

# Narrating Indonesia to Non-Native Speakers: Cultural Representation and Digital Transformation in BIPA Instruction

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**ABSTRACT:** This article examines the integration of cultural representation and digital technology in the teaching of Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing (BIPA), or Indonesian for Foreign Speakers. As BIPA gains prominence both regionally and internationally, particularly in the context of academic exchange and cultural diplomacy, there is an urgent need to address how local culture and technological innovation can be harmonised within instructional practice. The study engages critically with current literature in foreign language pedagogy, intercultural communication, and educational technology to evaluate how BIPA teaching materials and curricula represent Indonesian cultural knowledge, and how digital platforms are utilised to enhance learning outcomes. Through a qualitative synthesis of secondary data—including academic articles and teaching resources—the article explores the extent to which cultural content, such as folklore, traditional values, and social customs, is embedded in BIPA instruction. The analysis also strongly considers the implications of delivering BIPA through digital and hybrid modalities, particularly in response to the shift towards remote learning and the use of multimedia formats. Case examples are drawn from contemporary teaching practices, highlighting both the opportunities and limitations posed by these developments. The discussion identifies several core challenges: the risk of essentialising culture; the underutilisation of digital tools in narrating cultural complexity; and the need for more reflective, inclusive representations of Indonesia's diverse cultural landscape. It is argued that meaningful integration of culture and technology requires pedagogical intentionality, critical awareness, and collaboration between educators, cultural practitioners, and technology developers. The study highlights the importance of culturally responsive design in language instruction, and calls for ongoing dialogue between curriculum developers and the communities whose cultural narratives are being represented. In conclusion, the article advocates for a more integrated, critically informed approach to BIPA teaching—one that leverages digital innovation without diluting the richness and plurality of Indonesian cultural identities. Such an approach not only improves language acquisition but also fosters intercultural sensitivity among international learners of Indonesian.

**KEYWORDS** -BIPA, cultural representation, digital pedagogy, Indonesian language education, intercultural learning

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The teaching of Bahasa Indonesia to non-native speakers—officially known as *Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing* (BIPA)—has become an increasingly important area of educational and cultural engagement for Indonesia. As a country with over 270 million inhabitants and significant cultural, linguistic diversity, and economic potential, Indonesia's strategic interest in promoting its national language internationally is both timely and well-founded. The growth of BIPA programmes in Indonesia and abroad reflects not only a rising global curiosity about the language but also a broader cultural diplomacy effort to enhance Indonesia's international presence through education. BIPA thus operates at the intersection of language pedagogy, intercultural competence, and soft power projection, with its effectiveness hinging on the ability of educators to integrate linguistic instruction with cultural understanding and contemporary educational technology.

The relationship between language and culture is widely recognised in second language acquisition literature. Language is not merely a system of grammar and vocabulary; it is embedded within, and inseparable from, the cultural values, practices, and worldviews of its speakers. Accordingly, BIPA education has increasingly adopted culture-based pedagogical approaches, acknowledging that learners of Bahasa Indonesia must acquire not only linguistic proficiency but also the sociocultural competence to navigate real-world interactions with native speakers. Numerous studies have demonstrated that incorporating cultural content—ranging from local customs and etiquette to traditional arts and culinary heritage—enhances learners' engagement, contextual understanding, and ability to communicate appropriately in Indonesian society [1]; [2]; [3].

This cultural orientation has shaped the development of BIPA curricula and teaching materials at all levels of proficiency. Textbooks such as *Keren* and *Sahabatku Indonesia A1* embed cultural references directly into lesson content, exposing learners to traditional foods, clothing, performing arts, and social customs as they acquire the language [4]; [2]. Researchers have also experimented with incorporating folklore, literature, and local wisdom as the basis for learning modules—examples include using the *Timun Mas* folk tale [5], Betawi oral literature [6], or Bugis wedding traditions [7] to contextualise linguistic forms within culturally meaningful narratives. These approaches reflect a broader recognition that meaningful language learning involves emotional, cultural, and experiential dimensions, not just cognitive and grammatical mastery.

In parallel with the integration of cultural content, the role of technology in BIPA instruction has expanded rapidly. The digital transformation of education—accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic—has reshaped classroom practices and enabled BIPA educators to reach broader audiences through online platforms and multimedia tools. Research shows that the integration of technology in BIPA classrooms enhances student motivation, supports diverse learning styles, and allows for more interactive, flexible, and personalised instruction [8]; [9]. Teachers have incorporated digital audio and video resources for listening comprehension, employed interactive writing platforms, and used tools such as Zoom to maintain communicative learning environments during periods of remote instruction [10]. These practices not only support linguistic development but also expose learners to authentic, real-life use of Bahasa Indonesia in diverse formats.

More recently, digital content creation tools such as Canva have enabled BIPA educators to design visually engaging, culture-rich learning materials. For instance, Simanjuntak et al. [11] developed beginner-level BIPA resources incorporating North Sumatran culture using Canva as a platform. Similarly, the development of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), such as those targeting business communication in Indonesian, shows the potential of e-learning to broaden access to high-quality BIPA education worldwide [12]. These innovations point to a future in which BIPA instruction is increasingly hybrid, multimodal, and adapted to the needs of learners across a variety of global contexts.

Beyond improving instructional quality, the strategic integration of culture and technology in BIPA has broader implications for Indonesia's linguistic and cultural diplomacy. Several studies suggest that BIPA programmes can act as channels for introducing Indonesia's cultural identity to the international community, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation [13]; [14]. For example, the use of culinary traditions—such as *nasi goreng* (“fried rice”) or *gudeg* (“jackfruit stew in coconut milk”)—as classroom content not only provides concrete and sensory-based learning experiences, but also serves as an accessible form of cultural exchange that

appeals to learners across linguistic and national boundaries [15]; [16]. This form of “culinary diplomacy” has even been shown to increase enrolment in BIPA classes by sparking interest through food-based cultural events [17].

Despite these promising developments, several challenges remain. Access to technology remains uneven across learners and institutions, particularly in less developed regions. Teachers may require ongoing training to effectively implement new digital tools, and culturally embedded content must be carefully selected and adapted to diverse learner backgrounds to avoid stereotyping or superficial representations. Furthermore, although cultural integration has been shown to enhance learner motivation and performance, it must be supported by systematic curriculum design and evidence-based pedagogical models. Studies employing development frameworks such as ADDIE, or the 4D model have demonstrated the value of iterative design processes in producing culturally rich BIPA materials that are both educationally effective and culturally authentic [18]; [19].

This article discusses how cultural content and digital technology can be effectively integrated into the teaching of Bahasa Indonesia to non-native speakers within BIPA programmes. It draws on a wide range of empirical research and curriculum development projects to explore practical methods for embedding Indonesian culture into language instruction—such as the use of folklore, traditional arts, culinary themes, and region-specific customs—as a means to foster learners’ intercultural competence and engagement. Simultaneously, the article examines how educational technologies, including online platforms, multimedia tools, and interactive applications, can be used to support flexible, learner-centred, and motivating instructional models. By critically analysing these pedagogical approaches, the article aims to provide guidance on how BIPA programmes can be innovatively designed to promote linguistic proficiency alongside cultural understanding, while also contributing to Indonesia’s broader efforts in cultural diplomacy and global language education.

In sum, the evolving field of BIPA instruction illustrates how language teaching can serve as a bridge between cultures when it is informed by pedagogical innovation, cultural sensitivity, and technological responsiveness. As Bahasa Indonesia seeks a more prominent role on the global stage, the success of BIPA will depend not merely on expanding access but on ensuring that instruction is immersive, meaningful, and responsive to the complex realities of intercultural communication.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### INTEGRATION OF CULTURE ASPECTS INTO BIPA CLASSES

Language and culture are deeply intertwined, and a growing body of research on teaching Bahasa Indonesia to foreign learners (BIPA) emphasizes that effective language instruction must integrate cultural understanding. In BIPA classes, culture is not an optional add-on but a crucial component that enhances communication skills and contextual comprehension. By learning cultural norms, values, and practices alongside grammar and vocabulary, foreign students can avoid misunderstandings and engage more naturally with Indonesian speakers. Accordingly, numerous studies have explored practical ways to weave various aspects of Indonesian culture into BIPA curricula, yielding richer and more meaningful learning experiences for students.

One widespread approach is incorporating cultural content directly into textbooks and teaching materials used in BIPA programs. Many standard BIPA textbooks already embed Indonesian cultural elements to serve as a bridge between the language and its social context. For example, Murtianis and Rohmadi [4] examined the *Keren* textbook series used in a Central Java BIPA program and found it replete with references to Javanese culture. Lessons introduced students to traditional transport like the *becak* (“pedicab”) and *andong* (“horse carriage”), iconic foods such as *sate/ satay* (“skewered grilled meat with seasonings”) and herbal *jamu* drinks, indigenous arts including the *angklung* and *gamelan* musical ensembles and *wayang* puppetry, traditional clothing like the *kebaya*, and even historical landmarks like Borobudur and Prambanan temples. By encountering these tangible cultural artifacts in their language lessons, students gain concrete context for vocabulary and grammatical structures, and their curiosity about Indonesian life is sparked. Haryati et al. [1] provided a more systematic look at the cultural content in BIPA teaching materials: in an analysis of textbooks

across proficiency levels (A1 to B2), they identified a broad spectrum of cultural topics woven into the curriculum. These ranged from daily livelihood and technology (about 37.5% of the content) to arts (31.25%), knowledge systems, religious practices, and even discussion of Indonesia's linguistic diversity. Such content gives learners insight into how Indonesians live, create, and believe, going well beyond language mechanics. Importantly, Haryati et al. [1] note that professional instructors use this material to impart cross-cultural skills, helping students socialize effectively in Indonesian society, something that purely linguistic teaching cannot achieve. Another study by Rahayu [2] zeroed in on a beginner-level textbook (*Sahabatku Indonesia A1*) and found that it deliberately highlights cultural themes of *familiarity* and *politeness* in communication. Dialogues and scenarios in that book stress friendly greetings, introductions, and courteous speech, reflecting core Indonesian values of social harmony and respect. By teaching these pragmatic aspects (e.g. when to use formal vs. informal language, how to show respect), the textbook equips foreign learners to interact in culturally appropriate ways from the very basics of Indonesian. These examples show that official BIPA materials often purposefully integrate culture into language instruction, aligning with the view that language learning should also build socio-cultural competence.

In addition to leveraging existing textbooks, educators and researchers have been designing new BIPA learning resources that center on Indonesia's diverse cultures. A number of studies have adopted research-and-development methodologies to create innovative, culture-rich teaching models and then test their effectiveness with learners. Syamsi et al. [3] offer a clear example: they developed a culture-based Indonesian language textbook specifically for academic purposes, following a structured design process. In their approach, equal weight was given to building language proficiency and cultural awareness. The textbook units included not just grammar and vocabulary exercises, but also sections on cultural norms and opportunities for cultural experiences (e.g. tasks requiring students to engage with Indonesian media or traditions). The development process involved a needs analysis that surveyed students' cultural interests, careful selection of cultural topics to cover, creation of attractive content and graphics, and multiple rounds of review and pilot testing. The end result was a textbook tailored to intermediate BIPA students (levels 3–4) at an Indonesian university, and its efficacy was evidenced by significant improvements in post-test scores and enthusiastic feedback from both learners and instructors. In a similar vein, Purbarani and Muliastuti [20] recognized gaps in conventional BIPA curricula—namely, the lack of cultural and literary context in language lessons—and proposed a comprehensive model to address these gaps. They designed learning materials guided by the “5C” principles from foreign language pedagogy: communication, culture, connections, comparison, and communities. In practice, this meant every aspect of language skill training (listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar) was infused with cultural content and real-world connections. For instance, lessons encouraged students to make *connections* between Indonesian and other disciplines or their personal experiences, to *compare* Indonesian cultural norms with those of their own country, and to engage with local Indonesian-speaking *communities* or social contexts. By integrating these dimensions, the model aimed to produce not only linguistic competence but also culturally fluent communicators. Particularly for advanced learners, such as the BIPA level 7 group targeted by Purbarani and Muliastuti [20], this integrated 5C curriculum helps them navigate complex cultural nuances and pragmatic language use at a high level. The development of these new materials underscores an important trend: BIPA educators are moving away from rote language drills toward more holistic teaching that aligns language with culture at every step.

