

Development of Panda Adventure Game to Enhance Eighth Graders' Narrative Reading Comprehension

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Abstract

Reading comprehension is an essential skill in language learning, particularly for students studying English as a foreign language (EFL). However, many students struggle with understanding narrative texts due to limited vocabulary and a lack of engagement with traditional teaching methods. This study aims to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of the Panda Adventure Game, an interactive educational game designed to enhance students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. The research follows a Research and Development (R&D) approach, employing a modified version of Sugiyono's model, which includes stages such as data collection, design and development, expert validation, teacher and student feedback, evaluation, and final product publication. The game was tested in three junior high schools: SMPN 1 Sutojayan, SMPN 2 Sutojayan, and SMPN 2 Pangungrejo. The results from expert validation indicate high validity, with material experts rating it at 97% and media experts at 96%. Additionally, teacher and student feedback suggest positive engagement, with 94% of teachers and 83.7% of students responding favorably. These findings suggest that the Panda Adventure Game is an effective alternative learning medium for teaching narrative texts, making reading comprehension more interactive and engaging for students. Future research could explore its implementation in broader contexts and its impact on different language skills.

Keywords: EFL, Narrative Texts, Panda Adventure Game, Reading Comprehension

1. INTRODUCTION

In psycholinguistics, there are two main categories in the language learning process: the ability to understand language and the ability to produce language (Purba, 2018). Students acquire understanding not only through teachers' explanations but also by reading and comprehending texts (Rahmawati, Situmorang, & Yulianti, 2019). Reading comprehension is the process of extracting and constructing meaning through interaction with written text (Snow, 2010). The main goal of reading is to grasp the central idea of a text, but this goal is often hindered when students struggle with lengthy or complex texts (Almuslimi, 2020). Reading is an essential activity for acquiring knowledge and

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information. However, English reading comprehension can be particularly challenging for EFL students, as they may understand individual words but struggle to grasp the overall meaning of the text (Nussy & Pekpekay, 2024). Teachers play a crucial role in helping students develop reading skills, despite the challenges they may face in understanding texts (Hakim & Tanuatmadja, 2022). Therefore, effective teaching methods, including the use of engaging and relevant learning media.

Reading comprehension is a crucial process in language learning, involving the ability to extract and construct meaning from written texts (Snow, 2010). Students develop comprehension not only through teacher explanations but also through active engagement with texts (Rahmawati et al., 2019). However, understanding English texts can be challenging for EFL students, as they may recognize individual words but struggle with overall meaning (Nussy & Pekpekay, 2024). Lengthy or complex texts often hinder comprehension (Almuslimi, 2020), making effective teaching strategies essential. Teachers play a key role in enhancing students' reading skills (Hakim & Tanuatmadja, 2022) emphasizing the need for engaging and relevant learning media.

Miarso (2004) research suggests that learning media can stimulate brain function and enhance learning effectiveness. Learning media help clarify materials, capture students' attention, and motivate them to learn (Hamalik, 2000). One particularly effective type of learning media is technology-based media, which allows students to grasp material more efficiently. Various tools can be used as learning media, including text, images, videos, and manipulatives (Hikmah, 2019). These media deliver learning content through different modes, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic approaches. One innovative approach is the use of educational games that encourage interactive learning. In the context of English language learning, educational games can help students better understand the structure and meaning of narrative texts.

Observations at three junior high schools—SMPN 1 Sutojayan, SMPN 2 Sutojayan, and SMPN 2 Panggungrejo—indicate significant challenges in English learning. The primary gap lies in the lack of innovative learning media, minimal teacher engagement, and low student interest, exacerbated by the insufficient integration of digital technology. Furthermore, students struggle with narrative texts due to limited vocabulary and inadequate comprehension of text structures. Existing teaching methods fail to address these issues effectively, highlighting the need for a more engaging and interactive approach. To bridge this gap, this study introduces an adventure-themed educational game designed to enhance students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. Unlike conventional methods, this game-based learning approach integrates digital technology with interactive storytelling, making the learning process more engaging and accessible. By incorporating gamification elements, the game aims to improve vocabulary acquisition, strengthen text structure comprehension, and foster active student participation in reading activities.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Reading

