JURNAL KAJIAN PENDIDIKAN DAN CAKRAWALA PEMBELAJARAN

CHILDREN'S STORIES BASED ON THE LOCAL WISDOM OF BANTEN'S DEBUS TRADITION AS A STIMULUS FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Article Information

e-ISSN: 3089 – 9702
Volume 2 Issue 4
Pages 41 – 57

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Abstract

Background: *Descriptive writing instruction in elementary schools continues to face challenges in helping students generate ideas, select appropriate vocabulary, and develop coherent paragraphs. Children's stories based on local wisdom offer opportunities to provide contextual learning experiences while introducing regional cultural heritage.* ***Objective:*** *This study aimed to describe the use of children's stories based on Debus Banten local wisdom as a stimulus for descriptive writing instruction in elementary schools.* ***Method:*** *This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach involving 35 fifth-grade students from class V A at SDN 1 Rangkasbitung, Lebak Regency, Banten, Indonesia. Data were collected through classroom observations, assessments of students' written work, descriptive text analysis, and semi-structured interviews with the teacher and 10 students. Data were analyzed descriptively by examining learning activities, writing performance, textual characteristics, and participants' responses.* ***Results:*** *The findings indicate that children's stories featuring Debus Banten helped students identify cultural objects, develop vocabulary, and construct descriptive texts. Most students were able to describe the physical elements and atmosphere of Debus performances, although vocabulary diversity and paragraph coherence still required improvement.* ***Novelty:*** *This study specifically integrates the Debus Banten tradition into children's literature as a stimulus for descriptive writing, connecting language skill development with the recognition of local cultural identity.* ***Conclusion:*** *Children's stories based on Debus Banten local wisdom have the potential to serve as contextual learning resources that support descriptive writing skills while introducing regional cultural heritage to elementary school students. The descriptive writing assessment produced a mean score of 78.60 (SD = 7.35), with paragraph coherence (M = 73.80) and vocabulary selection (M = 76.50) remaining the weakest indicators. These findings describe students' performance after the learning activities and do not establish a causal effect of the stories.*

Keywords: *Children's Stories; Local Wisdom; Debus Banten; Descriptive Writing; Elementary School*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian language instruction in elementary schools plays a strategic role in developing students' abilities to understand and communicate ideas through spoken and written language. Writing is an essential competency because it requires students to organize ideas, select appropriate vocabulary, construct sentences, and convey information systematically. In descriptive writing, students are expected not only to identify objects but also to explain their characteristics, shapes, colors, settings, and impressions clearly. Rafiah et al. (2021) demonstrated a relationship between descriptive writing skills and students' creativity, while Anggraeni et al. (2024) identified difficulties in developing ideas, selecting appropriate words, and organizing written texts.

These challenges highlight the need for instructional approaches that provide concrete stimuli and align with the cognitive development of elementary school students. Materials that are overly abstract or disconnected from children's experiences may make it difficult for them to generate ideas and develop written descriptions. One alternative is the use of illustrated children's stories, which combine verbal and visual elements to help students recognize objects and develop their imagination. Himawati et al. (2024) demonstrated the potential of illustrated storybooks based on local wisdom to support foundational literacy, while Arviana and Cahyaningtyas (2025) found that illustrated storybooks can support narrative writing skills. However, their use as specific stimuli for descriptive writing remains an area that warrants further investigation.

Conceptually, children's stories are a form of literature that presents experiences, characters, events, and settings through language adapted to young readers' characteristics. In writing instruction, stories can serve as sources of ideas, while illustrations and cultural elements provide objects that students can observe and describe. Integrating local wisdom strengthens the connection between learning experiences and students' sociocultural environments. Dewi and Saputra (2025) emphasized the importance of writing instruction models oriented toward literacy competencies and students' experiential contexts. Similarly, Hatima (2025) highlighted the potential of local wisdom in Indonesian language instruction to create meaningful and contextually relevant learning experiences.

In elementary education, local culture can be integrated into learning through folklore, traditions, performing arts, and community knowledge. However, incorporating cultural elements into instructional materials should be directed toward specific language competencies rather than limited to introducing cultural values. Harziko et al. (2025) examined a local wisdom-based Indonesian literature learning model to support elementary students' language competencies. Juita et al. (2025) also demonstrated the use of digital flipbooks in literature instruction to introduce local culture to students. These studies reinforce the relevance of cultural resources in language learning, but neither specifically positions the Debus tradition of Banten as a stimulus for descriptive writing.

