transforming narrative folklore into concise poetic expression, particularly in theme alignment, figurative language, diction, and atmosphere. Twenty-three tenth-grade students participated in two cycles of action research consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through poetry writing performance tests, observation sheets, and classroom documentation, then analyzed through descriptive-comparative procedures across the pre-action stage, Cycle I, and Cycle II. The intervention integrated selected folklore or hikayat texts, visual brainstorming, Canva-based poem design, teacher scaffolding, and peer sharing through digital links. The results showed a significant improvement. Classical mastery increased from 22% in the pre-action stage to 87% in Cycle I and 96% in Cycle II. The mean writing score also rose from 65.5 in the pre-action stage to 81.78 in Cycle I and 89.70 in Cycle II. The strongest gain appeared when visual scaffolding was combined with explicit guidance on figurative language and diction. This study contributes a practical model for connecting local folklore, visual digital media, and creative writing instruction. Its practical implication is that teachers can use Canva not only as a design tool but also as a structured creative space for planning, revising, publishing, and discussing literary texts.

Keywords: Canva-Based Learning, Classroom Action Research, Creative Folklore Transformation, Poetry Writing Skills, Visual Digital Media

A. Introduction

Digital transformation has changed how students encounter literary texts, compose written products, and share their work with peers (Kopackova et al., 2024). In language classrooms, the shift from print-only instruction to multimodal learning is not merely a technical change; it reshapes the way learners build meaning from words, images, layout, sound, and social interaction. The current generation of senior high school students is familiar with visual platforms, short digital content, and collaborative online spaces. Consequently, Indonesian language teachers need

learning designs that connect canonical language competencies with students' digital habits. Poetry writing is one of the most suitable areas for this connection because poetry depends on condensed language, imagery, aesthetic form, and personal response. The problem is that many students perceive poetry as abstract, difficult, and distant from their everyday experience. They often struggle to choose diction, construct figurative expressions, and develop a coherent atmosphere. This condition becomes more complex when students are asked to transform folklore, which is commonly written as narrative prose, into poems that require compression, selection, and imaginative reinterpretation (Karam, 2021).

What is already known is that visual and digital media can support learning by providing multiple representations of information. Dual coding theory explains that verbal and visual channels can strengthen memory and understanding when they are meaningfully connected. Multimedia learning theory also stresses that students learn better when words and visuals are coordinated rather than presented as isolated elements. At the same time, teachers must manage cognitive load so that attractive visuals do not distract students from the main learning goal. In writing instruction, visual prompts and structured digital spaces may reduce the blank-page problem by helping students generate, organize, and revise ideas. The writing process itself is recursive; writers plan, translate, monitor, and revise ideas in response to goals and constraints. Therefore, a digital tool is educationally meaningful only when it supports these writing processes rather than merely decorating the final product (Reed & Johnson, 2023).

Canva has become a widely used digital platform in Indonesian classrooms because it provides templates, images, layouts, and collaborative sharing features that are relatively easy for teachers and students to use. Recent studies have reported the potential of Canva-based learning media to increase creativity, engagement, and writing performance. Canva-based media can enhance students' poetry writing skills by supporting the development of imagination, learning interest, and diction. Canva media has also been developed in the form of audio-visual learning media and video tutorials to support and enhance students' poetry writing skills. Other studies in writing and language learning have found positive effects of Canva on writing products, student engagement, and learning achievement. In science and general learning contexts, Canva-based media has also been associated with improved creativity and learning outcomes. These studies indicate that Canva can function as a learning medium, a writing scaffold, and a publication space (Sobko et al., 2020).

Another body of work relevant to this study is digital storytelling. Digital storytelling research has shown that the combination of narrative, visuals, voice, and technology can promote engaged learning, critical thinking, and written expression (Hwang et al., 2023). Although digital storytelling usually focuses on producing narrative videos or multimodal stories, its logic is closely related to folklore-based poetry writing. Students must understand a source narrative, select important episodes, identify

values or messages, and represent them in a new symbolic form. Local folklore is particularly valuable because it carries cultural memory, moral values, and place-based identity. Digital teaching materials based on local wisdom have been recommended as a way to connect writing activities with cultural relevance and student experience. When folklore is presented visually and transformed into poetry, students are invited to move from comprehension to interpretation and creation (Lee, 2024).