A recurrent strategy in the literature is to develop BIPA learning content around specific local cultures or regional “local wisdom” (*kearifanlokal*). Indonesia's rich cultural mosaic—spanning different provinces, ethnic groups, and traditions—provides ample material to contextualize language lessons. By anchoring lessons in a particular local culture, instructors give learners a tangible setting for the vocabulary and phrases they learn, as well as insight into the social milieu in which Indonesian is used. For example, Nurlina [21] focused on Central Javanese cultural values when creating Indonesian speaking exercises for foreigners in Central Java. Her materials drew on cultural elements from Banyumas, Solo, and Semarang regions to ensure that students not only practised speaking Indonesian but did so in scenarios that reflect Javanese customs and etiquette. The goal was to bridge the gap between language and context: a foreign student learning in Central Java would need both

the linguistic skill and the cultural knowledge to communicate fluently and appropriately in that community. Indeed, Nurlina [21] observed that integrating such local culture in lessons can reduce “culture shock” and help students adapt more comfortably to their host environment. Another study turned to the unique culture of the Betawi people (indigenous to the Jakarta area) as the basis for a BIPA learning model. Bahtiar and Nasrullah [6] introduced what they called a “multiliteration” model, combining multiple learning aspects, by using Betawi local-color literature as core content. They selected short stories and traditional *pantun* poems set in Betawi society and wove them into language lessons, so that students at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta were simultaneously learning Indonesian and learning about Betawi daily life, values, professions, and humor. This approach was reported to greatly enrich students’ understanding of not just the language’s words, but the cultural identity behind them, and motivated learners to engage more deeply with both aspects. Many other regions have similarly been leveraged in BIPA materials: Arisnawati et al. [7] looked to South Sulawesi’s Bugis culture and created BIPA lessons around practices like the traditional Bugis wedding ceremony and local culinary specialties. By learning the sequence of rituals in a Bugis marriage or the ingredients of a snack like *barongko*, students acquired relevant vocabulary and phrases in context and also gained an appreciation for Bugis social customs. Mulyaningsih and Khuzaemah [19] concentrated on Cirebon, a city in West Java, developing beginner-level materials that introduce local Cirebonese foods and tourist attractions as lesson content. Their rationale was that foreign speakers living in Cirebon needed basic Indonesian for everyday interactions, so why not teach those basics through scenarios set in Cirebon’s markets, eateries, and cultural sites? Embedding local context made the lessons more engaging and immediately relevant for the learners’ daily lives. The pattern that emerges is clear: whether it is Central Java, Betawi Jakarta, Bugis South Sulawesi, or Cirebon, grounding BIPA instruction in local culture provides a rich contextual scaffold for language. Students are effectively being taught how to *live* in the language, not just how to use verb prefixes. This local cultural integration also promotes communicative competence: as several authors point out, knowing the “right” words or grammar is not enough if learners misinterpret social cues or cultural norms. By experiencing Indonesian culture vicariously through class content, BIPA students can develop intuition for what to say and do in real situations. They become more attuned to things like formality levels, gestures, or cultural references that might arise in conversation, which in turn makes their communication more fluent and appropriate.

Indonesian folklore, literature, and arts are also used as powerful media for cultural integration in BIPA classes. Stories and artistic traditions carry embedded values and worldviews that can vividly illustrate Indonesian culture to outsiders. Several studies have tapped into these resources. Zainy et al. [5], for instance, explored using the beloved folk tale *Timun Mas* (the story of a girl born from a golden cucumber) as a medium for cultural learning in BIPA. Through text analysis, they identified moral values like loyalty, courage, and justice in the *Timun Mas* narrative. These values reflect broader principles in Indonesian society, and by discussing the tale in class, students not only practised reading comprehension but also engaged with these cultural concepts. Zainy et al. [5] argue that incorporating folklore provides a relatable, story-based framework that makes cultural lessons more memorable. Students can connect emotionally with the characters and plot, which helps them internalize the language and its cultural subtext simultaneously. Similarly, Azizah, Sukmawan, and Khasanah [22] drew on a ritual dance tradition from East Java known as *SodoranTengger* to enrich their BIPA instruction. They incorporated the traditional dance and its accompanying fairy tales as teaching materials, effectively turning a local ceremony into a classroom activity. Not only did the students learn vocabulary and expressions related to dance and storytelling, but they also got a window into Tenggerese cosmology and social rituals. This innovative use of a performing art introduced an element of fun and novelty into the class, and at the same time functioned as a form of cultural diplomacy – bringing a lesser-known Indonesian cultural practice to an international audience of learners. Another creative example comes from Andriana, Suyatno, and Mulyono [23], who leveraged a contemporary children’s storybook called *Dongeng Cinta Budaya* (“Folklore Love of Culture”) as BIPA teaching material. This book is a compilation of short stories aimed at Indonesian children, but it is rich in cultural content from various regions. In its pages, BIPA students encountered everything from the West Javanese *angklung* instrument and folk songs like *ManukDadali*, to Balinese *Pendet* dance and the famous Kuta Beach in Bali, to traditional games (*congklak*) and iconic



garments like *batik* and *ondel-ondel* puppets from Betawi culture. The researchers had students read and discuss these stories, and they augmented the experience with multimedia presentations of the music, dances, or foods mentioned, following a contextual teaching and learning approach. This immersive storytelling technique proved effective in inviting learners to engage with the language in an authentic way: students were not just parsing Indonesian sentences in the abstract; they were absorbing bits of Indonesia's diverse heritage at the same time. The conclusion from this study was that such culturally rich materials greatly enhanced learner motivation and made the class more *holistic*—students felt they were learning “the real Indonesia”, not just textbook dialogues. In a more skills-specific context, Yulianeta and Amandangi [24] showed that culture can be integrated even into writing exercises. They conducted a three-month program at the Indonesian Embassy in London where BIPA students learned to write descriptive texts by describing Indonesian *batik* patterns and the cultural significance behind them. This task required students to acquire relevant adjectives and narrative skills in Indonesian, but the twist was that they were describing something inherently cultural—the colors, motifs, and history of batik textiles. The students reportedly became very engaged; writing about a tangible cultural object like batik gave them a concrete topic and sparked discussions about Indonesian identity and symbolism in class. As a result, the students not only improved their Indonesian writing proficiency but also came away with a deeper appreciation for a famous aspect of Indonesian heritage (batik was even recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage). These varied examples illustrate how integrating folklore, arts, and cultural products into BIPA learning can make the language come alive. Rather than learning in a cultural vacuum, students connect words to images, stories, and practices that carry emotional and intellectual resonance.

Food and culinary traditions have emerged as particularly effective conduits of cultural learning in BIPA classes. The old saying *food is a universal language* seems to hold true—sharing and discussing food engages students' senses and invites cross-cultural comparison, making it an ideal entry point into deeper cultural understanding. Several educators have experimented with using Indonesian cuisine as a teaching medium. Gunawan et al. [15] implemented a program for American students (at Yale University) that revolved around the beloved Indonesian dish *nasi goreng* (“fried rice”). In this approach, language lessons were structured in stages: first, students learned simple vocabulary and sentence patterns while cooking and tasting basic *nasi goreng*; later, as their proficiency grew, they tackled more complex Indonesian expressions and even variations of the fried rice recipe from different regions. The cultural significance of *nasi goreng*—being a comfort food with countless local twists—was used to demonstrate Indonesia's diversity (for example, students learned how Bali's version differs from Java's, etc.). This tangible, tasty context made lessons highly engaging. Qualitative observations noted that students were excited and actively participated, associating the new Indonesian words with the flavors and cooking experiences they had in class. The study concluded that a culinary-based approach can effectively combine language acquisition with cultural immersion, leading to strong retention and positive attitudes among learners. In Yogyakarta, Aji et al. [16] similarly used a regional specialty, *gudeg* (a stew of young jackfruit and coconut milk), as the focus of BIPA learning activities. They found that introducing *gudeg* in lessons (for instance, by having students watch or read about how it is prepared, discussing its sweet taste, or even tasting it if possible) significantly boosted learners' interest and engagement. Many participants reported that learning about an authentic dish made them more eager to learn the language, because it created a personal and memorable connection to Indonesian culture. Beyond the classroom, the authors argued that such culinary integration supports the “internationalization” of Indonesian—essentially cultural diplomacy—by spreading appreciation for Indonesian cuisine abroad and making the language more attractive to learners. Indeed, the theme of culinary diplomacy is explicit in Widiyanto and Rahmania's case study [17] at the University of Ez-Zitouna in Tunisia. There, BIPA instructors organized events to introduce Tunisian students to Indonesian foods like *lumpia* (“spring rolls”), *kue pukis* (“coconut milk pancakes”), and *risoles* (“vegetable-stuffed crepes”). Notably, these particular snacks were chosen because their flavors were not too alien to the local palate, increasing the likelihood that students would enjoy them. The results were striking: after tasting the Indonesian treats, many Tunisian students became curious about Indonesia and signed up for the BIPA program, expressing enthusiasm to learn the language. In this way, traditional food served as an ambassador for Indonesian culture, lowering barriers and sparking interest in a way that formal advertisements

or brochures might not. The researchers describe this as a form of “culinary diplomacy” that can complement language teaching by building goodwill and curiosity among potential learners. These findings underscore that culinary culture is a highly accessible cultural dimension for learners—it appeals universally, invites comparison with one’s own cuisine, and often leaves a lasting positive impression. By cooking, sharing, or simply talking about Indonesian dishes, students gain language skills in a natural context (food ingredients, cooking verbs, expressions of taste) and simultaneously absorb cultural information (e.g. communal dining etiquette, regional specialties, the significance of certain dishes). This multi-sensory engagement can make the BIPA class feel less like a traditional classroom and more like an intercultural exchange.

To implement culture-integrative teaching effectively, many BIPA programs have also innovated in their pedagogical design and development processes. A common thread in the literature is the use of established educational development models to create and refine culturally embedded curricula. Rofiuddin et al. [18] provide a good example: they wanted to develop a full-fledged learning model that integrates Indonesian culture, and to do so they employed the R2D2 model (Reflective, Recursive, Design, and Development). This approach, which emphasizes iterative design with stakeholder input, allowed them to collaborate with BIPA teachers and students in creating the new model. The end product included a detailed lesson plan, classroom scenarios, and even a custom textbook titled *BIPA Learning Models Containing Indonesian Culture for Intermediate Learners*. These materials covered ten thematic units (each for a 100-minute lesson) focusing on everyday cultural contexts like traditional markets or local legends, complete with authentic reading texts and exercises. Trials with students from various ASEAN countries in Malang showed the model to be effective: learners responded positively, showing improved language skills and enthusiastic engagement with the cultural content. Likewise, Goziyah et al. [25] followed a classic R&D cycle defined by Borg & Gall to produce their cross-cultural BIPA textbooks for South Korean learners in Banten. They went through stages of needs analysis, planning, initial product development, and multiple rounds of trials (expert review, practitioner teaching, and field testing). At each trial stage, feedback was gathered on aspects like content relevance, language level, cultural appropriateness, and layout. The iterative revisions led to a final textbook comprising six units (covering greetings, traditional clothing, musical instruments, leisure activities, cultural values, daily routines, and arts) tailored to beginners. The evaluation results were quantifiably high: expert validators rated it ~86% feasible, teachers ~89%, and students in the field test ~92%, indicating a very high suitability for use. Mulyaningsih & Khuzaemah [19] took a similar structured approach with the 4D model (Define, Design, Develop, Disseminate) to build their Cirebon-culture-based materials. In the Define stage, they ran focus group discussions with stakeholders to pinpoint learners’ needs and relevant cultural content. During Design, they drafted lesson modules around those needs (for example, a module on Cirebon’s famous sites for learning location vocabulary, or a module on ordering local food to practise transactional dialogues). The Develop stage saw expert reviews to validate content and limited trials with an actual foreign learner in Cirebon. That trial revealed practical improvements (like the need to explain cultural references more and to include both formal and informal speech examples), which were then incorporated into the final version. Although the full Disseminate stage was not completed, the materials were considered suitable for wider use in similar contexts. These development studies show a clear commitment to evidence-based design: rather than just guessing what cultural content might work, educators are systematically testing and refining their methods to ensure that cultural integration truly benefits learning. The involvement of learners in the design process is especially noteworthy—by observing real students interacting with the culturally enriched materials, the researchers could fine-tune their approach to maximize engagement and comprehension. The result is BIPA resources that have been “culture-proofed,” so to speak, through rigorous development cycles.