Previous studies have demonstrated the potential of integrating cultural elements and story-based media into language instruction. Damayanti et al. (2026) found that incorporating Morowali local wisdom into multiliteracy instruction was associated with elementary students' descriptive writing achievement. Sukniasih et al. (2026) developed wordless illustrated storybooks based on local culture to support students' ability to construct narrative structures. Meanwhile, Anggraini and Febrianto (2026) developed Indonesian language teaching materials based on the Petik Laut tradition to support students' ability to write moral messages. These findings indicate that cultural contexts can serve as valuable resources for developing writing skills through various instructional materials and approaches.

Nevertheless, previous research reveals opportunities for further investigation concerning the selection of cultural objects and the specific focus of writing competencies. Sabaruddin and Rahman (2026) examined the integration of local wisdom into folklore as a medium for Indonesian language instruction, whereas Fathurrochman et al. (2026) investigated models for integrating local wisdom into elementary school local content curricula. Both studies provide a foundation for understanding the importance of culturally responsive education. However, neither specifically examines children's stories featuring the Debus tradition of Banten as a stimulus for producing descriptive texts. Accordingly, further investigation is needed to connect local cultural representation, children's literature, and the characteristics of students' descriptive writing.

The novelty of this study lies in its selection of the Debus tradition of Banten as the cultural content of children's stories specifically designed to stimulate descriptive writing skills. Saputra et al. (2025) discussed the role of local wisdom in strengthening Indonesian language literacy in elementary schools, while Hatima and Yuliana (2026) examined Banten-based children's literature as a medium for Indonesian language instruction. Trisnawati et al. (2026) also developed digital teaching materials based on Banten's local wisdom to support elementary school literacy. Building on these studies, the present research extends the discussion by focusing on the representation of physical features, performance equipment, activities, and the atmosphere of Debus performances as resources for vocabulary development and descriptive text production.

Based on this discussion, the central problem addressed in this study concerns the need for concrete, engaging, and culturally relevant learning resources for descriptive writing instruction. Previous studies have explored children's stories, local wisdom-based literacy, and the development of writing skills. However, the use of children's stories specifically featuring the Debus tradition of Banten to stimulate descriptive writing remains underexplored. Therefore, this study aims to describe the use of children's stories based on the local wisdom of Banten's Debus tradition as a stimulus for descriptive writing in elementary schools, including student engagement, the characteristics of students' written products, and the contribution of this approach to contextual Indonesian language instruction and the strengthening of local cultural identity. In this study, the relationship among these components is conceptualized as follows: the

Debus-based narrative provides a meaningful cultural context, its illustrations and story details offer concrete objects and sensory information, and these elements become resources for students to identify, select, and organize descriptive details in written texts. Thus, the focus is not merely on introducing Debus as cultural knowledge, but on examining how its representation in children's stories can support the specific processes involved in descriptive writing.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. It aimed to describe the use of children's stories based on the local wisdom of Banten's Debus tradition as a stimulus for descriptive writing instruction in elementary schools. The research design focused on the instructional process, student engagement, and the characteristics of students' descriptive writing after reading and understanding children's stories incorporating local cultural values from Banten. This approach was selected to obtain a comprehensive understanding of students' learning processes and experiences.

The study was conducted at SDN 1 Rangkasbitung, Lebak Regency, Banten Province, Indonesia, in July 2026. The research population consisted of 118 fifth-grade students, while the research participants comprised 35 students from Class V A. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their cognitive development, language abilities, and engagement in Indonesian language learning. In addition to the students, the Class V A teacher was involved as a supporting informant to provide information about instructional characteristics, students' initial writing abilities, and the implementation of children's stories based on local wisdom in classroom activities.

Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, documentation, and analysis of students' written work. Primary data were obtained from classroom activities, student responses, teacher interviews, and descriptive writing samples produced by the 35 fifth-grade students in Class V A. Secondary data were obtained from instructional documents, teaching modules, curriculum materials, and relevant literature on children's stories and the local wisdom of Banten's Debus tradition. The research instruments included observation sheets, interview guidelines, documentation records, and a descriptive writing assessment rubric. The research procedure began with an introduction to the Debus Banten story, followed by reading and comprehension activities, object identification, and descriptive writing exercises based on the story as a stimulus.