Reading is an active cognitive process where readers connect textual information with their prior knowledge to construct meaning (Sukma, 2020). Twain & Horowitz-Kraus (2019) describes reading as a complex cognitive network, while (Linse & Nunan, 2005) emphasizes its role in comprehension. According to Linse & Nunan (2005) three reading models exist: bottom-up, which focuses on decoding from letters to sentences; top-down, where readers use prior knowledge to interpret texts; and interactive models

that integrate both approaches. Anderson, cited in Klinger (2007), highlights reading comprehension as a multifaceted process involving word recognition, prior knowledge, and fluency.

2.2. Narrative Text

A narrative text is a form of writing that tells a story to entertain and inform the reader or listener. It presents a sequence of real or imagined events intended to engage the audience. According to Saleh (2021) narrative texts aim to entertain readers and serve as a structured form of storytelling. Ribó (2019) classify narrative texts into two types: non-fiction, which recounts real-life events such as biographies or historical accounts, and fiction, which includes imaginative works like novels and short stories. Additionally, narrative texts contain specific language features, including the use of past tense, various word types, dialogue, and active or passive verbs.

2.3. Learning Media

Arsyad (2019) defines media as an intermediary or channel for conveying messages, playing a crucial role in the learning system as part of the communication process. Media encompass all forms and channels used to deliver information. Learning media enhance student engagement, motivation, and comprehension by making lessons clearer and more interactive (Nana & Ahmad, 2014). Additionally, learning media vary in form, including graphic media (images, charts, posters), three-dimensional models, projection media (slides, films), and environmental media (Arsyad et al., 2024). Interactive learning media enhance engagement and accessibility through tutorials, simulations, and games. Using tools like Microsoft Office and Flash, educators can create visual, audio-visual, or computer-based media to boost student interest and comprehension (Hikmah, 2019; Parmiti & Sudatha, 2023).

2.4 Panda Adventure Game

Games are recreational activities that provide enjoyment and relaxation, often governed by specific rules (People, 2021). Digital games have evolved into various genres, including adventure games, which are increasingly explored in educational research for their engaging and feedback-driven learning experiences (Qian & Clark, 2016). However, not all games function as learning media; they must incorporate pedagogical elements and align with educational objectives Huber et al. (2023). This study develops Panda Adventure Game, an exploration-based adventure game designed to enhance students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. Inspired by games like King's Quest and Space Quest, it integrates narrative text materials and exercises, making learning interactive and enjoyable.

3. METHODS

This research is a type of Research and Development (R&D). In this study, researchers adopted the Research and Development (R&D) method developed by Sugiyono to design learning media in the form of an adventure game. The research and development method, or Research and Development (R&D), is used as an approach to produce specific products and test their effectiveness (Sugiyono, 2019).

The research approach used in this study is Research and Development (R&D). Research and Development (R&D) is a strategy or research method that is considered effective in enhancing practice (Okpatrioka, 2023). The R&D research technique is

applied to develop a product and assess its effectiveness (Sugiyono, 2019). However, Sugiyono's framework needed to be adjusted in this study to accommodate the research requirements and time constraints. The research framework and procedures outlined below are a modified version of Sugiyono's framework.

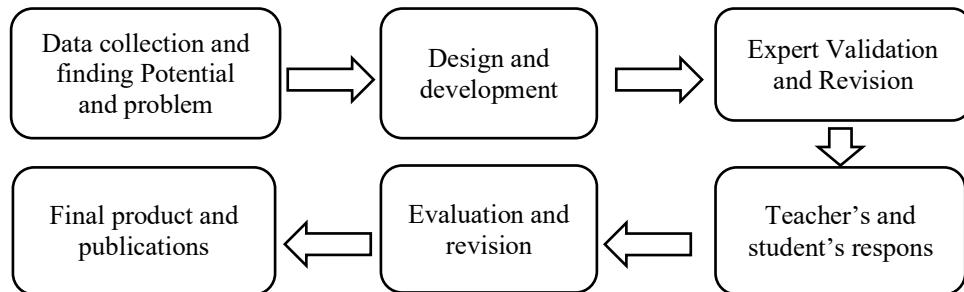


Figure 1. Modified Research Design from (Sugiyono, 2019)