How do learners respond to all these culturally enriched methods? Across the board, the literature reports positive impacts on student motivation, cultural knowledge, and even linguistic performance when culture is integrated into BIPA. Safitri et al. [13] note that introducing Indonesian culture and local wisdom in language lessons immediately increased foreign students’ interest and enthusiasm in their classes. The new cultural content provided “new experiences” for the students, breaking the monotony of rote learning and allowing them to discover Indonesia’s diversity with excitement. In turn, this enthusiasm translated into better

practical language use, as students were eager to apply what they learned in culturally relevant situations. Several studies mention that culturally informed teaching can prevent miscommunication and cultural faux pas. Students learn not just what to say in Indonesian, but how and when to say it appropriately. For example, after using materials emphasizing familiarity and politeness, Rahayu [2] found that learners were more capable of socially appropriate interactions at a basic level—they could greet, thank, and converse in a manner that Indonesian speakers found polite and friendly. This kind of cultural competence is critical; as Adnyana et al. [26] observed, sometimes “cultural errors” can hinder communication even more than grammatical errors. Their survey of BIPA students in Bali showed that nearly all participants valued learning about cultural values, and an overwhelming 96.7% agreed that using the Balinese *Tri Hita Karana* philosophy (which teaches harmony with God, nature, and people) as part of their lessons made the learning process more effective. Furthermore, when asked about specific teaching methods, those students indicated a strong preference for immersive and interactive cultural activities. Among various techniques introduced—such as interpreting cultural images, doing physical tasks like “running dictation” games, observing cultural sites, watching video demonstrations, and direct cultural immersion—the *immersion* experiences were rated most highly. This suggests that learners greatly appreciate opportunities to directly experience or simulate Indonesian culture as part of their language study, whether that means visiting a local event, tasting Indonesian food, or engaging in role-plays of cultural scenarios. Such immersive methods evidently leave a deeper impression than abstract exercises, leading to more meaningful and retained learning. Many researchers also report improved linguistic outcomes alongside cultural learning. Syamsi et al. [3] documented significant jumps in test scores after implementing their culture-based textbook, and instructors confirmed that students were more actively involved and confident in using Indonesian in class. In Rofiuddin et al.’s trial [18], students who learned with the culture-integrated model showed better mastery in using Indonesian appropriately, likely because they had practised in contextual, lifelike situations rather than contrived textbook examples. Even in less formal assessments, the feedback is telling: Gunawan et al. [15] noted in their qualitative study that students responded very positively to the culinary-based lessons, describing them as “enjoyable” and stating that it helped them remember words better because they had real-world associations (like recalling the word for “spicy” after actually tasting spicy *sambal* in the fried rice). Learners often express a sense of appreciation that the teacher is sharing Indonesian culture with them, which can strengthen the student-teacher rapport and the learners’ overall attitude toward the language. Culturally enriched BIPA classes also serve a larger purpose by acting as a form of cultural exchange or diplomacy. As Nugraheni [14] observed, the growing interest in Indonesian language in countries like Thailand and the Philippines is tied to Indonesia’s role in ASEAN and international communities. BIPA programs that integrate culture help promote mutual understanding and friendship—students not only learn Indonesian but also gain insight into the Indonesian way of life, which is invaluable in diplomatic or business contexts. In the Tunisian case, the cultural activities around food directly led to increased enrollment in BIPA, essentially furthering Indonesia’s cultural outreach in that region. Safitri et al. [13] explicitly frame cultural integration as a strategic move for “cultural diplomacy”, noting that by showcasing Indonesia’s cultural heritage in language classes, the country can strengthen its international cultural presence while simultaneously providing better education. In summary, the integration of cultural aspects into BIPA classes has been shown to enrich the learning process on multiple levels. It makes classes more engaging and enjoyable, increases student motivation, and provides authentic contexts that improve communicative competence. Students learn not just to speak Indonesian, but to speak it as Indonesians do—with an understanding of etiquette, history, humor, and values. Research across different settings (universities in Indonesia and abroad, beginner to advanced levels, various cultural themes) converges on the finding that culture-based teaching leads to more holistic and effective language learning. This approach transforms the BIPA classroom from a place of rote memorization into a living bridge between cultures, where learning a new language also means embracing a new cultural perspective. By engaging foreign students with the diverse cultural riches of Indonesia—from its folktales and foods to its philosophies and festivals—BIPA educators are not only teaching linguistic skills but also fostering cross-cultural understanding and appreciation. The result is a more immersive, meaningful, and enduring educational experience for learners of Bahasa Indonesia as a foreign language.



### **INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY INTO EDUCATION AND BIPA TEACHING**

The teaching of Indonesian to foreign speakers (BIPA) has increasingly embraced technology to enhance learning outcomes and engagement. Around the world, education is undergoing a digital transformation that emphasizes interactive, flexible, and personalized learning, and BIPA programs are part of this shift [9]. This reflects both the rising global interest in learning Indonesian and the need to modernize language instruction for the digital age. Indeed, BIPA has a strategic role in promoting Indonesian language and culture internationally, and integrating technology is seen as vital to support this mission [27]. Recent studies in BIPA contexts have documented concrete ways in which technological tools and digital resources are being used to improve language skills, motivation, and access for learners, while also identifying challenges that educators and institutions must address.

One clear finding is that BIPA instructors are already widely using technology in their teaching, particularly to develop listening and writing abilities. For example, a survey of BIPA teachers found that they have broadly adopted various technological tools for listening comprehension exercises and writing practice [8]. This adoption is viewed very positively: teachers report that using digital audio, video, and interactive writing platforms makes lessons more engaging and varied for learners. Importantly, technology provides BIPA students with richer exposure to the Indonesian language by allowing them to experience authentic spoken and written language in diverse ways [8]. Access to multimedia content and online resources means learners can hear different accents, see real-life contexts, and receive instant feedback on writing, all of which reinforce their skills. In the study by Nurramdhani et al. [8], teachers noted a marked improvement in students' listening and writing proficiency when these tools were used, confirming that technology can be an effective enhancer of core language skills. Moreover, the integration of technology not only improved measurable language abilities, but also made the learning process "more exciting", which helped sustain student interest and motivation. This is a critical outcome because motivation and engagement are key factors in successful language acquisition, especially for foreign language learners [8]. Thus, technology has a dual benefit in BIPA classes: it boosts skill development and creates a more dynamic, enjoyable learning atmosphere.

The value of technology in keeping students engaged became even more evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, when BIPA programs—like most educational programs—had to move online. A study by Marlini [10] chronicles how a BIPA course in an Indonesian university pivoted to fully online instruction using Zoom during the pandemic. This sudden transition was mandated by national policy to ensure learning continuity while in-person classes were suspended [10]. Zoom emerged as the platform of choice due to its user-friendly design and robust features for interactivity. In the BIPA online classes, Zoom's capabilities for two-way communication were essential: live video and audio allowed real-time speaking practice, and the platform supported screen-sharing for visual materials as well as text chat for written interaction [10]. The paper highlights how features like breakout rooms enabled small group discussions and role-plays, which are important for language practice, while the main session allowed full-class engagement. These features helped recreate an interactive environment akin to an in-person classroom, thereby maintaining the program's communicative focus. Students could ask questions and get feedback immediately, practice dialogues in breakout groups, and engage with multimedia content shared by the teacher—all through Zoom's interface. The implementation was not without difficulties: common challenges included technical glitches, unstable internet connections, and the learning curve for both teachers and students to master the platform's tools [10]. Some BIPA learners initially struggled with connectivity or did not know how to use functions like the virtual whiteboard or breakout room, and instructors had to spend additional time training participants in these aspects. Teachers also had to adapt their teaching style to keep students attentive on a screen, which is different from a physical classroom. Despite these obstacles, the study concluded that Zoom was an effective solution under the circumstances, enabling the BIPA class to continue with a good level of interaction and learning outcomes [10]. Students remained engaged and the essential two-way communication of language learning was preserved. This experience during the pandemic underscored the importance of technological readiness in language programs. It showed that with the right platform, remote language teaching can still be interactive and productive. It also foreshadowed how online learning platforms might continue to be used in BIPA even beyond emergency

situations, to reach learners at a distance or provide more flexible class options. In sum, both the everyday integration of tech in normal times (as noted by Nurramdhani et al. [8]) and the intensive use of online platforms during the pandemic (as in Marlina's case) demonstrate that technology has become integral to BIPA teaching, leading to more engaging learning experiences for students.

Beyond improving day-to-day class engagement, technology integration has spurred the development of new BIPA teaching materials and course designs that were not previously feasible. Several research and development projects have created digital or online BIPA materials to meet emerging needs. One such initiative focused on designing online teaching materials specifically for advanced BIPA learners (level 5) [27]. Before this project, most BIPA textbooks and modules were intended for traditional classroom use, and there was a gap in materials optimized for online learning at higher proficiency levels [27]. To address the increasing demand for online BIPA instruction, Muzaki [27] and colleagues developed a full set of digital materials using the ADDIE instructional design model. This systematic model—Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate—ensured the materials were carefully tailored and tested for the online context. In the Analyze phase, the team confirmed that students at level 5 needed resources adapted to remote learning, including content that could be self-studied or used in virtual classrooms. The Design phase produced a detailed blueprint covering four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) with appropriate topics, tasks, and assessments for each skill [27]. They deliberately included culturally rich topics and contemporary themes to keep content engaging. During development, seven thematic units were created, each unit focusing on a different theme relevant to Indonesian context—for example, one unit on natural disasters, another on historical places, and another on Indonesian cuisine [27]. Each unit was comprehensive, containing learning objectives and pre-activity warm-ups, followed by reading or listening passages, practice exercises, grammar explanations, new vocabulary lists, and even insights into Indonesian culture and customs related to the theme. By incorporating cultural notes and thematic vocabulary, the materials not only taught language in a vacuum but also gave learners contextual knowledge, which is important at higher proficiency to use the language appropriately. After creating these units, the researchers implemented them with actual BIPA learners via an online platform and collected feedback through questionnaires [27]. The evaluation results were very promising: the materials scored high on several quality dimensions, with content relevance and accuracy rated around 83%, language clarity also 83%, visual design appeal at about 92.5%, presentation/organization around 80%, and inclusion of cultural elements at 87.5% [27]. These quantitative evaluations indicate that both experts and students found the online materials to be pedagogically sound and visually engaging. Particularly noteworthy is the high score for graphics, which suggests that the digital format allowed for more attractive visuals (images, layout, even videos) than typical print textbooks. Based on this positive outcome, the study concluded the materials were suitable for use with advanced BIPA students and meet the needs of online learning [27]. It also provided concrete suggestions for further improvement, such as integrating more video media and adding assessment rubrics for teachers—features that would enhance the interactivity and ease of evaluation in an online setting [27]. This work by Muzaki [27] demonstrates how technology integration goes hand-in-hand with curriculum innovation: the shift to online learning necessitated new materials, and by carefully creating and testing these, educators can ensure that quality of instruction remains high. The project also reinforces the idea that BIPA's global mission can be supported through well-designed online content, since accessible digital materials enable more learners around the world to engage with Indonesian language and culture.

Another development effort targeted beginner-level BIPA instruction with a creative blend of cultural content and design technology. Simanjuntak et al. [11] focused on developing BIPA Level A1 teaching materials that are “charged” with North Sumatran culture, using the Canva application as the design tool. This study was motivated by two aims: first, to infuse local Indonesian culture into language teaching for foreigners, and second, to leverage modern multimedia design platforms to make materials visually appealing [11]. BIPA programs have a dual objective of teaching language and introducing Indonesian culture, so it is pedagogically effective to integrate cultural context from the start of learning [11]. The authors note that exposing learners to cultural elements (like regional traditions, foods, folklore, daily life) at the beginner stage can deepen their understanding and interest, making the language more meaningful. In this case, North Sumatra's culture was

chosen to showcase one of Indonesia's many cultural landscapes, giving learners a taste of the country's diversity early on [11]. For example, lessons might include simple texts or vocabulary about North Sumatran traditional clothing, famous landmarks in Medan, or local cuisine, thereby teaching basic language (colors, numbers, greetings) in a cultural frame. To create the materials, the researchers used Canva—a popular graphic design platform—to produce worksheets and visual aids that are colorful, engaging, and tailored to the content [11]. Canva made it possible for educators with limited graphic design background to incorporate images, infographics, and attractive layouts easily, resulting in a set of materials that are not only educationally useful but also visually stimulating. This visually rich approach is especially valuable for beginner learners, as imagery can aid comprehension and keep learners interested even when their language level is low. The paper emphasizes that such culturally enriched materials were previously scarce, so this project fills an important gap [11]. By addressing the scarcity, the study provides a model for how BIPA educators can create their own culture-based content with readily available technology. In sum, the integration of a design tool like Canva allowed the creation of innovative BIPA materials that serve a holistic purpose: they teach language fundamentals and simultaneously function as a medium for cultural exchange [11]. Learners using these resources can pick up basic Indonesian while also gaining insight into North Sumatran customs, which can increase their cultural awareness and motivation to learn more. This exemplifies how technology (here, a digital design platform) can empower teachers to craft customized, culturally rich learning experiences for foreign students.