Data were analyzed qualitatively through three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Observation and interview data were analyzed to identify students' engagement, comprehension, and responses throughout the learning process. Meanwhile, students' written work was examined using an assessment rubric covering content relevance to the described object, vocabulary accuracy, use of descriptive sentences, ability to portray object characteristics, and paragraph coherence. The findings were subsequently

classified according to the assessment indicators to provide an overview of the characteristics of students' descriptive writing abilities.

The research was conducted in five stages: preparation of research instruments and children's story materials based on the Debus tradition of Banten; introduction to descriptive writing; implementation of story-based instructional activities; collection of students' written work; and data analysis and interpretation. Data trustworthiness was established through methodological and source triangulation by comparing classroom observations, interviews, documentation, and students' written products. The analysis was also reviewed to minimize researcher subjectivity. All research activities were systematically documented to ensure that the research procedures and findings could be scientifically accounted for.

The ten student interviewees were selected to represent three levels of writing ability: three students with high ability, four with moderate ability, and three with low ability. Students' written products were examined using the five stated rubric indicators: content relevance, vocabulary accuracy, descriptive sentences, object characteristics, and paragraph coherence. The researcher's and teacher's assessments were compared through the reported inter-rater agreement procedures. Triangulation was conducted by comparing observation records, interview information, instructional documentation, and students' written products; the findings were interpreted descriptively rather than as evidence of causal effectiveness.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The study entitled "Children's Stories Based on the Local Wisdom of Banten's Debus Tradition as a Stimulus for Descriptive Writing in Elementary Schools" was conducted at SDN 1 Rangkasbitung, Lebak Regency, Banten Province, Indonesia, in July 2026. The findings are presented across six aspects: research instrument quality, classroom learning activities, students' descriptive writing abilities, characteristics of students' written products, teacher and student responses, and a synthesis of the findings. The results integrate descriptive quantitative and qualitative data obtained through classroom observations, performance-based writing assessments, written document analysis, and semi-structured interviews.

1. Overview of Research Implementation and Instrument Quality

The study involved 35 fifth-grade students from Class V A, selected from a population of 118 fifth-grade students. The instructional activities used illustrated children's stories incorporating the local wisdom of Banten's Debus tradition, including traditional figures, clothing, musical instruments, performance equipment, and the activities of martial arts performers. The learning activities consisted of intensive reading, identifying cultural elements in the stories, identifying objects, developing vocabulary, and independently composing descriptive texts. Research data were collected using observation sheets, performance-based writing assessments, text characteristic analyses, and interviews with the classroom teacher and selected students.

Before implementation, the research instruments underwent content validity and inter-rater reliability testing. The validation process involved three experts: an elementary Indonesian language education specialist, a children's literature and local culture learning specialist, and a senior teacher practitioner. Content validity was analyzed using Aiken's V coefficient, while the consistency of written product assessments was examined through inter-rater agreement using Cohen's Kappa and the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC). The results of the instrument quality assessment are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of Research Instrument Validity and Reliability Testing

No.	Assessment Aspect	Statistical Indicator	Result	Interpretation
1	Content validity	Aiken's V	0.89	Very high
2	Validity range	Aiken's V	0.83–0.94	Very high
3	Inter-rater reliability	Cohen's Kappa	0.84	Very good agreement
4	Assessment consistency	ICC	0.91	Very good
5	ICC significance	p-value	$p < 0.001$	Significant

The results in Table 1 indicate that the research instruments obtained an average content validity index of 0.89, with a range of 0.83–0.94. These values indicate that the components of the children's story instructional materials, descriptive writing assessment rubric, observation sheets, and interview guidelines demonstrated high content validity. Furthermore, inter-rater reliability testing produced a Cohen's Kappa coefficient of 0.84 and an ICC of 0.91, with a significance level of $p < 0.001$. These findings indicate very good agreement and assessment consistency between the researcher and the Class V A teacher. Therefore, the instruments demonstrated adequate validity and reliability for data collection and analysis.

2. Results of Classroom Learning Activity Observations

Classroom observations were conducted to identify students' engagement and participation during descriptive writing instruction using children's stories based on the local wisdom of Banten's Debus tradition. The observations covered five indicators representing the instructional stages, from reading activities to written text production. These indicators included engagement in reading the story, comprehension of story content, ability to identify objects, development of descriptive vocabulary, and active participation in writing. The observation results for the 35 students are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of Observations of Students' Learning Activities (N = 35)

No.	Observation Indicator	Number of Students	Percentage
1	Engagement in reading the story	31	88.57%
2	Comprehension of the Debus Banten story	29	82.86%
3	Ability to identify objects	30	85.71%
4	Development of descriptive vocabulary	26	74.29%
5	Active participation in writing	28	80.00%
	Average	28.8	82.29%