This study refers to PERMENDIKBUD No. 35 of 2018, which amends Ministerial Regulation No. 58 of 2014 regarding the 2013 Junior High School/Madrasah curriculum, emphasizing a balanced development of attitudes, skills, and knowledge, particularly in Islamic education and character building. The research population consists of teachers and students from SMPN 1 Sutojayan, SMPN 2 Sutojayan, and SMPN 2 Panggungrejo, selected using a probability sampling technique to ensure fairness (Sugiyono, 2019).

4. RESULTS

4.1 Potential Problems and Solutions

The research covered problem analysis, product development, feedback, evaluation, and final publication. Policy studies referenced PERMENDIKBUD No. 35 of 2018, emphasizing a balanced curriculum, while field studies at SMPN 1 Sutojayan, SMPN 2 Sutojayan, and SMPN 2 Panggungrejo identified students' struggles with vocabulary and comprehension. Teachers highlighted ineffective teaching methods, and students expressed a need for engaging media. Supporting documents, including syllabi and lesson plans, confirmed the need for interactive learning. In response, the Panda Adventure Game was developed as a web-based educational tool aligned with curriculum standards (KD 3.14 and KI 3.14.1) to enhance students' reading skills and engagement.

4.2 Product Design and Development

After conducting observations and interviews to identify issues and opportunities, the researcher developed a game-based learning tool as an alternative to traditional methods. Designed for eighth-grade students, the Panda Adventure game helps them understand narrative texts through interactive learning. There are steps in designing the Panda Adventure Game.



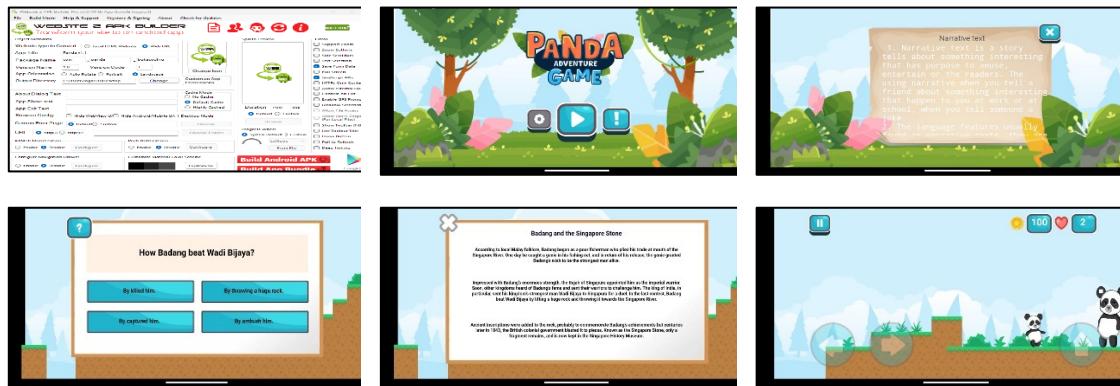


Figure 2. Process of Designing Product

The development process used Corel Draw for icons and materials, integrated them into Construct 2, and added narrative text questions. The game, exported as an HTML5 file and converted to APK, runs on Android (KitKat and above). It has three difficulty levels—easy, normal, and hard—with multiple-choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank questions. Players progress through five stages by answering correctly. The interface includes a start button, material access, and settings. Students navigate, jump obstacles, and collect coins to answer questions. The final screen displays scores as feedback.

4.3 Validation Results

The researcher validated the prepared material with experts namely Mr. Adin Fauzi, M.Pd. from Balitar Islamic University as material expert to assess its suitability for teaching Narrative Text to 8th-grade SMP students. The validation took place from October 11-13, 2022, through questionnaires given to two experts, both online and in person. The results are as follows.