However, what remains unknown is how Canva can be organized as a step-by-step instructional action for transforming folklore into poetry in an Indonesian senior high school classroom. Many existing studies treat Canva as an attractive medium or as a product development tool (Moure et al., 2023). Fewer studies explain the classroom process through which students move from reading folklore, identifying narrative values, generating imagery, choosing figurative language, designing a poem, and reflecting on the finished work. The gap is not only about whether Canva works but also about how teachers can use it pedagogically for literary transformation. This gap matters because a visually rich platform can easily become superficial when students focus on templates more than meaning. A strong learning design must keep the literary objectives visible: thematic fidelity to folklore, figurative language, diction, atmosphere, and the communicative power of the poem (Nie, 2025).

The state of the art suggests three important directions. First, creative writing improves when students receive explicit guidance, opportunities for revision, and meaningful publication. Second, twenty-first-century learning requires the integration of digital skills, communication, creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking. Third, students' motivation increases when they feel competent, autonomous, and socially connected in learning activities. Canva-based folklore transformation can bring these directions together. It can provide visual support for comprehension, encourage creative design choices, enable peer sharing, and create a sense of ownership over literary products. In addition, creative writing can operate as a medium for developing twenty-first-century skills because students must imagine, decide, compose, and communicate their ideas. Digital comics and multimodal writing studies likewise show that visual composition can support young learners' writing creativity (Axelrod & Kahn, 2024).

For this study, creative transformation refers to more than changing the form of a text. It involves reading a folklore narrative, identifying its cultural values, selecting meaningful episodes, converting narrative description into poetic imagery, and arranging language into lines and stanzas. In Indonesian language learning, this process is valuable because it requires students to use reading comprehension, interpretation, cultural appreciation, and creative production at the same time. Folklore also gives students a shared source text, so the teacher can assess how well each student preserves meaning while creating an individual poetic expression. Canva is relevant to this transformation because the platform allows students to map

visual impressions before deciding on words. However, the platform must be placed within a clear literary framework; otherwise, students may produce a visually attractive page without strong poetic quality. This study therefore treats Canva as a scaffold for literary thinking, not as the final purpose of learning. The expected outcome is a poem that remains connected to folklore but demonstrates students' own diction, imagery, and emotional response (Ferreira & Kendrick, 2025).

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on creative folklore transformation through Canva in poetry writing. The intervention did not use Canva merely to make a beautiful poster. Instead, Canva was positioned as a creative workspace in which students read and interpret selected folklore or hikayat texts, map important images, transform narrative elements into poetic lines, arrange diction and atmosphere, and publish their poems in a shareable digital format. This article also presents evidence from a classroom action research cycle, showing how the first implementation was reflected on and revised in Cycle II. In this way, the study contributes a practical, replicable, and culturally responsive model for Indonesian language teachers who seek to integrate local literature and digital media. The research questions are: (1) How is the Canva digital platform implemented to improve the creative transformation of folklore into poetry among students of SMA Karya Ibu Palembang? and (2) Can the use of the Canva digital platform improve students' poetry writing skills at SMA Karya Ibu Palembang?

B. Methods

This research used classroom action research because the main objective was to improve an existing classroom practice through planned, observed, and reflected action. Classroom action research is appropriate when a teacher-researcher identifies a practical learning problem, designs an intervention, observes its implementation, and revises the action based on evidence from the classroom. The approach is also compatible with participatory educational improvement because it values reflection, local context, and practitioner knowledge. The study was implemented in two cycles. Each cycle consisted of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The second cycle was not a repetition of the first cycle; it was a revised action based on the weaknesses found in Cycle I (Gudeta, 2022).

The participants were 23 tenth-grade students of SMA Karya Ibu Palembang in the 2025/2026 academic year, consisting of 14 female students and 9 male students. The class consisted of students with varied initial poetry writing abilities, particularly in poetry writing, diction selection, imagination development, and the transformation of folklore into poetic texts. The research was conducted from December 2025 to April 2026, while the classroom actions were concentrated in the poetry writing unit. The selected learning problem was the students' low ability to write poems, especially when transforming folklore narratives into poetic texts. Before the action, learning was still dominated by conventional explanation, and students had limited opportunities

to use digital visual media to plan and present literary works (Jaleniauskiene, 2023). The minimum mastery criterion used by the school for Indonesian language learning was 75.