As shown in Table 2, engagement in reading the story obtained the highest percentage, at 88.57%, representing 31 students. This finding indicates that most students were able to

participate attentively in the reading activities and complete the story. The ability to identify objects also demonstrated a relatively high percentage of 85.71%, representing 30 students. Students were able to recognize specific objects featured in the story, such as gendang (traditional drums), terbang gede (large traditional frame drums), golok (traditional machetes), pangsi clothing, and traditional headbands. Meanwhile, comprehension of the story reached 82.86%, indicating that students were able to identify the characters, settings, and sequence of events in the Debus Banten performance.

In contrast, the development of descriptive vocabulary obtained the lowest percentage, at 74.29%, representing 26 students. The remaining nine students tended to use general vocabulary taken directly from the story. Regarding active participation in writing, 28 students (80.00%) were able to independently develop an outline into a draft, while seven students still required guidance in constructing opening sentences. Overall, the average achievement across the observed learning activities reached 82.29%. This pattern indicates that receptive activities, particularly reading and object identification, demonstrated higher achievement than productive activities requiring independent vocabulary development.

3. Results of the Analysis of Students' Descriptive Writing Abilities

Students' descriptive writing abilities were assessed through 35 written products from Class V A using a rubric with scores ranging from 1 to 100. The assessment covered five indicators: content relevance to the object, vocabulary selection accuracy, use of descriptive sentences, ability to describe object characteristics, and paragraph coherence. The analysis was conducted to provide an overview of students' writing achievement, both overall and across individual assessment indicators.

Descriptive statistical analysis of individual final scores showed that students obtained a mean descriptive writing score of 78.60, with a standard deviation of 7.35. The median score was 78.00, with a minimum score of 62.00 and a maximum score of 94.00. Meanwhile, the assessment results for each indicator are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Descriptive Writing Abilities by Indicator (N = 35)

No.	Assessment Indicator	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Category
1	Content relevance to the object	68.00	96.00	84.20	7.12	Very Good
2	Vocabulary selection accuracy	60.00	92.00	76.50	7.84	Good
3	Use of descriptive sentences	62.00	94.00	78.10	7.56	Good
4	Description of object characteristics	64.00	95.00	80.40	7.41	Good
5	Paragraph coherence	56.00	93.00	73.80	8.15	Fairly Good
	Overall Average	62.00	94.00	78.60	7.35	Good

Note: 81.00–100 = Very Good; 75.00–80.99 = Good; 65.00–74.99 = Fairly Good; below 65.00 = Needs Improvement.

The results in Table 3 show that content relevance to the object obtained the highest mean score of 84.20, with a standard deviation of 7.12. This achievement indicates that students were generally able to maintain the relevance of their writing to the cultural objects being described. The description of object characteristics ranked second, with a mean score of 80.40 and a

standard deviation of 7.41. This result demonstrates students' ability to explain object characteristics based on their shapes, colors, equipment, and physical features. The use of descriptive sentences obtained a mean score of 78.10, indicating that students were able to develop information from the story into sentences that described objects in greater detail.

Conversely, vocabulary selection accuracy obtained a mean score of 76.50, while paragraph coherence recorded the lowest mean score of 73.80. The standard deviation for paragraph coherence was 8.15, the highest among all assessment indicators. This finding indicates that students' ability to organize ideas across sentences varied more considerably than their performance in other assessment areas. Overall, students demonstrated stronger performance in content relevance and object description, whereas vocabulary development and paragraph coherence remained areas requiring further improvement.

To clarify the distribution of overall writing abilities, students' individual scores were classified into four categories based on the established assessment ranges. The frequency and percentage distributions for each category are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Students' Descriptive Writing Abilities (N = 35)

No.	Score Range	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	81.00–100	Very Good	12	34.29%
2	75.00–80.99	Good	15	42.86%
3	65.00–74.99	Fairly Good	6	17.14%
4	Below 65.00	Needs Improvement	2	5.71%
		Total	35	100.00%

The distribution in Table 4 shows that the good category had the highest frequency, comprising 15 students (42.86%), followed by the very good category, with 12 students (34.29%). Thus, 27 students (77.14%) were classified within the good to very good categories. Meanwhile, six students (17.14%) were classified as fairly good, and two students (5.71%) still required additional guidance. These findings indicate that most students demonstrated good descriptive writing abilities, although some continued to require support in improving the quality of their written work. The score range of 62.00–94.00 also reflects differences in writing proficiency among the research participants.