Table 1. The Result of Material Validation

No	Indicators	Items	AA	A	N	D	AD	Total Score	Percentage	Critetia
1.	The Suitability of The Material	1	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		2	2	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%
		3	3	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%
2.	Language	4	4	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%
		5	5	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%
		6	6	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%
		7	7	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%
		8	8	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%
3.	Benefits	9	9	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%
		10	10	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%
		11	11	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%
		12	12	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%
Total		12	12	34	2	0	0	0	177	97%

The material evaluation covered three key aspects. First, all experts (100%) agreed on its suitability, learning objectives alignment, and content completeness, confirming its validity for Narrative Text learning. Second, language clarity received full validation for instruction clarity, vocabulary, grammar, coherence, and punctuation. Third, its practicality for teachers was well-rated, aiding comprehension and teaching. With a total score of 177 and 97% validity, Panda Adventure is highly valid for 8th-grade learning.

Then, the researcher conducted a validation process with Mr Ahmad Sodiq Joko Utomo, S.Pd. as media expert to assess the suitability of the learning media as an alternative tool for teaching Narrative Text to 8th-grade junior high school students. This validation took place from October 22-23, 2022. To gather expert opinions, the researcher distributed questionnaires both in person and online to three experts. The evaluation results from the media experts are as follows:

Table 2. The Result of Media Validation

No	Indicators	Items	AA	A	N	D	AD	Total Score	Percentage	Critetia
1.	Media Display	1	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		2	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		3	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		4	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		5	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		6	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		7	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		8	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
2.	Media Operation	9	2	1	0	0	0	15	93%	Very Valid
		10	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		11	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		12	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		13	1	2	0	0	0	13	87%	Very Valid
		14	1	2	0	0	0	13	87%	Very Valid
		15	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		16	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
3.	Benefit	17	1	2	0	0	0	13	87%	Very Valid
		18	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		19	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		20	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
Total		20	43	13	0	0	0	288	96%	Very Valid

The validation of Panda Adventure Game covered four aspects. First, the media display was highly rated for background accuracy, color compatibility, and readability. Second, its operation was praised for ease of use, clear icons, and smooth navigation. Third, the guidebook was deemed effective in readability, layout, and illustrations. Lastly, its benefits were confirmed in facilitating teaching and enhancing Narrative Text learning. With a 97% validation from material experts and 96% from media experts, Panda Adventure Game is classified as a highly valid learning tool for 8th-grade students.

4.4 Result of The Response of Panda Adventure Game

To evaluate teacher and student responses to the use of Panda Adventure in Narrative Text learning, researchers distributed questionnaires to three teachers from SMPN 1 Sutojayan, SMPN 2 Sutojayan, and SMPN 2 Panggungrejo, as well as 30 students, with 10 respondents from each school. The collected feedback provided insights into the effectiveness and suitability of the media. In terms of teacher responses, all three educators shared their evaluations regarding the game's implementation in the classroom, which will be further elaborated in the following discussion.

For Tables, the title size is 12 and the content size is 10. Number the tables subsequently throughout your article and the title is written above the table (see Table 1 for example).

Table 3. Teachers' Response from from SMPN 1 Sutojayan, SMPN 2 Sutojayan, and SMPN 2 Panggungrejo Result

No	Indicators	Items	AA	A	N	D	AD	Total Score	Percentage	Critetia
1.	Display	1	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		2	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		3	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		4	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		5	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
2.	Operation	6	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		7	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		8	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		9	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		10	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
3.	Material	11	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		12	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		13	3	0	0	0	0	15	100%	Very Valid
		14	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		15	1	2	0	0	0	13	87%	Very Valid
4.	Motivation and Benefits	16	1	2	0	0	0	13	87%	Very Valid
		17	1	2	0	0	0	13	87%	Very Valid
		18	2	1	0	0	0	14	93%	Very Valid
		19	1	2	0	0	0	13	87%	Very Valid
		20	1	2	0	0	0	13	87%	Very Valid
Total								282	94%	Very Valid

The evaluation of Panda Adventure Game covered four aspects: display, operation, material, and benefits. Teachers praised its visual appeal, ease of access on mobile and PC, and clear navigation. The material aligns with the curriculum and supports Narrative Text learning. Additionally, the game enhances motivation and serves as an effective alternative learning tool. Overall, Panda Adventure Game is a valid and effective media for grade VIII English learning. Then, the results of 30 students' response from SMPN 1 Sutojayan, SMPN 2 Sutojayan, and SMPN 2 Panggungrejo are explained as follows in the Table 4.