Technology in BIPA teaching is also being used to address the specific needs of special groups of learners. One compelling example is the development of BIPA speaking modules tailored for foreign athletes in Indonesia [28]. In recent years, interest in learning Indonesian has grown among diverse international audiences—not just traditional students or expatriates, but even those in fields like sports. Putra et al. [28] point out that the BIPA program has attracted learners from sectors such as business, healthcare, the military, academia, and notably professional sports. They cite the case of Danish badminton players showing enthusiasm to learn Indonesian, which underscores the need for language resources that fit non-traditional learner groups [28]. Recognizing that foreign athletes likely have different language needs and learning contexts, this study undertook a needs analysis to design appropriate speaking materials for them. Using the ADDIE model of instructional design, the researchers first conducted a thorough Analysis phase: they gathered information from the athletes and their coaches or instructors about why these athletes wanted to learn Indonesian and what communicative situations were most relevant [28]. For example, athletes might need to learn how to give basic interviews in Indonesian, communicate with local teammates or fans, or navigate daily life during training in Indonesia. The needs analysis, which involved questionnaires or interviews, confirmed a demand for conversational Indonesian focused on practical, everyday communication rather than academic language. It also highlighted that athletes preferred flexible, self-paced learning modules that could accommodate their training schedules [28]. Armed with these insights, the team proceeded to the Design and Development phases to create an open-access BIPA speaking module targeting these needs. The resulting module included situational dialogues, sports-related vocabulary, and speaking exercises simulating scenarios an athlete would encounter [28]. The content was likely delivered through digital means—through an online module in e-learning format—to make it easily accessible. By Implementation, the module was piloted with some foreign athletes to get feedback on its relevance and difficulty. The Evaluation phase then assessed its effectiveness and gathered user responses. A key takeaway from this project is the emphasis on relevance: the study stresses that performing a detailed needs analysis is crucial for BIPA teachers when integrating technology into module design [28]. Without understanding the learners' specific context, any technological solution or content might miss the mark. In this case, technology's role was to enable the creation of a specialized curriculum (likely using multimedia resources and possibly distribution on an online platform) that directly addresses the communicative situations of a unique learner group. Putra et al. [28] conclude that such tailored modules greatly enhance learning because the learners see immediate applicability to their lives, which increases motivation and engagement. This specialization of BIPA content is made feasible by technology—for instance, video lessons or interactive speaking exercises can be developed and disseminated quickly to meet a particular group's needs. Moreover,

creating open modules suggests they intended the materials to be freely available, which technology platforms can facilitate, thus broadening access for any interested athletes worldwide. Overall, the project reflects how tech integration in BIPA is not one-size-fits-all; it can be adapted to niche domains (like sports) to support Indonesian language promotion in those circles. It aligns with the broader goal of BIPA to extend Indonesian language learning to all kinds of international audiences and showcases how digital instructional design models (like ADDIE) guide the development of effective, context-specific resources [28].

In addition to tailored modules and classroom tools, technology has opened up new modes of delivering BIPA courses entirely, such as through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). Febrianti et al. [12] report on the development of a MOOC specifically for BIPA in a business communication context. This initiative was targeted at international students at an Indonesian university (BINUS University International) but was delivered via Udemy, a global MOOC platform, making it accessible to a wider audience online [12]. The choice of platform is telling: Udemy offers features like video lectures, quizzes, discussion forums, and certificates, which are well-suited for a structured language course. The BIPA for Business Communication MOOC was designed at an intermediate level, aiming to help learners handle professional interactions in Indonesian—an area of growing importance as more foreigners engage in business in Indonesia [12]. The course development followed a 4D model (Define, Design, Develop, Disseminate), a structured process ensuring all educational needs were addressed systematically. In the Define stage, the team identified learning outcomes such as enabling students to understand business terminology in Indonesian and navigate cultural norms in business settings [12]. Then in the Design stage, they outlined the course content and activities. The MOOC ended up comprising ten distinct topics covering essential business communication scenarios—likely topics such as introductions in a meeting, making phone calls, negotiating, writing emails in Indonesian, understanding cultural etiquette in business, etc.—ensuring a comprehensive coverage of the domain [12]. Each topic was delivered primarily through video lessons that provided both visual and auditory input, crucial for language learning. These were supplemented by interactive elements: for instance, after watching a video, learners might answer quiz questions or participate in a discussion board where they could practise writing or ask questions [12]. The course also utilized announcements and note-taking features on Udemy to guide learners and highlight key points. A noteworthy aspect of this MOOC was the conscious integration of socio-cultural content alongside language instruction [12]. Business communication in a foreign language involves understanding cultural contexts—knowing how to address a superior, how to politely decline or agree, etc., in culturally appropriate ways. By including these cultural insights, the course ensured that learners were not just memorizing phrases but also developing pragmatic skills for real business interactions. After development, the MOOC underwent an expert validation process: language instructors and subject matter experts reviewed the course and gave it high marks for quality (scoring ~3.75 out of 4 on a validation scale). Such validation indicates that the course content, pedagogical approach, and use of the platform were effective and met educational standards [12]. The MOOC's success is significant because it shows how technology can massively expand the reach of BIPA instruction. Instead of a traditional class limited to 15 students in a physical room, a MOOC can enroll hundreds or thousands of learners globally who self-enroll and progress at their own pace. This aligns with the push to promote Indonesian language internationally: anyone interested in business Indonesian can join such a course online, breaking geographical barriers. The MOOC format also caters to learners who need flexibility—many may be working professionals who appreciate the on-demand nature of video lessons. Febrianti et al. [12] conclude that their MOOC provides accessible and effective language education tailored to a specific professional need (business), and it also fosters cross-cultural communication skills, since learners discuss and internalize Indonesian business culture through the course. In effect, this project harnessed a popular educational technology (MOOCs) to serve BIPA's goals, demonstrating the adaptability of language programs to modern e-learning trends.

Bringing together these various studies, it becomes evident that technology integration in BIPA classes is multifaceted, touching on classroom methodology, material development, specialized curriculum design, and new delivery platforms. Across all these facets, a consistent theme is improved student engagement and enriched learning experiences. When teachers incorporate multimedia and interactive tools, students are more

motivated and participate more actively [8]. When materials are designed with digital enhancements—whether through appealing visuals in Canva or online videos and quizzes—learners find the content more accessible and stimulating [11]; [12]. And when courses leverage online platforms like Zoom or Udemy, they maintain or even increase opportunities for interaction, practice, and feedback, which are essential for language learning [10]; [12]. These outcomes in the BIPA context mirror broader findings in educational research that technology can significantly boost student interest and involvement. For instance, studies on emerging educational technologies have found that tools like interactive software, mobile apps, or virtual environments create more engaging and adaptive learning conditions, thereby raising student motivation [29]. In the BIPA cases, engagement was evidenced by students' excitement with technology-mediated lessons (as teachers observed) and their sustained participation in online classes or courses. Immersive technologies in particular hold promise for language education: virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) can create simulated real-world scenarios where BIPA learners practise Indonesian in context, such as navigating a virtual Indonesian market or taking a tour of a cultural site. Research on VR in education indicates that such immersion can significantly enhance comprehension and retention by making learning experiential and context-rich [30]. Specifically, VR and AR have been noted to facilitate language acquisition by providing a contextual environment for practice. An AI-driven VR scenario could, for example, let a learner have a "conversation" with a virtual shopkeeper in Indonesian, offering a safe space to make mistakes and learn, much like a controlled role-play but more lifelike [31]. While the current BIPA literature reviewed above did not yet report using VR or AR in practice, it is a logical extension of integrating technology for future BIPA classes. Already, one study explicitly mentions that immersive realities, paired with AI, can elevate student motivation and memory retention in complex subjects, and language learning is identified as one area that benefits from contextual immersive practice [31]. We can anticipate that as VR equipment becomes more accessible, BIPA programs might use 360-degree videos or VR cultural simulations to deepen learners' cultural understanding and listening/speaking practice. The increased engagement from such tools would likely parallel the engagement seen with simpler tools like Zoom and Canva, but on an even more immersive level.

Another cross-cutting benefit of technology is the potential for personalization and self-paced learning, which can be particularly advantageous for BIPA students who come from various backgrounds and learn at different speeds. In a traditional classroom, a teacher might struggle to cater to a mix of learners—some picking up grammar quickly, others needing more repetition—but adaptive learning technologies can help bridge this gap. General educational research on artificial intelligence (AI) in learning shows that AI-powered platforms can tailor exercises to individual student performance, provide instant feedback, and thus keep each learner in their optimal zone of challenge [32]. In the context of language learning, an AI-based tutoring system could, for instance, adjust the difficulty of listening exercises based on how well a student understands previous ones, or it could identify that a particular student frequently makes errors with, say, Indonesian verb affixes and then provide extra practice in that area. The literature suggests that AI has strong potential to personalize education and increase efficiency by doing this kind of adaptive scaffolding [14]. Although the BIPA studies discussed have not yet fully incorporated AI-based personalization, they did incorporate elements of tailoring to learners' needs—for example, Putra et al. [28] tailored content to athletes' needs through a needs analysis (a human-driven form of personalization), and Febrianti et al. [12] positioned their MOOC at a specific level (intermediate) with a diagnostic approach to content. Going forward, BIPA programs could adopt adaptive learning software for drilling vocabulary or grammar, which would allow students to progress at their own pace outside of class. This would complement in-class learning by ensuring each student gets sufficient practice on their weak points. The push toward such personalized learning paths in higher education is already documented, with AI providing instant feedback and dynamically adjusting content difficulty [14]. For BIPA, this might mean a shift towards more student-centered learning, where technology handles routine practice and feedback, freeing class time for communicative activities. Indeed, modern educational technology is credited with shifting classrooms from a teacher-centered, lecture model to a student-centered model where learners actively interact with materials and each other [33]. In BIPA teaching, this shift is evident in how technology encourages students to learn by doing—e.g. writing on a shared Google Doc, participating in online quizzes, or practicing



speaking via language apps—rather than passively listening to a teacher. BIPA instructors become facilitators guiding tech-enhanced activities rather than sole knowledge providers, which aligns with the worldwide trend of technology making education more learner-driven [33]. This trend is beneficial, as language learning thrives in interactive, student-centered environments where learners use the language actively.

While the advantages of integrating technology into BIPA teaching are compelling, researchers also caution that there are challenges and limitations that need careful management. One recurring challenge is ensuring equitable access to technology for all students. If some BIPA learners have limited internet bandwidth or older devices, they might struggle to participate fully in online activities or access multimedia content. Nurramdhani et al. [8] noted that issues of access and technical difficulties can pose obstacles in BIPA learning. For example, a student in a remote area might not be able to stream video lessons smoothly, or a class might be disrupted by power outages or platform outages. Additionally, some learners or even teachers may feel overwhelmed by too many new tools. There can be resistance to change among educators who are used to traditional methods—a phenomenon observed broadly in educational tech adoption [29]. Continuous professional development and training are required to help BIPA teachers become proficient with new software, learning management systems, or emerging tools [29]. The studies suggest that teachers must adapt to new teaching methods and tools, which implies a learning curve and the need for institutional support [8]. For instance, implementing a MOOC or a Canva-designed curriculum likely required training workshops for instructors to learn how to create content on those platforms. Where such support is lacking, teachers might not fully utilize the available tech or might use it sub-optimally. Another challenge highlighted, especially with advanced technologies like VR and AR, is the high cost and resource requirement [30]. Not every BIPA program can afford VR headsets or custom-developed language learning software. High costs of equipment and content creation were pointed out as major barriers to adopting immersive technologies in education [31]. Collaboration with tech providers or seeking funding would be necessary to overcome this, as suggested by Al Balushi et al. [31], but until then, many programs may have to stick to more accessible tools. Furthermore, even when technology is available, its effective integration requires aligning it with sound pedagogy. Simply having interactive whiteboards or online quizzes does not automatically improve learning; they must be part of a thoughtful lesson plan that blends traditional and modern methods. A study by Харченко et al. [34] argues that the most effective approach is to combine innovative digital tools with the strengths of conventional teaching, rather than replacing one with the other. In BIPA contexts, this could mean blending face-to-face cultural activities (like cooking Indonesian food together for a cultural lesson) with online research or multimedia presentations, to get the best of both worlds. Over-reliance on technology without human touch or without cultural immersion opportunities could diminish the learning experience, so balance is key [34]. Challenges specific to language learning tech include ensuring authenticity of materials and interaction. For example, automated pronunciation feedback by AI might not always catch nuances that a human teacher would, or a culturally-themed app might oversimplify cultural nuances. Therefore, educators need to be critical and selective about tech tools, using them to complement rather than completely substitute real practice and exposure. There are also concerns about data privacy and ethical use of AI in education. If BIPA programs start using AI tutors or collecting student performance data, they must handle that data responsibly and ensure the AI's feedback is accurate and unbiased. Ifraheem et al. [32] found that issues of user experience, adaptability, and accuracy in AI systems were challenges that need addressing for AI to deliver its full benefits. For BIPA, this implies that any AI-based learning app used should be evaluated for how well it actually understands Indonesian language input (e.g., speech recognition for Indonesian accents) and how user-friendly it is for learners who may not be tech-savvy. The existence of these challenges does not negate the benefits; rather, it points to areas where support and improvement are necessary. The literature emphasizes fostering a culture open to change, allocating adequate resources, and training teachers continuously as strategies to overcome many of these hurdles [29]. In practical terms, institutions running BIPA programs should invest in reliable IT infrastructure (so online classes run smoothly), provide workshops for instructors on digital pedagogy, and perhaps develop low-bandwidth versions of materials for students with limited internet. By proactively tackling issues of access, training, and balanced integration, BIPA programs can ensure that the technology truly serves its pedagogical goals.