4. Analysis of the Characteristics of Students' Descriptive Texts

The characteristics of students' writing were analyzed across 35 descriptive texts to identify their ability to transform cultural information into written descriptions. The analysis focused on five aspects: descriptions of cultural objects, use of concrete vocabulary, use of adjectives, development of descriptive sentences, and coherence of written content. These aspects were used to identify the linguistic characteristics and depth of local cultural representation in students' written products. The analysis revealed variations in students' abilities to develop visual, auditory, and descriptive elements obtained from the children's stories based on Banten's Debus tradition.

Table 5. Analysis of the Characteristics of Students' Descriptive Texts

No.	Analytical Aspect	Research Findings
1	Description of cultural objects	A total of 85.71% of students (30 students) described the physical attributes of Debus performances, including pangsi clothing, traditional headbands, terbang gede, gendang, golok, and burning embers.
2	Use of concrete vocabulary	Students used concrete nouns associated with sensory experiences, such as the sound of drumbeats, the gleam of metal blades, incense smoke, deep black fabric, and martial arts movements.
3	Use of adjectives	Various adjectives were identified, including loud, sharp, brave, lively, tense, strong, and traditional. A total of 25.71% of the written texts still demonstrated repetition of general words, such as good and great.
4	Development of descriptive sentences	A total of 77.14% of students (27 students) were able to construct sentences describing the shape, color, size, and sounds of objects, whereas 22.86% (8 students) still produced simple narrative-informative sentences.
5	Coherence of written content	Students' texts generally included object identification and descriptions of specific features. However, sentence relationships tended to be enumerative, with limited use of varied conjunctions.

As shown in Table 5, descriptions of cultural objects represented the most prominent characteristic of students' written products. A total of 30 students (85.71%) were able to incorporate the physical attributes of Banten's Debus tradition into their writing, including pangsi clothing, traditional headbands, musical instruments, and performance equipment. The use of concrete vocabulary associated with sensory experiences also indicated that students could transform information from the stories into descriptions of object characteristics. Visual and auditory elements, such as clothing colors, the gleam of metal blades, the sound of drumbeats, and performers' movements, became part of the information used in constructing descriptive texts.

Regarding the use of adjectives, students demonstrated a variety of vocabulary items to describe object characteristics and the atmosphere of the performances, including loud, sharp, brave, lively, tense, and strong. Nevertheless, 25.71% of the written texts still contained repeated general vocabulary, particularly good and great. This finding indicates that students' ability to recognize object characteristics was not yet fully accompanied by mastery of more specific vocabulary. Therefore, vocabulary enrichment represents an important aspect of improving descriptive text quality.

In terms of sentence development, 27 students (77.14%) were able to construct sentences describing the shapes, colors, sizes, and sounds of objects. One example identified in the students' written products was, *"The sound of the terbang gede echoed rhythmically, accompanying the agile movements of the martial arts performer."* This sentence demonstrates the ability to combine auditory information and movement within a single descriptive statement. Meanwhile, the remaining eight students continued to produce relatively simple narrative-informative sentences. Regarding coherence, students' texts generally included object

identification and descriptions of specific features. However, several paragraphs were still organized as lists of characteristics that were not yet systematically connected.

5. Interview Findings and Student Responses to the Use of Children's Stories

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Class V A teacher and ten students representing different writing ability levels: three students with high writing abilities, four with moderate abilities, and three with low abilities. The interviews aimed to obtain information about students' learning experiences, interest in the Debus Banten stories, ease of understanding the reading materials, ability to generate writing ideas, and understanding of local wisdom. Information from the teacher was used to complement the observation findings, while students' statements were analyzed to identify their learning experiences according to their writing ability levels. The interview findings are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Analysis of Teacher and Student Interview Findings