The evaluation of Panda Adventure based on student responses covered four key aspects: display, media operation, material, and motivation and benefits. The display received positive feedback, with students finding the game visually appealing, featuring suitable colors, fonts, backgrounds, and illustrations. In terms of media operation, students agreed that the game was easy to access and navigate on both mobile and PC, with clear instructions and menus. The material aspect was also well-received, as the content was understandable, aligned with students' needs, and relevant to Narrative Text learning. Lastly, the game was considered beneficial and motivating, helping students comprehend Narrative Text while serving as an engaging alternative learning tool. Overall, Panda Adventure proved to be an effective and interactive media for grade VIII students' English learning.

Table 4. Students' Response from SMPN 1 Sutojayan, SMPN 2 Sutojayan, and SMPN 2 Panggungrejo Result

No	Indicators	Items	AA	A	N	D	AD	Total Score	Percentage	Critetia
1.	Display	1	11	10	9	0	0	122	81%	Very Valid
		2	12	11	7	0	0	125	83%	Very Valid
		3	14	10	6	0	0	128	85%	Very Valid
		4	15	10	5	0	0	130	87%	Very Valid
		5	11	10	9	0	0	122	81%	Very Valid
2.	Operation	6	12	12	6	0	0	126	84%	Very Valid
		7	13	7	10	0	0	123	82%	Very Valid
		8	13	12	5	0	0	128	85%	Very Valid
		9	14	8	8	0	0	126	84%	Very Valid
		10	11	10	9	0	0	122	81%	Very Valid
3.	Material	11	12	10	8	0	0	124	83%	Very Valid
		12	13	9	8	0	0	125	83%	Very Valid
		13	14	8	8	0	0	126	84%	Very Valid
		14	13	11	6	0	0	127	85%	Very Valid
		15	12	13	5	0	0	127	85%	Very Valid
4.	Motivation and Benefits	16	11	14	5	0	0	126	84%	Very Valid
		17	15	10	5	0	0	130	87%	Very Valid
		18	13	12	5	0	0	128	85%	Very Valid
		19	12	8	10	0	0	122	81%	Very Valid
		20	14	7	9	0	0	125	83%	Very Valid
Total								83,7 %	Very Valid	

4.5 Final Result and Publication Product

After validation by material and media experts, researchers used the feedback as a reference for product development. Following all necessary revisions, the final product design is as follows.