The intervention integrated four learning components. First, students read and discussed selected folklore or hikayat texts used in the Indonesian language learning unit so that they could understand the narrative, characters, events, and cultural values. Second, students used Canva as a visual brainstorming space to collect images, keywords, and emotional impressions related to the folklore. Third, the teacher guided students to transform narrative elements into poetic elements: theme, figurative language, diction, and atmosphere. Fourth, students designed, revised, and shared their poems through Canva links, allowing peer comparison, feedback, and presentation. In Cycle II, the action was revised by choosing folklore themes closer to students' everyday experiences, reviewing figurative language and diction more explicitly, and providing more concrete examples before students wrote independently (Steiss & Chung, 2023).

In Cycle I, the learning sequence began with orientation to the purpose of transforming folklore into poetry. The teacher displayed the selected folklore text and visuals, asked students to identify the main events and messages, and introduced Canva as a place to collect visual cues and compose the poem. Students then drafted poems individually while the teacher circulated to provide help. The reflection from Cycle I showed that students were more enthusiastic and many achieved the criterion, but several students still wrote literal sentences and had difficulty choosing figurative expressions. Based on this reflection, Cycle II added a stronger modeling stage. The teacher compared literal and poetic versions of several sentences, demonstrated how a narrative event could become a metaphor or image, and asked students to explain why particular words matched the atmosphere of the folklore. Students then revised their Canva drafts, shared links through the class group, and discussed examples of strong theme alignment, diction, figurative language, and atmosphere (Smith et al., 2025).

The instruments consisted of a poetry writing performance test, observation sheets for teacher and student activities, and documentation. The performance test assessed four indicators: theme suitability, figurative language, diction, and atmosphere. Each student's poem was scored on a scale of 100. Students who obtained a score of 75 or higher were categorized as having met the criterion. Observation was used to record the implementation process, including students' attention, participation, collaboration, use of Canva, and responses during presentation and feedback. Documentation included learning materials, students' Canva products, attendance, score sheets, and classroom activity records (Hill & Tham, 2020).

The data were analyzed using descriptive-comparative analysis. The quantitative data from the poetry writing tests were tabulated into frequency, percentage, mean score,

and classical mastery. The results of the pre-action stage, Cycle I, and Cycle II were compared to determine whether the action produced improvement. The non-test data from observation and documentation were analyzed descriptively to explain students' participation, teacher activities, and the classroom process during the implementation of Canva-based folklore transformation. The action was considered successful when students achieved the minimum mastery criterion (KKM) of 75 and when classroom observation showed increased participation, motivation, and independence in writing poetry.

C. Results and Discussion

The pre-action result showed that students' poetry writing skills were still below the expected level. Only 6 of 23 students achieved the minimum mastery criterion, meaning that classical mastery was 22%. Seventeen students, or 78%, did not meet the criterion. The mean score in the pre-action stage was 65.5. The students' main difficulties appeared in the use of figurative language, diction, and atmosphere. Many poems still resembled short prose summaries because students transferred the story directly instead of transforming it into poetic expression. Students also tended to choose general words, used limited imagery, and did not consistently build emotional tone. This finding supports the idea that writing is a complex cognitive activity requiring planning, language control, and revision. When instruction focuses only on explanation, students may understand the definition of poetry but still lack a concrete route for composing it (Tsao & Nogues, 2024).

In Cycle I, Canva was introduced as a medium for connecting folklore comprehension and poetry composition. The teacher presented selected Palembang folklore or hikayat texts, guided students to identify important events and values, and asked them to use Canva to arrange visual ideas before writing. Students then composed poems by considering theme suitability, figurative language, diction, and atmosphere. The result increased substantially. Twenty students, or 87%, achieved the criterion, while three students, or 13%, remained below it. The mean score rose to 81.78. This improvement indicates that visual scaffolding helped students convert narrative information into poetic images. The visual features of Canva appeared to reduce students' difficulty in imagining scenes, characters, and emotional atmosphere. This supports the theoretical claim that coordinated visual and verbal information can strengthen learning when it is aligned with the learning objective (Cavanagh & Kiersch, 2023).

Although Cycle I produced a strong increase, reflection showed that the action still needed refinement. Some students used Canva templates attractively, but they did not fully control diction, figurative language, poetic atmosphere, and idea organization. Several students were able to select images, but some of their poems still sounded literal and the intended message was not clearly conveyed. This means that Canva helped stimulate ideas, but the digital tool alone was not enough. Teacher scaffolding

remained necessary to direct students' attention from visual decoration to poetic meaning. The Cycle I reflection is important because it confirms a key principle of multimedia learning: technology supports learning only when instructional guidance manages attention and cognitive load. In a poetry lesson, an attractive design may become a distraction if students do not connect images to theme, diction, and atmosphere. Therefore, Cycle II emphasized more intensive guidance on diction selection, figurative language, poetic atmosphere, and the organization of ideas, supported by folklore themes that were closer to students' daily experiences (Bedeker & Kerimkulova, 2024).