No.	Interview Focus	Research Findings	Respondent Statements
1	Interest in the Debus Banten stories	Students demonstrated enthusiasm for illustrated stories featuring local traditions.	"Children usually get bored quickly when they only look at a single still image on the board. With the illustrated Debus Banten story, they immediately become enthusiastic, ask questions, and stay focused on reading until they finish." (Class V A Teacher)
2	Ease of understanding the story	The language and storyline helped students recognize the sequence of performances and the equipment used.	"The story is exciting, and the language is easy to understand, so I know the sequence of the Debus performance and the musical instruments used, such as the terbang gede." (S-04, Moderate-Ability Group)
3	Ability to generate writing ideas	Nine out of ten students reported that they found it easier to determine a topic and begin writing.	"Usually, when I am asked to write directly, I get confused about where to start. After reading the story, I immediately get ideas about writing about the performer's black clothes and the golok." (S-11, High-Ability Group)
4	Ease of developing descriptions	High- and moderate-ability students benefited from the illustrations, whereas low-ability students still required guidance.	"The pictures are very clear, and the colors make it easy to describe things. But I still find it a little difficult to connect the sentences if the teacher does not give me a word list." (S-29, Low-Ability Group)
5	Understanding of local wisdom	Students recognized Debus as a cultural tradition that embodies courage and perseverance.	"I just learned that Debus is not only a performance involving physical endurance, but also an original Banten cultural tradition that requires dedicated practice and courage." (S-18, Moderate-Ability Group)

The interview findings in Table 6 indicate that the use of children's stories based on Banten's Debus tradition received positive responses from both students and the teacher. One of the main findings concerned students' ability to generate writing ideas more easily. Nine out of the ten interviewed students reported that the characters, objects, and sequences of events

presented in the stories helped them determine topics and begin writing. This was reflected in S-11's statement, which indicated that information about the performer's clothing and golok provided an initial idea for developing a descriptive text. This finding suggests that the stories provided a source of information that helped students identify writing topics more purposefully.

Regarding reading comprehension, students reported that the use of accessible language and a coherent storyline helped them recognize the elements of Banten's Debus performances. S-04's statement indicated that the story helped students understand the sequence of performances and identify traditional musical instruments. This information was supported by the Class V A teacher's observation that illustrated stories encouraged students to ask questions and participate more actively in reading activities. These interview findings are consistent with the observation data, which showed that engagement in reading the story reached 88.57%.

Nevertheless, the interviews revealed differences in learning needs according to students' writing ability levels. High- and moderate-ability students generally used illustrations to develop descriptions of object colors, shapes, and characteristics. In contrast, low-ability students continued to experience difficulties connecting sentences coherently. This was evident in S-29's statement, which indicated that illustrations helped with object descriptions, but sentence construction still required vocabulary lists provided by the teacher. This finding is consistent with the assessment results, which showed that paragraph coherence had the lowest mean score of 73.80 and the highest standard deviation of 8.15.

In addition to writing skills, the interviews also revealed students' understanding of the cultural values embedded in Banten's Debus tradition. S-18's statement indicated that students were beginning to understand Debus not merely as a performance involving physical skills, but also as a cultural tradition associated with courage and perseverance in training. This finding demonstrates that children's stories provide opportunities to integrate language literacy with an understanding of local cultural identity. Thus, student responses encompassed two aspects: learning experiences in developing writing skills and understanding the cultural traditions of the Banten community.

6. Synthesis of Research Findings

The synthesis integrated the results of instrument testing, classroom activity observations, written product assessments, text characteristic analyses, and interviews with the teacher and students. This integration aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the use of children's stories based on the local wisdom of Banten's Debus tradition as a stimulus for descriptive writing instruction. The synthesis revealed connections among students' engagement in understanding the stories, their ability to identify cultural objects, their development of information into written descriptions, and their responses to the use of contextual reading materials. A summary of the main research findings is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Synthesis of the Main Research Findings

No.	Research Aspect	Main Findings	Empirical Evidence
1	Instrument quality	The instruments met the criteria for content validity and inter-rater reliability.	Aiken's V = 0.89; Kappa = 0.84; ICC = 0.91
2	Learning engagement	Students demonstrated high engagement in reading the stories.	88.57%; average observation score = 82.29%
3	Identification of cultural objects	Students were able to recognize specific elements and objects presented in the stories.	85.71% of students
4	Descriptive writing ability	Overall descriptive writing ability was classified as good.	Mean = 78.60; SD = 7.35
5	Distribution of writing ability	Most students were classified within the good and very good categories.	27 students (77.14%)
6	Development of descriptive sentences	Most students were able to develop sentences based on object characteristics.	77.14% of students
7	Paragraph coherence	Paragraph organization and sentence continuity still required improvement.	Mean = 73.80; SD = 8.15
8	Learning responses	Students found it easier to generate ideas through illustrated stories.	9 out of 10 students
9	Understanding of local culture	Students recognized elements of the Debus tradition and its cultural values.	Teacher and student interview findings

As shown in Table 7, students demonstrated relatively high achievement in understanding the stories and identifying cultural objects. This finding corresponds with the writing assessment results, in which the content relevance to the object indicator obtained a mean score of 84.20. The relationship between these findings indicates that students were able to use information obtained from the stories to maintain the focus of their writing on the objects being described. Furthermore, the ability to describe object characteristics obtained a mean score of 80.40, indicating that students could develop information about the shapes, colors, equipment, and physical characteristics of cultural objects into written descriptions.