In conclusion, the integration of technology into BIPA teaching has proven to be a game-changer, bringing about more engaging, effective, and far-reaching language learning experiences. Concrete evidence from various studies illustrates that BIPA instructors are leveraging technology to enhance traditional teaching and to innovate beyond it. Technologies like video conferencing, multimedia content, and online learning platforms have enabled BIPA classes to maintain rich interaction (even during a pandemic) and to cater to a global audience. The development of specialized digital materials and courses—from culturally-infused Canva materials at the A1 level [11] to advanced online modules for level 5 [27] and even business-oriented MOOCs [12]—shows a robust response to the diverse needs of learners. These efforts align with global educational trends, yet remain focused on BIPA's unique context of language-and-culture teaching. Importantly, technology has helped shift BIPA pedagogy towards more student-centered learning: students are actively listening, speaking, reading, and writing through interactive tools rather than passively receiving information. Motivation and engagement have increased as learners find digital activities more exciting and relevant [8]. Additionally, the flexibility of online resources means BIPA programs can reach learners who were previously inaccessible—athletes on the move, international business students, or enthusiasts worldwide—thereby expanding the impact of Indonesian language promotion. At the same time, a cautious understanding of challenges ensures that educators do not treat technology as a panacea but as a powerful aid that must be implemented thoughtfully. By balancing innovative tech with proven teaching practices and by addressing issues like access and teacher readiness, BIPA programs can fully harness the benefits of technology. Future prospects for tech in BIPA are bright: as tools like AI and VR become more mainstream in education, BIPA classes could incorporate adaptive learning paths and immersive cultural simulations, further enriching the learning process. Ultimately, the integration of technology in BIPA teaching is not about using gadgets for novelty's sake—it is about enhancing language acquisition and cultural learning in ways that make the process more effective, inclusive, and enjoyable for foreign learners of Indonesian. The literature reviewed provides a wealth of examples and evidence that when applied wisely, technology indeed serves as a catalyst for better learning outcomes and a more vibrant BIPA learning community.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This article employs a qualitative and illustrative-descriptive methodology, rooted in applied linguistics and intercultural education. The focus is not on collecting empirical classroom data, but rather on formulating concrete, pedagogically informed models for integrating Indonesian cultural content with digital technologies in BIPA (*Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing* or “Bahasa Indonesia for foreign speakers”) classes. The objective is to demonstrate, through detailed examples, how Indonesian culture and technology can be introduced simultaneously in beginner and intermediate BIPA learning contexts.

The structure of the article was developed based on two interrelated strands of literature: (1) studies on cultural representation, sociocultural competence, and authentic material use in BIPA, and (2) studies on digital technology and its pedagogical implementation in language learning, including mobile learning, audiovisual content, and virtual collaboration. These two strands were synthesised to identify intersections where cultural authenticity and digital tools could be pedagogically combined. The literature review thus functions as the foundation for the subsequent discussion, which provides seven thematically structured examples of how culture and technology can be integrated in practice.

The method of analysis follows a conceptual-descriptive approach, whereby each selected cultural domain is discussed in relation to specific digital strategies that support its introduction in the classroom. The seven domains selected are: (1) culinary culture, (2) traditional houses and architecture, (3) festivals and ceremonies, (4) performing arts (including *wayang*), (5) traditional games, (6) traditional clothing, and (7) culture-bound metaphors. These domains were chosen because they reflect key dimensions of Indonesian culture as outlined by BIPA practitioners and cultural institutions, and because they offer tangible, multimodal content that can be adapted to a range of teaching media.

Each example is treated in a case-based manner: representative cultural elements—such as *batik* for traditional clothing or *rumah gadang* for architecture—are selected and discussed in detail to illustrate how they can be taught through digital means. The examples aim to represent different regions and practices across

Indonesia, thus highlighting the linguistic and cultural diversity that BIPA learners are likely to encounter. While each section includes multiple cultural references, only one or two are explored in depth to maintain focus and clarity.

The technological strategies presented are grounded in the current capabilities and realities of BIPA classrooms, particularly in international contexts where teachers and students may not have physical access to Indonesia. Tools such as interactive video platforms, digital exhibitions, virtual field trips, gamified language apps, collaborative presentation software, and cultural heritage platforms are introduced as realistic solutions to bridge geographical distance and enhance engagement. In all cases, the integration of technology is framed not as an end in itself, but as a medium to support sociocultural learning and communicative competence in Indonesian.

The section on culture-bound metaphors draws on existing research on Indonesian metaphorical language, particularly in cognitive semantics and linguistic relativity. Two key sources are used to support this analysis: Huszka [35], which explores metaphors of anger in Bahasa Indonesia, and Huszka et al. [36], which investigates the metaphorical construction of identity through Malay (and Indonesian) proverbs. These works serve as the linguistic basis for proposing classroom applications that use digital annotation, semantic mapping, and corpus-based analysis to engage students in understanding metaphors as culturally situated expressions.

While the discussion provides theoretically grounded teaching ideas, the article does not claim to evaluate or measure the effectiveness of these proposals. Rather, the approach is exploratory, illustrative, and conceptual in nature. The aim is to offer curriculum developers, BIPA instructors, and language education researchers a set of integrated models that can be tested, adapted, and expanded in diverse teaching contexts. The scenarios are designed to be modular, scalable, and culturally sensitive, and can be applied to both online and face-to-face BIPA learning environments.

In conclusion, this methodology combines literature-based analysis with illustrative, practice-oriented design. By grounding the discussion in authentic cultural domains and connecting them to feasible digital tools, the article seeks to provide actionable insights into how BIPA instruction can evolve to meet the demands of a global, digitally mediated, and culturally rich learning landscape of Bahasa Indonesia.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

##### CULINARY CULTURE

The integration of traditional Indonesian cuisine into BIPA classes represents one of the most accessible and culturally rich strategies for embedding authentic content into language learning. Culinary culture is immediately relatable and provides not only lexical and grammatical input, but also introduces learners to deeper cultural meanings, values, and regional diversity. More importantly, food-related content can be easily mediated through widely available digital tools, even in international contexts where direct access to Indonesian dishes is limited. This makes it particularly suitable for beginner and intermediate BIPA learners studying the language outside Indonesia.

Traditional Indonesian dishes such as *rendang* (“slow-cooked spicy beef from West Sumatra”), *gudeg* (“young jackfruit stew from Yogyakarta”), *pempek* (“savory fishcake from Palembang”), or *tumpeng* (“a ceremonial cone-shaped rice dish”) offer entry points into different ethnic and cultural communities across the archipelago. Beyond the dishes themselves, food also communicates symbolic values—*tumpeng*, for example, is closely tied to communal celebrations and spiritual offerings. Through food, learners begin to understand not only what Indonesians eat, but how meals reflect social norms, religious practices, regional identities, and collective values such as *kebersamaan* (“togetherness”) and *gotong royong* (“mutual cooperation”).

From a pedagogical perspective, culinary topics offer rich opportunities for developing both receptive and productive skills in the BIPA classroom. Listening and reading tasks can revolve around recipes, interviews with chefs, cooking vlogs, or short documentaries. Speaking and writing tasks can include describing recipes, giving instructions, comparing different national dishes, or reflecting on food-related experiences. However, what can transform these tasks from routine exercises into moments of immersive intercultural learning is the possible integration of technology.

One effective way to introduce Indonesian culinary culture is through curated video materials. Many Indonesian culinary channels on YouTube, such as those featuring traditional cooking processes in rural villages or street food reviews in urban centres, are freely accessible and can be repurposed for education. Teachers can select a short clip that demonstrates the making of *rendang*, for example, and play it in class with Indonesian subtitles enabled. The vocabulary of cooking verbs (*memotong*, *menggoreng*, *merebus*, *mencampur*—“cutting, frying, boiling, mixing”) can be introduced contextually, while students also observe culturally specific cooking tools such as the *ulekan* (“stone mortar and pestle”) or *dandang* (“steamer pot”). This approach not only expands vocabulary but reinforces cultural literacy through visual exposure.

To encourage active engagement with these materials, teachers can use interactive video annotation tools such as Edpuzzle or PlayPosit. These platforms allow instructors to embed comprehension questions, vocabulary prompts, or grammar checkpoints directly into video segments. For instance, a scene where the cook says, “*Kita masak sampai bumbu nyameresap*” (“We are cooking it until the spices are absorbed.”), can be paused to insert a prompt asking learners to interpret the phrase *meresap* in context, or to match it with its closest synonym. This strategy ensures that learners are not passive viewers but are actively processing both language and culture.

For production-focused activities, collaborative platforms like Padlet or Google Slides can be used to create virtual recipe books. In small groups, students can research a traditional dish from a chosen region and prepare a digital recipe presentation in Indonesian. Each entry could include the name of the dish, a list of ingredients (with local alternatives if needed), step-by-step instructions, and notes on cultural relevance. These presentations can be enriched with images or even short self-recorded videos of students attempting the recipe at home. This project format not only reinforces language structures (imperatives, sequential connectors, quantifiers) but fosters cross-cultural reflection, particularly when learners compare Indonesian cooking with their own culinary traditions.

Another strategy is to use digital storytelling to explore the cultural background of foods. Students can be assigned a dish like *nasi tumpeng* and asked to create a narrated slideshow (using tools like Canva, VoiceThread, or even PowerPoint with audio) that tells the story of the dish—its origin, how it is used in ceremonies, the symbolism of its shape, and the meanings of the accompanying side dishes. In doing so, learners practise summarising and sequencing, while also exploring concepts such as *syukuran* (“gratitude feasts”), *adat* (“custom”), and *doabersama* (“communal supplication”). Teachers may provide scaffolding by pre-teaching relevant vocabulary and phrases, and by supplying culturally authentic reference materials.

When possible, hybrid or face-to-face sessions can include cooking demonstrations, either live or recorded by guest speakers from Indonesian communities abroad. Instructors may invite Indonesian chefs, cultural ambassadors, or Indonesian diaspora students to present their favourite traditional dishes. These sessions can be streamed via Zoom and recorded for later classroom use. Learners can prepare questions in advance and practise conversational structures such as *bagaimana cara membuat...?* (“How do you make...?”), *berapa lama dimasak?* (“How long is it cooked?”), and *apakah bumbu utamanya?* (“What are the main spices?”). Instructors can follow up with post-session reflection tasks or vocabulary games to consolidate learning.

In more advanced classes, food-related discussions can be used to prompt cultural comparisons and deeper reflection on food taboos, regional differences, or values surrounding hospitality. For example, a discussion on *rendang* might lead to a broader examination of Minangkabau matrilineal culture and communal eating practices. Although these discussions are more appropriate for intermediate learners, teachers can simplify input texts and adjust questions to make the content accessible at lower levels.

For assessment, short video tasks can be especially effective. Students may be asked to record a brief cooking show segment where they prepare a simple dish (real or imagined), describe the process, and comment on the cultural background. This type of task combines speaking, vocabulary recall, and narrative sequencing in an authentic format. For those without access to Indonesian ingredients, the focus can be shifted to description and comparison: for example, “how would you prepare this dish in your home country?” or “what is a similar dish in your culture?”