Cycle II revised the action in three ways. First, the teacher re-selected folklore materials and connected them more strongly with students' everyday experiences. This helped students understand the story values before transforming them into poems. Second, the teacher reviewed figurative language and diction with concrete examples. Students were encouraged to replace literal sentences with images, symbols, metaphors, and emotionally loaded words. Third, students shared their Canva links in the Indonesian language class group, allowing their peers to compare, comment on, and learn from one another's work. This digital publication process made the writing activity more meaningful because students wrote for an audience rather than only for a score. Such audience awareness is consistent with process-based writing instruction and with digital storytelling practices that value publication, feedback, and revision (West et al., 2022).

The Cycle II result showed a significant improvement in students' poetry writing skills. Twenty-two of 23 students achieved the minimum mastery criterion, resulting in 96% classical mastery, while only one student, or 4%, remained below the criterion. The mean score increased to 89.70. The indicator scores also improved. Theme suitability became more stable because most students were able to preserve the main message of the folklore while changing its form (Arus & Ivanova, 2024). Figurative language improved after explicit modeling and repeated questioning. Diction became more precise as students learned to choose words that matched the emotional tone of the folklore (Bashiri & Naderi, 2024). Atmosphere improved most visibly because Canva's visual elements helped students imagine setting, mood, and feeling before arranging lines into stanzas. This finding aligns with previous studies showing that Canva-based media can encourage students' creativity, imagination, learning interest, diction development, and engagement in poetry or writing classes.

The comparative results across stages are presented in Table 1. The table shows that the most dramatic increase occurred from pre-action to Cycle I, where mastery rose by 65 percentage points. The increase from Cycle I to Cycle II was smaller, nine percentage points, but pedagogically meaningful because it moved the class from high mastery to near-total mastery. The mean score pattern also indicates continuous growth: 65.5 in the pre-action stage, 81.78 in Cycle I, and 89.70 in Cycle II. These data suggest that Canva-based folklore transformation was effective not only as a one-time

novelty but also as a process that became stronger after reflection and revision. The classroom action design made this improvement visible because each cycle generated evidence for the next decision. This supports the view that action research is not only a method for measuring improvement but also a method for producing practical knowledge in context (Mach et al., 2020).

Table 1. Comparative Poetry Writing Results Across Research Stages

Stage	Action focus	Mean score	Students meeting criterion	Students below criterion	Classical mastery
Pre-action	Conventional poetry writing practice	65.5	6	17	22%
Cycle I	Canva visual scaffolding and digital folklore source	81.78	20	3	87%
Cycle II	Contextual folklore, diction and figurative-language guidance, peer sharing	89.70	22	1	96%

Source: Processed from classroom action research score tables, 2026.

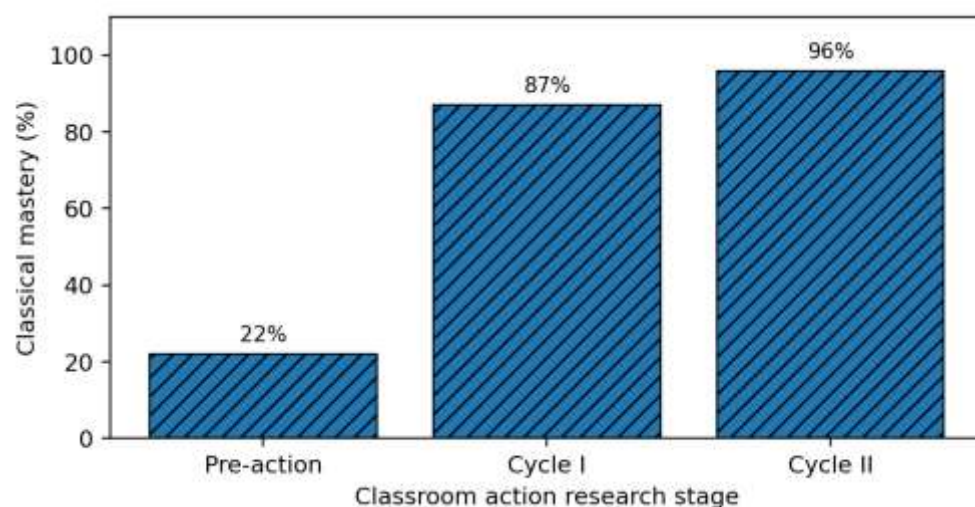


Figure 1. Growth of Classical Mastery in Poetry Writing

Discussion

The improvement can be explained through three mechanisms. The first mechanism is visualization. Folklore contains characters, events, conflict, values, and setting, but these elements can remain abstract for students when presented only in long narrative text. Canva allowed students to externalize their imagination through images, layouts, colors, and keywords. This externalization supported their ability to convert narrative