On the other hand, differences emerged between students' ability to identify information and their ability to organize that information into coherent descriptive texts. The paragraph coherence indicator obtained a mean score of 73.80, with a standard deviation of 8.15, the highest among the five assessment indicators. This result was supported by the analysis of students' written products, which revealed a tendency to use enumerative sentences and repeat general vocabulary. Interviews with students in the low-ability group also indicated that some students still needed assistance in connecting sentences. Therefore, the ability to identify and develop object details was not yet fully accompanied by mastery of cohesive and coherent paragraph organization.

Overall, the findings indicate that children's stories based on the local wisdom of Banten's Debus tradition can be used as a contextual stimulus in descriptive writing instruction in elementary schools. The stories provide sources of information, visual representations of objects, and cultural contexts that help students generate ideas and develop descriptive details.

Furthermore, integrating local traditions provides opportunities for students to recognize regional cultural elements and values through literacy activities. Nevertheless, vocabulary development, sentence variation, and paragraph coherence still require further reinforcement through teacher guidance and continuous writing practice.

The assessment results should therefore be interpreted alongside the qualitative evidence. For example, the sentence, “The sound of the terbang gede echoed rhythmically, accompanying the agile movements of the martial arts performer,” illustrates how one student combined auditory detail and movement in a descriptive sentence. At the same time, the lower mean for paragraph coherence (73.80) and the interview response describing difficulty connecting sentences indicate that identifying details did not always translate into well-organized paragraphs.

DISCUSSION

1. Children's Stories Based on Local Wisdom as a Stimulus for Descriptive Writing Instruction

The use of children's stories based on the local wisdom of Banten's Debus tradition highlights the importance of incorporating cultural contexts that are familiar to students into descriptive writing instruction. Stories function not only as reading materials but also as sources of knowledge and references to objects that help students develop written ideas. The relevance of instructional materials to students' cultural environments provides a contextual foundation for literacy development. This finding is consistent with Saputra et al. (2025), who emphasized the role of local wisdom in strengthening Indonesian language literacy competencies, and Hatima (2025), who positioned local culture as a source of contextual learning in elementary schools.

From a pedagogical perspective, using children's stories based on Banten's Debus tradition demonstrates how cultural integration can connect language learning objectives with an understanding of regional identity. Students not only learn about the characteristics of objects but also develop an understanding of community traditions through narratives and illustrations. This finding is relevant to Hatima and Yuliana (2026), who identified Banten-based children's literature as a contextual medium for Indonesian language instruction. Ummah et al. (2025) also emphasized the importance of integrating linguistic aspects and cultural diversity into elementary education. Therefore, children's stories have the potential to serve as a bridge between cultural experiences and students' language skills.

2. The Role of Narratives and Illustrations in Developing Ideas and Descriptive Vocabulary

The presence of illustrations and narratives in children's stories provides concrete representations of objects that students are expected to describe. From a cognitive perspective, visual information helps students recognize object characteristics, while narratives provide contextual information for understanding the functions of and relationships between objects. The combination of these elements provides a foundation for students to develop written ideas. This finding is consistent with Sukniasih et al. (2026), who demonstrated that illustrated storybooks

based on local culture can support students' ability to organize information. Hatima and Yuliana (2026) also highlighted the potential of Banten-based children's literature to develop students' language skills and creativity.

Nevertheless, the ease of generating ideas does not necessarily guarantee the ability to develop vocabulary and construct coherent paragraphs. Students may recognize objects through illustrations but still require enrichment in adjectives, verbs, and conjunctions to produce more detailed descriptions. This condition is consistent with Anggraeni et al. (2024), who identified difficulties among elementary school students in developing ideas, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and organizing written texts. Damayanti et al. (2026) also demonstrated the relevance of local wisdom-based multiliteracy instruction to the development of descriptive writing skills. Therefore, illustrations should be accompanied by language modeling and teacher guidance.