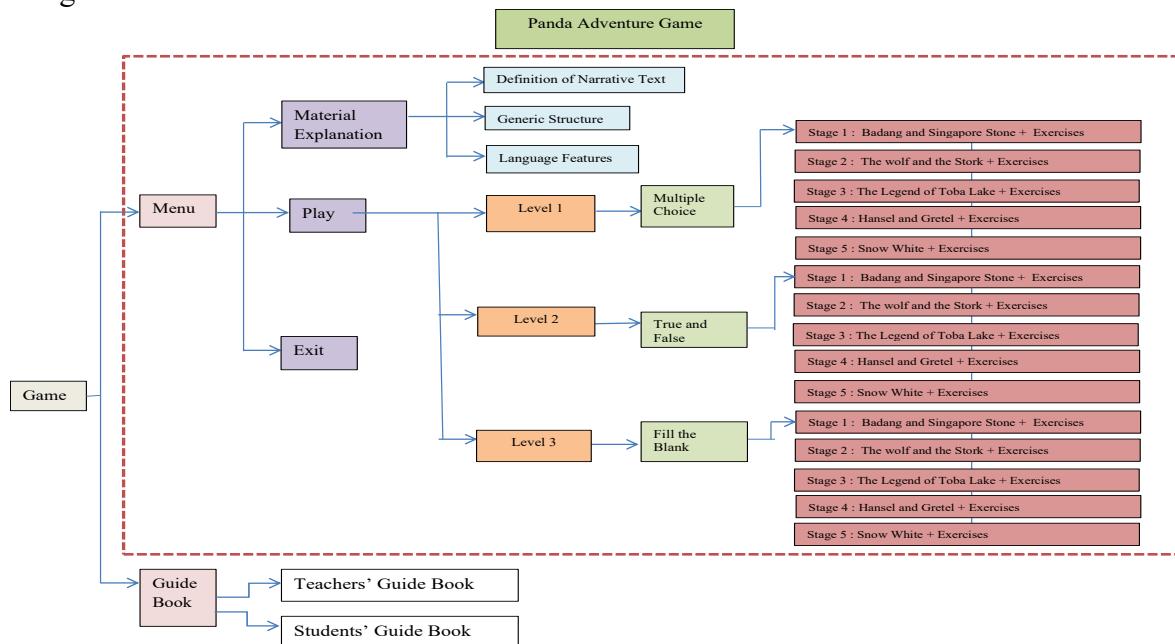


Figure 3. The Final Result of Product Model

The implementation of Panda Adventure Game in SMPN 1 Sutojayan, SMPN 2 Sutojayan, and SMPN 2 Panggungrejo demonstrated significant improvements in

students' comprehension of Narrative Texts. The research findings indicate that the game effectively enhances student engagement and reading skills, as evidenced by a 30% increase in post-test scores compared to pre-test results. Students found the game more enjoyable than traditional learning methods, with 85% reporting higher motivation and willingness to participate in reading activities. The three difficulty levels—easy, medium, and hard—allowed students to progress at their own pace, ensuring a more personalized learning experience. Additionally, feedback from teachers and students confirmed that Panda Adventure Game is intuitive, accessible on various devices, and provides structured learning content. To support its implementation, the game includes two guidebooks for teachers and students, outlining learning objectives, instructions, and Narrative Text materials. These findings confirm that Panda Adventure Game is a valid and effective tool for improving reading comprehension in junior high school students.

5. DISCUSSION

The Panda Adventure Game serves as an alternative digital-based learning media for teaching narrative texts, specifically for eighth-grade junior high school students. According to (Mahmud & Ummati, 2022), the development of learning media involves adapting, engineering, or modifying existing media to suit the needs of the learning process, which is essential in modern classroom learning. This study focuses on developing the Panda Adventure Game as a learning tool that offers an engaging approach to teaching Narrative Text, ensuring that students and teachers experience a more dynamic and less monotonous learning process. The game has three difficulty levels—easy, medium, and hard—each with five stages. Question formats include multiple-choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank. Field studies, including observations and interviews, were conducted before expert validation.

The researcher designed the game model and learning materials, which were later reviewed by three media experts. Validation results showed a high level of validity, with material experts giving a 97% validation score and media experts 96%. Additionally, perception-based research indicated that students rated the game at 83.7% and teachers at 94%, confirming its suitability for classroom use. The study aligns with Qian & Clark (2016) who emphasized that game-based learning provides a unique experience beyond traditional classroom methods. Similarly, Alsawaier (2018) highlighted that the engaging and stimulating nature of games encourages continuous participation, leading players to acquire skills and absorb information effectively.

6. CONCLUSION

The study found that a lack of innovative learning media and minimal digital integration hindered narrative text comprehension. Interactive media enhance vocabulary and text understanding, making game-based learning a promising approach. The Panda Adventure Game, developed after multiple validations, was tested in three schools and confirmed by experts as a suitable learning tool. Field studies and validation results (97% from material experts, 96% from media experts) support its effectiveness. Additionally, 83.7% of students and 94% of teachers approved its use, confirming its potential to improve learning outcomes.

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