It is important to acknowledge that not all learners will be familiar or comfortable with Indonesian ingredients or culinary customs. Therefore, the role of the teacher is to frame food not as something exotic or alien, but as a bridge for empathy and curiosity. Teachers should present cultural content with sensitivity, encourage learners to ask questions, and create an open and safe space for comparative dialogue. This is particularly important when dealing with food practices tied to religious observance (e.g., halal food), fasting rituals, or ceremonial offerings.

The use of online quizzes, vocabulary apps (such as Quizizz or Wordwall), and image-based flashcards can further support lexical acquisition. These tools can be customised to reinforce kitchen-related vocabulary, ingredients, or procedural verbs. Repetition through games also provides lower-stakes, engaging reinforcement, especially for younger or less confident learners.

Finally, the integration of food-related idioms or expressions—such as *bagaimakanbuahsimalakama* (“like eating the fruit of Simalakama”, a metaphor for a no-win situation)—can provide cultural and linguistic depth. These idioms are best introduced after learners have encountered the literal and cultural contexts of the related food, allowing them to see how language reflects experience and worldview.

While it is currently not feasible to use AR (augmented reality) for culinary exploration in BIPA due to a lack of relevant content, the existing landscape of digital resources is already rich and sufficient for meaningful integration. What is most crucial is not technological novelty, but pedagogical intentionality: teachers must carefully select tools and tasks that support language objectives while embedding cultural knowledge. With thoughtful implementation, food-based content can help BIPA learners acquire not only vocabulary and grammar, but also the cultural fluency needed to navigate Indonesian social life more confidently.

In sum, traditional Indonesian cuisine provides an ideal thematic focus for culturally integrated BIPA instruction. It allows teachers to leverage digital media and collaborative tools in ways that are pedagogically sound, culturally authentic, and highly engaging. By using cooking videos, collaborative recipe creation, digital storytelling, and interactive games, instructors can transform food from a textbook topic into an immersive cultural journey—one that nourishes both the language and the learner.

## TRADITIONAL HOUSES AND ARCHITECTURE

Introducing traditional Indonesian houses and architectural features in BIPA classes provides learners not only with linguistic enrichment but with a visual and conceptual understanding of regional identity, socio-cultural organisation, and indigenous worldviews. Each *rumahadat* (“traditional house”) in Indonesia encapsulates a unique blend of form, function, and symbolism, tied to local customs (*adat*), belief systems, ecological settings, and historical trajectories. With over 17,000 islands and hundreds of ethnic groups, Indonesian architecture is deeply diverse—from the soaring roof of the *Tongkonan* in Toraja to the carved front façade of the *Joglo* in Central Java and the layered construction of the *Rumah Gadang* in West Sumatra. As pedagogical content, these architectural styles serve as rich vehicles for cultural immersion and vocabulary acquisition, particularly when paired with accessible digital media.

The teaching of traditional houses in BIPA contexts can be approached from multiple angles: descriptive language (shapes, materials, spatial arrangements), cultural meaning (ritual use, symbolism, community life), and regional identity (ethnolinguistic variation, topographical adaptation). For beginner learners, the focus might lie in basic descriptive and locational phrases—*atapnyatinggi, rumahinidarikayu, adaempatitiang di depanrumah* (“the roof is high, this house is made of wood, there are four pillars in front of the house”). Intermediate learners can explore spatial organisation (*ruangtamu, dapur, lumbung*—“living room, kitchen, granary”, etc.), contrastive structures (*berbedadenganrumah di negara saya*) (“it is different from houses in my country”), and explanations of function (*digunakanuntukpacaraadat*) (“it is used for traditional ceremonies”). To contextualise these language goals, a well-designed sequence of media-based tasks is essential.

The most straightforward and effective way to bring traditional houses into the BIPA classroom is through curated visual resources. Teachers can make use of photographic databases, cultural documentaries, or virtual museum exhibitions that present detailed imagery of traditional houses across Indonesian regions. Using



platforms like Google Slides or Canva, instructors can create interactive digital galleries that include captioned images of the *Rumah Gadang*, *Tongkonan*, *Joglo*, *Sasak lumbung*, or *Balinese compound*. Each image can be accompanied by a short paragraph in Indonesian, written at the target learner level, describing the house's appearance and cultural function. Learners are then invited to create their own annotated galleries or write simple descriptive texts using sentence models.

For a more interactive approach, teachers can guide students in digital “walkthroughs” using video clips or 360° house tours available on platforms such as YouTube or those developed by Indonesian cultural preservation agencies. For example, a class can virtually visit a *Tongkonan* in Tana Toraja and observe the buffalo horns displayed at the front as a sign of status and lineage. The teacher can prepare pre-watching tasks that introduce key vocabulary (*ukiran*, *bambu*, *atap pelana*, *teras*—“carvings, bamboo, saddle roof, terrace”), and post-watching tasks that ask learners to describe the function of each part of the house. These tasks can be scaffolded by matching activities, sequencing steps in traditional house construction, or categorising vocabulary into themes such as materials, shapes, and household areas.

In more collaborative settings, learners can be encouraged to produce simple presentations comparing their own house or a traditional house from their country with an Indonesian *rumahadat*. Using Google Slides or Padlet, each student can create a visual comparison with basic linguistic structures: *Rumah sayamemilikijendelakaca, tetapirumah Toraja memilikiukirankayu* (“My house has glass windows, but a Toraja house has wooden carvings”).

These comparative projects foster the development of both grammatical structures and intercultural awareness, as learners are required to reflect on what constitutes “home” in different cultural settings. Even simple sentences that compare height, materials, or interior layout can serve as bridges for meaningful reflection and deeper vocabulary retention.

To further support learners' understanding of cultural meaning, instructors can incorporate simple ethnographic narratives about the rituals associated with traditional houses. For instance, in Toraja, the *Tongkonan* is not merely a residence but a sacred ancestral house that plays a central role in ceremonial life, particularly funerary rites. While these concepts are complex, they can be simplified into intermediate-level texts using graded language: *Tongkonanadalahrumahadat orang Toraja* (“Tongkonan is the traditional house of the Toraja people”). *Rumah inipentingkarenadigunakanuntukupacarakematian dan simbolkeluargabesar*. (“This house is important because it is used for funeral ceremonies and as a symbol of the extended family.”) Teachers can pair such texts with vocabulary glossaries and simple comprehension questions to ensure both cultural understanding and reading fluency.

Group projects that simulate the design of a traditional house can also be incorporated. Using drawing tools such as Jamboard or collaborative whiteboard apps, students can design a basic model of a *rumahadat* based on templates provided by the instructor. Each student in the group can be assigned one part of the house to describe and label in Indonesian. For example, one learner describes the roof, another the materials, another the household objects inside. This division of labour encourages cooperation, speaking practice, and the use of concrete nouns, adjectives, and spatial prepositions in context.

Another engaging activity is the *Guess the House* game, which can be adapted into a quiz format using Kahoot or Wordwall. The instructor prepares descriptions of various houses—e.g., *Rumah inimiliki atap sepertitandukkerbau dan berasal dari Sulawesi Selatan* (“This house has a roof shaped like buffalo horns and comes from South Sulawesi”)—and learners choose the correct house among options like *Tongkonan*, *Joglo*, or *Rumah Gadang*. This game reinforces regional knowledge, reading comprehension, and associative recall, while also breaking the monotony of textbook-based lessons.

Students can also be asked to watch short interviews or video reports featuring local craftsmen, house restorers, or cultural historians. These clips can be selected based on audio clarity and language accessibility. Teachers can extract simple dialogue or monologue segments for transcription, gap-filling, or summarisation exercises. Where appropriate, subtitles can be added by the instructor or using tools such as Amara. Exposure to authentic speech patterns, even in simplified form, deepens listening skills and provides learners with real-world language in cultural context.

When dealing with students who have a background or interest in architecture, anthropology, or heritage studies, teachers can design thematic modules that explore the concept of sustainable architecture and indigenous knowledge systems. For instance, learners can read simplified texts about how traditional houses are adapted to the local environment—*Rumah Gadang* memiliki atap tinggi agar udaranya masuk dan membuat rumah sejuk (“Rumah Gadang has a high roof to let air in and keep the house cool”). This allows for the integration of environmental vocabulary, causal structures, and discourse connectors while grounding grammar practice in meaningful cultural knowledge.

While full-scale virtual reality is not yet practical in BIPA settings, teachers can simulate immersive exploration by using maps to link traditional houses to specific provinces. With Google Maps or simple infographic tools, students can click on a province and see its traditional house, followed by an introductory paragraph and vocabulary list. These maps can be developed by teachers or as class projects, with students contributing short texts about each house. The end result can be a collaborative digital “atlas” of *rumah adat* written in Indonesian by BIPA learners themselves.

Lastly, architecture-themed cultural discussions can also be used as prompts for writing reflections. Teachers can ask: “*Apa rumah adat yang paling menarik menurut Anda? Mengapa?*” (“Which traditional house do you find most interesting? Why?”) or “*Jika Anda bisa tinggal di salah satu rumah adat, mana yang Anda pilih?*” (“If you could live in one of the traditional houses, which one would you choose?”) Such prompts promote the use of opinion structures, justification clauses, and thematic vocabulary while encouraging personal engagement with cultural material.

Through these varied yet feasible strategies, the traditional houses of Indonesia can be transformed from static images into dynamic learning resources. Their visual distinctiveness, symbolic richness, and regional variety make them ideal for language teaching that combines descriptive grammar, intercultural awareness, and spatial vocabulary. When supported by technology—such as collaborative documents, image annotation, video content, and online mapping tools—these architectural forms provide learners with both linguistic input and meaningful cultural insight.

Rather than presenting Indonesian culture as a collection of abstract facts, the teaching of *rumah adat* invites learners to inhabit perspectives: to see, name, compare, and reflect on the meanings of home, space, and tradition. For BIPA learners, this means gaining not only lexical competence, but also a conceptual map of Indonesian diversity—one in which language and culture are mutually reinforcing. Carefully designed digital integration allows this cultural content to be accessible, interactive, and memorable—even for students far from Indonesia.

## FESTIVALS AND CEREMONIES

Festivals and ceremonies form the living pulse of Indonesian cultural life, offering a deeply symbolic yet concrete pathway into the values, beliefs, and communal practices of diverse ethnic and religious groups. In the BIPA classroom, this content not only captures student interest but provides a rich linguistic environment for contextualising both vocabulary and grammar. From *Idul Fitri* (“Festival of breaking the fast at the end of Ramadan”) and *Nyepi* (“Balinese day of silence”) to *Cap Go Meh* (“Fifteenth day of the Lunar New Year”), *Grebeg Maulud* (“Javanese celebration of the Prophet Muhammad’s birthday”), and *Ngaben* (“Balinese Hindu cremation ceremony”), Indonesia’s festive calendar is marked by vibrant rituals that reflect Islamic, Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, Confucian, and indigenous traditions. Importantly, these events are frequently represented in popular media, community videos, and news footage, making them ideal candidates for technology-enhanced teaching.

The pedagogical value of festivals lies in their ability to unite language and culture in a single narrative. A lesson about *Lebaran* (*Idul Fitri*) is not just about the date and rituals—it also teaches culturally embedded phrases like *mudik* (“homecoming tradition”), *maaf lahir batin* (“I seek forgiveness for all my mistakes, in word and deed”), *ketupat* (“rice cake in woven palm leaf”), and *silaturahmi* (“maintaining and nurturing social or family ties”). Learners can grasp the structure of greetings, imperatives, and polite forms of request while exploring gift exchanges, family visits, or clothing customs. Similarly, *Nyepi*, the Balinese day of

silence, introduces learners to notions of ritual fasting (*tapa brata*), environmental respect, and religious philosophy, all of which can be scaffolded through appropriate language activities.

To begin integrating this content, teachers can build multimedia entry points into specific festivals using short videos, digital storytelling, or annotated slides. For example, a lesson on *Cap Go Meh*—the fifteenth day after Chinese New Year—can be introduced through a short video showing a *barongsai* (lion dance) performance in Singkawang. Students are asked to watch the video (with or without subtitles, depending on proficiency) and answer comprehension questions such as: *Di mana festival ini berlangsung? Siapa yang ikut? Apa yang mereka bawa?* (“Where does this festival take place? Who participates? What do they bring?”) Follow-up tasks can involve sequencing events from the video, describing costumes, or identifying key objects such as lanterns, food offerings, and musical instruments.