3. Characteristics of Descriptive Writing Abilities and the Need for Instructional Support

Differences in achievement across content relevance, object description, and paragraph coherence indicate that descriptive writing involves interrelated competencies that do not necessarily develop simultaneously. Students generally find it easier to identify object characteristics than to organize information into cohesive paragraphs. This phenomenon suggests that mastery of substantive information needs to be accompanied by proficiency in linguistic features and text organization. Damayanti et al. (2026) demonstrated that local wisdom-based writing instruction can be developed through a multiliteracy approach, while Saputra et al. (2025) emphasized that cultural contexts provide learning resources for developing various literacy competencies.

Teacher support is particularly important for students who experience difficulties in developing sentences and connecting ideas. Providing vocabulary lists, descriptive sentence models, object characteristic classification activities, and paragraph construction exercises can help address these challenges. From a language learning perspective, these activities represent forms of gradual instructional support that enable students to progress from identifying information to producing independent written texts. Ummah et al. (2025) emphasized the importance of integrating linguistic aspects into multicultural learning, while Hatima (2025) highlighted the value of Indonesian language instruction that incorporates local wisdom. Both studies reinforce the importance of language instruction that is simultaneously contextual and structured.

4. Pedagogical Contributions, Implications, and Research Limitations

The primary contribution of this study lies in the use of children's stories based on Banten's Debus tradition as a stimulus that integrates descriptive writing skills with cultural literacy. Using local traditions as instructional content provides teachers with an alternative approach to developing teaching materials that are relevant to students' social and cultural environments. Hatima and Yuliana (2026) demonstrated that Banten-based children's literature has the potential to strengthen language learning and cultural identity, while Sukniasih et al. (2026) highlighted the importance of visual representation and cultural context in supporting students' writing abilities.

The present study extends these perspectives by applying them to descriptive writing through the use of Banten's Debus tradition as the central cultural subject.

The practical implications of this study highlight the need for teachers to develop writing instruction through illustrated stories, observations of cultural objects, vocabulary enrichment, and guided paragraph construction. However, this study has several limitations because it involved only one class of 35 students and employed a descriptive approach without a comparison group or pre- and post-instruction assessments. Consequently, the findings do not establish a causal effect. Anggraeni et al. (2024) and Damayanti et al. (2026) provide a foundation for future research to examine instructional support strategies and the effectiveness of culturally based approaches through experimental designs, larger samples, and longitudinal assessments of writing abilities.

The contrast between the relatively high content-relevance score (M = 84.20) and the lower paragraph-coherence score (M = 73.80) suggests that the stories more readily supported the identification and selection of descriptive content than the organization of that content into connected paragraphs. This interpretation is also supported by the interview finding that some students still needed vocabulary lists and guidance to connect sentences. Accordingly, the distinctive contribution of the Debus context is its provision of culturally specific, observable objects, sounds, clothing, and movements as material for description; it should be understood as a contextual writing stimulus, not as a proven independent cause of improved writing.

CONCLUSION

Main Findings: This study found that children's stories based on Debus Banten local wisdom can serve as contextual stimuli for descriptive writing in elementary schools. The combination of narratives and illustrations helped students identify cultural objects, develop vocabulary, and describe the physical elements and atmosphere of Debus performances. However, some students still experienced difficulties in vocabulary variation and paragraph coherence. **Research Contribution:** This study contributes to Indonesian language education by integrating children's literature and local cultural heritage as learning resources for descriptive writing. It introduces Debus Banten as a culturally relevant context for developing students' writing skills while fostering awareness of regional cultural identity. **Theoretical and Practical Implications:** The findings highlight the potential of culturally contextualized children's literature to support descriptive writing instruction. Teachers can use illustrated local-culture stories to provide concrete writing stimuli and facilitate students' vocabulary development and description skills. **Research Limitations:** This study involved 35 fifth-grade students from one elementary school and employed a descriptive qualitative approach. Therefore, the findings do not establish causal effects or represent elementary school students more broadly. **Future Research Directions:** Future studies should involve students from different schools and use experimental or quasi-experimental designs to examine the effectiveness of local-wisdom-based children's stories in improving descriptive writing skills. Further research may also investigate their contribution to

students' cultural literacy. In classroom practice, teachers can follow the story-reading activity with a vocabulary bank of specific nouns, adjectives, and action verbs; guided sentence modeling; and exercises that connect descriptive details using appropriate conjunctions. These supports are particularly relevant for students who experience difficulty moving from identifying objects to organizing coherent paragraphs. The findings should be applied cautiously because they describe one class at one school and do not demonstrate that the stories alone caused an improvement in writing performance.

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