events into poetic images. The second mechanism is structured transformation. Students were not simply told to write freely; they were directed to identify story elements, select a central theme, choose figurative expressions, refine diction, and arrange atmosphere. The third mechanism is social publication. When students shared Canva links, the classroom became a community of readers. Peer visibility encouraged students to take their writing more seriously and increased confidence during presentation. These mechanisms relate to self-determination theory because students experienced competence through guidance, autonomy through design choices, and relatedness through peer sharing (Jeno et al., 2022).

The findings also correspond with broader research on digital writing and multimodal learning. Digital storytelling studies have demonstrated that combining narrative and media can improve student motivation, critical thinking, and communication. The present study extends that logic to poetry, a genre that is shorter but semantically denser than narrative writing. Instead of producing a digital story, students transformed a story into a poem supported by digital design. This transformation required students to interpret cultural messages and express them through compressed language. Therefore, the activity can be seen as a form of multimodal literary pedagogy. Multimodality can enrich poetry instruction by connecting poetic language with digital representation (Zhang, 2024). The present results support that view in an Indonesian classroom context where local folklore and Canva were combined.

The use of local folklore strengthened the cultural relevance of the lesson. Students were not asked to write from a random topic but from stories connected with Palembang cultural memory. This connection helped them recognize that poetry can be a way to preserve, reinterpret, and communicate local values. Digital teaching materials based on local wisdom have been shown to support writing activities by linking students' literacy with cultural content. In this study, folklore worked as a source of narrative content, while Canva worked as a bridge between cultural content and contemporary expression. The result is important because digitalization should not separate students from local culture. Instead, digital platforms can become spaces where local narratives are reimagined through new forms. Canva-based digital painting is relevant for poetry learning and supports the idea that visual digital creation can strengthen literary exploration (Paradita et al., 2025).

The findings should also be read against studies of Canva in non-poetry contexts. Canva could transform students' engagement and performance in writing project-based learning with Canva improved students' descriptive writing achievement and supported digital writing tasks such as curriculum vitae writing. These studies, together with the present findings, indicate that Canva is flexible across writing genres. However, the genre determines the type of guidance needed. For descriptive writing, students may need guidance on description and organization. For poetry writing, they need guidance on imagery, figurative language, diction, atmosphere,

and line arrangement. Thus, teachers should avoid using Canva with one generic procedure. The platform should be adapted to the rhetorical and aesthetic demands of the text type being learned (Santa et al., 2022).

The classroom observation data helped explain why improvement occurred. Students became more active in discussing ideas, asking about diction, and presenting their poems. They were also more willing to revise after seeing examples and peer products. In Cycle II, the class showed stronger independence because students could use Canva not only to decorate but also to organize the composition process. This confirms that digital literacy in education is not only technical ability. Students need to use digital tools to search, evaluate, create, communicate, and solve problems. The intervention also supported creative skills. Creative writing can be a medium for developing communication and imagination when learners receive sufficient support. Similarly, visual digital composition such as digital comics has been associated with students' creativity and writing development (Estrella, 2026).

The assessment results showed that students' poetry writing skills improved in the main assessment aspects, namely theme suitability, figurative language, diction, and atmosphere. This improvement was reflected in students' ability to transform folklore into poems that were more relevant to the theme, richer in figurative expression, more precise in diction, and stronger in poetic atmosphere. These qualitative improvements supported the increase in classical mastery from 22% in the pre-action stage to 87% in Cycle I and 96% in Cycle II (Zhu et al., 2025).

The result does not mean that Canva automatically improves writing. The study gives a more careful interpretation: Canva supported writing when it was embedded in explicit instruction, contextual materials, and feedback. This interpretation is consistent with cautionary arguments that minimally guided technology-rich learning may fail when students do not have enough prior knowledge or direction. In Cycle I, several students were attracted to design features but still needed help to transform prose into poetic language. This observation is also consistent with cognitive load theory because too many design choices can divide attention if students do not know the literary criteria. Therefore, the productive element of the intervention was not Canva alone but the relationship among folklore, teacher modeling, rubric-based assessment, student design, and peer response. The study differs from simple media-use claims by showing that the quality of instructional orchestration determines the quality of the writing outcome (Çakiroğlu et al., 2025).