Platforms like Edpuzzle or Flip can be used to create embedded questions or reflective tasks within festival footage. For instance, in a video documenting *Ngaben* (Balinese cremation ceremony), teachers can pause at points showing the cremation tower (*bade*) or sacred preparations, and ask students to describe what they see or predict the next step. Vocabulary related to emotion, ritual, colour, and movement can be integrated naturally. Even beginner learners can use simple sentence frames like *Saya melihat orang membawa...*, *Ada api besar*, or *Pakaian mereka berwarna putih* (“I see people carrying..., There is a big fire or Their clothes are white”) to express observations.

Digital slideshows or visual timelines also offer powerful tools for mapping out ceremonial sequences. A class exploring *Sekaten*—the Javanese celebration of the Prophet Muhammad’s birthday—might construct a collaborative timeline on Google Slides or Padlet, identifying key events such as the *gunungan* parade (“mountain-shaped offering made of food, vegetables, rice, or snacks”), traditional gamelan performance, or *keraton* (“royal palace in Javanese culture”) involvement. Each student can be assigned one event to describe in Indonesian, adding images and text. This reinforces both sequencing structures (*lalu, kemudian, setelah itu*—“then, afterwards, after that”) and topic-specific vocabulary. Additionally, learners are exposed to regional variation in Islamic observance, which broadens their sociocultural understanding.

For productive skills, festivals serve as ideal contexts for structured oral presentations. Students can research one Indonesian festival and deliver a short talk using a visual aid. The presentation might include the name and date of the festival, its religious or cultural significance, main activities, special foods, and clothing associated with the event. Tools like Canva, PowerPoint, or Genially can support students in producing clear, visually appealing materials. Teachers can provide language scaffolds to support organisation: *Pertama, saya akan menjelaskan tentang...* (“First, I will explain about...”), *Kemudian, acara penting adalah...* (“Then, the important event is...”), *Terakhir, orang-orang biasanya...* (“Finally, people usually...”) Such activities integrate vocabulary, syntax, and cross-cultural reflection.

An additional strategy is to use virtual event participation as a form of experiential learning. Indonesian embassies and diaspora communities abroad sometimes livestream or upload recordings of festivals such as *Grebeg Maulud*, *Pesta Rakyat* (“People’s festival”), or *Ramadan Bazaars*. BIPA learners can be invited to attend a virtual event asynchronously and complete a worksheet tailored to their level. Questions might include: *Apa nama acara ini? Siapa yang ikut? Apa musiknya? Apa yang dimakan?* (“What is the name of this event? Who participates? What music is played? What food is eaten?”) For intermediate learners, reflection prompts can be added: *Apa perbedaan festival ini dengan festival di negara Anda?* or *Apa yang Anda pelajari tentang budaya Indonesia?* (“What is the difference between this festival and festivals in your country? or What did you learn about Indonesian culture?”)

Teachers can also develop thematic vocabulary games or quizzes after each festival-focused lesson. Platforms like Wordwall, Quizizz, or Blooket can be used to reinforce new vocabulary such as *arak-arakan*, *upacara*, *persembahan*, *petasan* (“parade, ceremony, offering, firecrackers”), or *doa bersama*. These games encourage repetition and retrieval in a low-pressure format. For example, a matching activity might pair images of *gunungan*, *balokapi* (“torches”), or *topeng barong* (“barong mask”) with their Indonesian terms. Timed quizzes can add a layer of excitement while reinforcing spelling and meaning.

Written tasks also gain cultural depth when connected to ceremonies. Beginner students might be assigned to write a simple invitation to a *syukuran* (“thanksgiving ceremony”), using set phrases: *Kami mengundang Anda untuk hadir dalam acara syukuran kami pada hari Sabtu...* (“We invite you to attend our thanksgiving celebration on Saturday...”) More advanced learners could be tasked with writing a diary entry about attending *Nyepi* or *Lebaran*, including feelings, activities, and observations. These writing tasks promote narrative sequencing, emotional vocabulary, and cross-cultural empathy, especially when students are encouraged to compare the event with their own cultural festivals.

Festivals can also be linked to broader cultural values, such as collectivism, ritual purity, or respect for elders. While such themes may seem abstract at first, they can be contextualised through guided class discussions or reflection journals. For instance, after watching a segment about *mudik* (homecoming) during *Idul Fitri*, learners can be asked why this ritual matters and how it reflects values of family and tradition. Even beginner-level students can respond to guided prompts such as: *Apa arti keluarga untuk Anda? Apa tradisi keluarga di negara Anda?* (“What does family mean to you? What are the family traditions in your country?”) Teachers can compile students’ answers into a class Padlet wall, showcasing linguistic diversity and intercultural insight.

Another productive integration involves comparing Indonesian festivals with those from students’ home countries. Teachers can provide a comparison chart with categories such as: name of festival, main activities, religious/cultural significance, food, music, and traditional clothing. Students fill out one side for an Indonesian festival (e.g., *Nyepi*) and the other for a festival from their own context (e.g., *Diwali*, *Christmas*, *Songkran*). This supports contrastive grammar (*lebih... daripada, berbedadengan*) (“more... than, different from”), introduces useful prepositions and conjunctions, and promotes cultural dialogue.

For cross-disciplinary enrichment, festivals can also be linked to Indonesian music and dance. A unit on *Grebeg Maulud* might include exposure to *gamelan sekaten*, allowing students to listen to and describe the music using basic adjectives: *musik nikeras, irama lambat, ada gong besar* (“this music is loud, the rhythm is slow, there is a big gong”). Similarly, teachers might incorporate regional dance clips from *Cap Go Meh* or *Pesta Budaya Papua* (“Papuan Cultural Festival”), followed by descriptive or mimetic tasks. This not only diversifies listening and speaking opportunities but deepens learners’ appreciation for Indonesia’s artistic heritage.

It is also possible to include basic religious and philosophical vocabulary where appropriate. For instance, a lesson on *Nyepi* might introduce terms such as *puasa*, *meditasi*, and *roh jahat* (“fasting, meditation, and evil spirit”), while a unit on *Ngaben* might touch on *reinkarnasi*, *jiwa*, and *perpisahan* (“reincarnation, soul, and farewell”). While teachers must be sensitive to students’ backgrounds, presenting these concepts in neutral, informative language promotes tolerance and awareness. Cultural explanation should always precede or accompany linguistic input to avoid stereotyping or confusion.

Finally, festivals lend themselves well to project-based learning. A class might be divided into groups, with each group creating a digital presentation or video introduction to a different Indonesian festival. Using tools like Google Slides, Canva, or Prezi, students can research, script, and present their topic using Indonesian. The teacher can provide structure through a template and guide students to focus on key areas: *apa nama dan waktu festival, apa yang dilakukan orang-orang, apa arti budaya festival tersebut* (“what is the name and time of the festival, what do people do, and what is the cultural meaning of the festival?”). These projects can be shared with other classes or compiled into a digital class magazine on Indonesian festivals.

In summary, festivals and ceremonies offer BIPA learners a unique opportunity to witness Indonesian culture as lived, performed, and shared across regions and religious communities. With appropriate use of multimedia, collaborative tools, and scaffolded tasks, learners can explore this content not as distant observers, but as engaged participants. The digital tools available today—videos, interactive timelines, collaborative posters, online quizzes—allow teachers to simulate participation in cultural events, even for students outside Indonesia. This approach not only enhances linguistic proficiency but fosters empathy, curiosity, and a more nuanced appreciation of Indonesia’s diverse cultural landscape.

#### WAYANG AND TRADITIONAL PERFORMING ARTS



Traditional performing arts such as *wayangkulit* (“shadow puppetry”), *wayanggolek* (“wooden rod puppets”), *tari topeng* (“masked dance”), and regional musical ensembles like *gamelan* are among the most distinctive forms of intangible heritage in Indonesia. For BIPA learners, these forms offer not only cultural knowledge but also access to artistic traditions that remain alive in festivals, ceremonies, and community life. These art forms often embody layered meanings—religious, moral, historical, and philosophical—while simultaneously providing engaging visual and auditory experiences. When approached with pedagogical care and appropriate digital support, they can be introduced even at beginner and intermediate BIPA levels through descriptive language, storytelling, comparison, and expressive practice.

The *wayang* tradition, in particular, lends itself to rich language use. Performances often adapt episodes from the *Mahabharata* or *Ramayana*, yet are localised with Indonesian humour, philosophy, and political commentary. Although learners are not expected to master these epic narratives, simplified excerpts and visual content can be employed to foster listening comprehension and vocabulary learning. A typical *wayangkulit* character such as *Semar*—a divine clown with humble appearance and deep wisdom—offers an opportunity to introduce adjectives (*pendek, gemuk, bijak* – “short, fat, wise”) and personality traits (*sabar, jujur, setia* – “patient, honest, loyal”) in context.

Teachers can introduce *wayang* through short animated or recorded performances. For instance, a five-minute segment from a children’s adaptation of *Wayang Ramayana* can serve as a lesson starter. With Indonesian subtitles enabled, students can watch and match dialogue with character names, infer emotions, and answer simple comprehension questions: *Siapa yang marah?* (“Who is angry?”), *Apa yang terjadi di akhircerita?* (“What happened at the end of the story?”). Teachers may pause the video to highlight expressions, gestures, or cultural elements, and invite learners to describe them: *Dalangnyamemakaikain batik* (“The puppeteer is wearing batik cloth”), *Boneka wayangnya kurus dan tinggi* (“The puppet is thin and tall”).

For productive language use, learners can participate in script-based activities. The teacher may provide a short scene with four characters and distribute simplified dialogue for a classroom reading or video-based re-enactment. Learners read aloud or record themselves acting the lines using simple Indonesian: *Aku pergisekarang!* (“I’m leaving now!”), *Jangantakut, aku akan menolongmu!* (“Don’t be afraid, I will help you!”). Tools like Flip or VoiceThread can be used for asynchronous speaking tasks, where students record and upload their performances with puppet drawings or cutouts. This promotes speaking fluency and dramatic expression, while reinforcing narrative grammar and emotion-related vocabulary.

To explore the structure and symbolism of *wayang* characters, teachers can prepare interactive character maps using Google Slides or collaborative diagramming tools. Each group of students receives a *wayang* figure—*Arjuna, Bima, Petruk, Cangik*—and fills in descriptive fields: *Nama* (“Name”), *Sifat* (“Traits”), *Senjata* (“Weapon”), *Peran dalamcerita* (“Role in the story”). These maps can be shared digitally and discussed in class, allowing even beginner students to practise nouns and adjectives while becoming familiar with traditional archetypes. Optional extensions may include drawing their own *wayang* character and presenting it: *Ini karaktersaya. Namanya Dewa Api. Dia kuat dan bijaksana* (“This is my character. His name is Fire God. He is strong and wise”).

Dance traditions such as *tari topeng* (“masked dance”), *tari kecak* (“kecak dance”), and *tari saman* (“saman dance”) offer alternative routes into embodied learning. While it may not be feasible to practise complex movements in class, video observation and reflection can support vocabulary development and cultural appreciation. For example, a lesson on *tari kecak* can begin with a high-quality performance clip from Bali, where students are guided to observe patterns: *Penarinya duduk melingkar* (“The dancers sit in a circle”), *Mereka bersuara: cak-cak-cak* (“They chant: cak-cak-cak”), *Tidak adaalatmusik* (“There are no musical instruments”). Such visual descriptions enable the integration of physical movement vocabulary, verb usage with prefixes, and spatial prepositions.

Learners can then be asked to complete structured sentence prompts or compose short descriptive paragraphs. A sample prompt might be: *Di video inisayamelihat...* (“In this video I see...”), *Penarimemakai...* (“The dancer wears...”), *Tarian iniberasaldari...* (“This dance comes from...”). These small writing tasks can be developed into collaborative posters using Canva or Padlet, especially when learners are divided into groups



exploring different regions or performance types. The result is a digital showcase of Indonesia's performing arts as seen and described through learners' own words.

Music, as part of traditional performance, can also be used for listening comprehension. Excerpts of *gamelan*, *angklung*, or *kolintang* performances can be presented for auditory discrimination: *Alat musik apa yang Anda dengar?* ("What instrument do you hear?"), *Cepat atau lambat? Keras atau lembut?* ("Fast or slow? Loud or soft?"). Even short exposure sessions of 1–2 minutes can be used to build vocabulary around rhythm, pitch, texture, and feeling. For advanced beginners, teachers can introduce musical expressions such as *mengiringi tarian* ("to accompany the dance"), *suara gong terdengar keras* ("the gong sounds loud"), or *melodi ini terdengar sedih* ("this melody sounds sad").