The novelty of the model can be summarized in six classroom moves. The first move is cultural anchoring, where folklore becomes the source of meaning. The second move is visual elicitation, where Canva images and layout choices help students imagine scenes and emotions. The third move is poetic compression, where students are guided to reduce narrative events into symbolic lines. The fourth move is language refinement, where students revise figurative language and diction using a rubric. The

fifth move is digital publication, where poems are shared through links and read by peers. The sixth move is reflective comparison, where students identify why one poem communicates atmosphere more strongly than another. These moves make the intervention transferable because teachers can adapt the same sequence to other local stories and other literary genres (Mcewen et al., 2022).

Despite the positive results, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study involved only one class with 23 students, so the findings should be interpreted as classroom-based evidence rather than broad generalization. Second, the action was conducted in two cycles, which was sufficient to meet the success criterion but not enough to examine long-term retention. Third, the assessment focused on poetry products and classroom observation; future studies could add interviews, student reflection journals, or discourse analysis of peer feedback. Fourth, Canva access depends on devices, internet connection, and teacher digital competence. A school with limited facilities may need offline preparation, shared devices, or printed visual scaffolds (Chen & Brotherson, 2023). Nevertheless, the results provide a realistic model for teachers because the intervention used familiar tools and focused on practical classroom improvement rather than expensive technology. The practical implication is clear. Teachers can use Canva as a structured writing scaffold by dividing the lesson into reading, mapping, transforming, designing, sharing, and reflecting. For poetry writing, Canva should be connected with explicit mini-lessons on figurative language, diction, and atmosphere. Students should be reminded that visual design must serve poetic meaning. The teacher can provide a rubric before students begin, ask students to justify their design and diction choices, and create peer feedback activities based on the rubric. Schools can support this practice by improving internet access, providing projectors or smart televisions, and encouraging teachers to develop digital materials based on local culture (Gul et al., 2023). For researchers, the model can be tested in other genres such as short stories, pantun, drama scripts, or reflective essays. It can also be compared with other platforms such as Padlet, Storybird, Google Docs, or digital comic makers.

Based on the assessment results across the pre-action stage, Cycle I, and Cycle II, students' poetry writing skills improved in the main assessment aspects, namely theme suitability, figurative language, diction, and atmosphere. The improvement was reflected in students' ability to transform folklore into poems that were more relevant to the theme, richer in figurative expression, more precise in diction, and stronger in poetic atmosphere. This indicator-level improvement supported the increase in classical mastery from 22% in the pre-action stage to 87% in Cycle I and 96% in Cycle II.

D. Conclusions

This study concludes that the implementation of Canva-based folklore transformation effectively improved students' poetry writing skills in Indonesian language learning.

The classroom action research showed consistent progress across the stages of intervention. Students' classical mastery increased from 22% in the pre-action stage to 87% in Cycle I and reached 96% in Cycle II. The mean score also rose from 65.5 before the action to 81.78 in Cycle I and 89.70 in Cycle II. These results indicate that Canva was able to create a more supportive, visual, and interactive learning environment for transforming folklore into poetry. The improvement occurred because Canva helped students understand folklore through visual scaffolding, identify important narrative elements, and convert them into poetic expressions. Students were guided to select themes, characters, conflicts, moral values, and cultural messages from folklore, then transform them into imagery, figurative language, diction, rhythm, and atmosphere in poetry. Canva also encouraged students to revise their work more actively because the platform allowed them to combine text, images, layout, and color in a creative digital space. Peer sharing through Canva links strengthened collaboration, appreciation, and confidence in publishing literary works. The practical implication of this study is that Indonesian language teachers can use Canva not merely as a design application, but as a pedagogical workspace for planning, composing, revising, and publishing literary texts. However, effective use of Canva requires clear assessment rubrics, teacher modeling, contextual folklore materials, structured feedback, and learning activities that keep students focused on literary quality rather than visual appearance alone. Future research is recommended to examine the long-term impact of this model, involve wider school contexts, compare Canva with other digital writing platforms, and include qualitative data from student reflections to better understand learners' experiences in transforming local folklore into poetry as a meaningful creative process in literature learning today.

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