In storytelling modules, *wayang* can also serve as a springboard for narrative construction. Intermediate students can be asked to write short folktales based on *wayang*-style conflict: a hero, a challenge, a magical object, and a resolution. These original stories can follow a template and be illustrated digitally. Students might be guided to include opening phrases like *Pada zaman dahulu* ("Once upon a time"), use sequencers (*lalu*, *kemudian*, *akhirnya* ("then, next, finally"), and insert direct speech. This task reinforces the usage of sequences and cultural schema, while providing opportunities for creative expression.

To link performing arts with values education, teachers can frame reflective discussions around character traits and moral lessons. After learning about a *wayang* story where *Bima* helps a weaker friend, the teacher might ask: *Menurut Anda, mengapa Bima adalah pahlawan? Apa sifat yang Anda kagumi?* ("In your opinion, why is Bima a hero? What traits do you admire?"). These discussions, scaffolded with vocabulary lists and model responses, help learners express abstract ideas while reinforcing cultural norms such as *kesetiaan* ("loyalty"), *pengorbanan* ("sacrifice"), and *keberanian* ("bravery").

Teachers may also include cross-cultural comparison prompts: *Apakah di negara Anda adapertunjukan boneka seperti wayang?* ("Are there puppet performances in your country?"), or *Apa musik tradisional dari negara Anda?* ("What is traditional music from your country?"). These tasks deepen learners' awareness of cultural diversity while providing opportunities for speaking and writing practice in a familiar format.

Although full performance experiences may not be possible in international classrooms, digital museum archives, cultural centre websites, and educational YouTube channels provide ample material to simulate exposure. Educators can curate short, accessible, and thematically relevant clips to build lessons around themes of movement, music, and morality. Learners can be asked to keep a digital journal responding to different videos: *Saya sukai tarian ini karena...* ("I like this dance because..."), *Pertunjukan ini lucu / menegangkan / menarik* ("This performance is funny / suspenseful / interesting").

Assessment tasks can include group-created performances, video presentations, or even puppet shows using paper figures. For example, a group may perform a simplified *wayang* skit based on a folktale or script written in class, using simple Indonesian dialogue and basic props. These tasks can be recorded with smartphones and edited using basic video software before sharing them on a class Padlet or Drive folder. In these activities, students practise dialogue, sequencing, and intonation while also exploring artistic self-expression.

In sum, traditional performing arts—especially *wayang*—offer fertile ground for integrated BIPA instruction. Through structured observation, descriptive writing, guided performance, and digital storytelling, learners gain not only linguistic competence but also a sense of connection to Indonesia's cultural legacy. These activities do not require specialised knowledge or equipment, but rather thoughtful design, accessible materials, and culturally grounded teaching objectives. When guided carefully, even complex artistic forms like *wayang* or *tari kecak* become teachable moments that combine form, meaning, and experience for learners across linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

#### TRADITIONAL GAMES AND CHILDREN'S CULTURE

Traditional games and children's culture in Indonesia offer a compelling pedagogical resource for BIPA classes, particularly for beginner and intermediate learners. These cultural practices represent a still living, playful form of knowledge transmission that encodes social values, language use, teamwork, and creativity.

Unlike formal ceremonies or performing arts, traditional games are often more physically accessible, emotionally resonant, and pedagogically flexible, especially for younger learners or adult learners seeking low-stress engagement. Introducing such elements through digital means allows students to experience Indonesian social life not as distant spectators, but as active participants in the cultural patterns of play, interaction, and belonging.

Indonesia's rich repertoire of traditional games includes *engklek* ("hopscotch"), *congklak* ("mancala-style board game"), *gasing* ("spinning top"), *gobaksodor* ("block-the-line tag game"), *bakiak* ("wooden clogs for group races"), and *petakumpet* ("hide and seek"), among many others. Each game introduces learners not only to movement and competition but also to language patterns such as commands, turn-taking expressions, rhymes, counting, and polite disagreement—all of which are communicatively relevant. Furthermore, children's songs (*laguanak-anak*), playground rituals, and rhymes (*pantun bermain*) offer access to phonetic patterns, vocabulary, and cultural humor.

In the BIPA classroom, these traditional games can be introduced through multimedia presentations and virtual demonstrations. Teachers can start a lesson by playing a short video that shows children playing *congklak*, with clear visuals of the board, seeds, and turn structure. Using subtitles or teacher-made narration, students are guided through the basic mechanics of the game: *Pemainmengambilbijidarisatulubang...* ("The player takes seeds from one hole..."), *Giliranberpindahkepemainberikutnya* ("The turn moves to the next player"), *Yang menangadalah yang mengumpulkanbijiterbanyak* ("The winner is the one who collects the most seeds"). Such demonstrations are particularly helpful for visual learners and those unfamiliar with the physical objects used in the game.

To promote vocabulary acquisition, teachers can design illustrated digital glossaries using platforms like Google Slides or Quizlet. Each slide or card might feature one term, such as *bijicongklak* ("congklak seed"), *papankayu* ("wooden board"), *lubangkecil* ("small hole"), or *giliran* ("turn"), with an image and a simple definition. Learners can use these glossaries before or after watching gameplay videos to reinforce lexical items. The teacher can also include commands commonly used in play: *Ayo mulai!* ("Let's start!"), *Giliransaya!* ("It's my turn!"), *Kamu curang!* ("You're cheating!")—all of which are rich in informal and interactive registers.

Where feasible, learners can simulate these games digitally or physically, depending on the setting. For instance, students can use online *congklak* simulators or create makeshift boards using cardboard and seeds at home. They can record a video of themselves playing the game while narrating the steps in Indonesian: *Saya ambilbijini dan letakkan di sini...* ("I take this seed and place it here..."), *Sekaranggilirantemansaya* ("Now it's my friend's turn"). These self-recorded demonstrations, uploaded via Flip or shared on a class Padlet wall, promote spoken fluency, sequencing skills, and active use of imperatives and pronouns.

Another popular game, *gobaksodor* (a traditional team-based tag game), is ideal for teaching movement verbs and locational prepositions. Even if students cannot physically play the game, they can watch and describe a video of Indonesian children playing it. Teachers can prepare a fill-in-the-blank script or diagram to accompany the video: *Pemainberlarikedepan / kesamping / kebelakang* ("The player runs forward / to the side / backward"), *Garis inidisebut garis batas* ("This line is called the boundary line"), *Penjagaberdiri di tengahlapangan* ("The guard stands in the middle of the field"). Afterward, learners can describe the game's rules in their own words or draw a diagram of the game field with Indonesian labels.

For more creative interaction, teachers can design *Game of the Week* posters where each week a new traditional game is introduced with visuals, vocabulary, rules, and a short story or cultural note. These posters can be designed collaboratively by students, who work in pairs or groups to research a game like *bakiak* or *gasing*, summarise its function, and present it in Indonesian using platforms like Canva or Google Docs. For example, a poster on *bakiak* might include: *Bakiakadalahpermainantradisionaldari Sumatera Barat. Pemainmemakai sandal panjangbersama-sama dan berjalanke garis akhir. Permainaninimengajarkankerjasama* ("Bakiak is a traditional game from West Sumatra. Players wear long sandals together and walk to the finish line. This game teaches teamwork").

Children's songs and rhymes (*lagupermainan*) provide additional access to the rhythm and sound of Indonesian language. Short and repetitive songs like *Topi Saya Bundar* ("My Hat is Round"), *Ampar-Ampar*

*Pisang* (“Bananas laid out to dry”), or *Satu-satu Aku Sayang Ibu* (“One by One, I Love My Mother”) are rich in vocabulary, cultural imagery, and melodic structure. Teachers can use YouTube recordings of these songs, accompanied by karaoke-style lyrics or visual animations, to support listening and pronunciation. Students can be encouraged to sing along, match lines to images, or create short skits that illustrate the lyrics. Even beginner learners benefit from this phonetic immersion, particularly when reinforced with gestures or classroom games.

For vocabulary and structure practice, teachers can extract specific lines from songs and create cloze activities or word rearrangement tasks. For example, from *Ampar-Ampar Pisang*, a gap-fill exercise might be: *Ampar-ampar \_\_\_\_ / masak di \_\_\_\_ / siapasuka \_\_\_\_?* (“Laid out to dry \_\_\_\_ / Cooked \_\_\_\_ / Who likes \_\_\_\_?”). These tasks reinforce listening skills, rhyme recognition, and grammatical awareness while also exposing learners to poetic and informal forms of language. Intermediate learners can then be asked to rewrite or translate parts of the song, explaining their meaning in simple Indonesian or comparing it to children’s songs from their own country.

To incorporate oral interaction, teachers can facilitate *Game Interviews* where students act as reporters asking questions about their classmates’ favorite games: *Apa permainan tradisional favorit kamu? Mengapa? Siapa yang mengajarkannya?* (“What is your favourite traditional game? Why? Who taught you?”). These dialogues, whether conducted live or recorded, reinforce question forms, personal pronouns, and descriptive language. Students can use structured responses: *Saya suka congklak karena seru dan menantang. Saya belajarnya dari teman saya* (“I like *congklak* because it is fun and challenging. I learned it from my friend”).

One especially engaging project is the creation of a digital book of games by the class. Each student contributes one traditional game, complete with a written description, illustrated steps, and a short video or drawing. Pages are compiled into a shared Google Slides or Book Creator file, which becomes a class resource. The project allows learners to practise all four skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—in a culturally grounded context. Teachers can support learners with sentence frames, vocabulary lists, and layout templates to ensure clarity and consistency.

A particularly important aspect of traditional games is their moral and communal value. Many Indonesian games emphasise cooperation, patience, honesty, and perseverance. This cultural dimension can be made explicit in class reflection tasks. After learning about a game like *petakumpet* (“hide and seek”) or *balapkarung* (“sack race”), learners can be asked: *Permainan ini mengajarkan apa?* (“What does this game teach?”), *Bagaimana permainan ini berbeda dari permainan di negara Anda?* (“How is this game different from games in your country?”). These prompts encourage students to move beyond surface descriptions and consider the social meanings of play.

Teachers should also be aware that many of these games are linked to specific regions or festivities. For example, *balapkarung* and *panjat pinang* (“a tall, slippery pole / tree, often greased with oil or mud, is erected with prizes hung at the top—such as clothes, food, or household goods”) are common during Indonesian Independence Day celebrations. A class module might explore these games within the broader theme of *Hari Kemerdekaan* (“Independence Day”), including the national anthem, flag ceremonies, and community competitions. In this way, games become not only standalone content but entry points into wider civic and cultural learning.

While physical play may not always be possible, the spirit of play can be preserved through virtual challenges, drawings, and digital simulations. Students can create short “how-to” videos explaining a game, draw and label game components, or even invent their own traditional-style game using Indonesian vocabulary. Teachers can encourage creativity while guiding grammar and syntax: *Permainan ini dimainkan oleh dua orang. Setiap pemain harus...* (“This game is played by two people. Each player must...”). These invention tasks promote autonomy, cultural adaptation, and integrative thinking.

In conclusion, traditional games and children’s culture present an inviting, low-barrier, and emotionally engaging path for cultural integration in BIPA classes. With appropriate scaffolding, these elements introduce learners to communal values, informal registers, physical movement vocabulary, and expressions of joy and fairness that are deeply embedded in Indonesian culture. Supported by videos, glossaries, interviews, creative design tasks, and classroom play, these cultural forms transform the BIPA classroom into a site of linguistic

learning and intercultural empathy. More than mere entertainment, traditional games are pedagogical assets that help learners connect language, culture, and play in meaningful ways.

### TRADITIONAL CLOTHES

Traditional clothing in Indonesia is one of the most visible and meaningful expressions of cultural identity, regional diversity, and social formality. Items such as *batik* ("cloth made using a wax-resist dyeing technique to create detailed patterns"), *kebaya* ("embroidered blouse for women"), *baju koko* ("collarless shirt worn by Muslim men"), *jarik* ("traditional Javanese wrap"), *sarung* ("tube-shaped cloth worn around the waist"), *peci* ("black cap"), *ulos* ("ceremonial cloth of the Batak people"), *songket* ("handwoven cloth with shimmering gold or silver threads, traditionally worn for weddings, ceremonies"), and *lurik* ("striped handwoven fabric from Java") are not only textiles but also carriers of meaning. They are worn in daily life, religious ceremonies, weddings, national events, and regional festivals, often with precise codes regarding gender, age, status, and occasion. In the BIPA classroom, these garments offer a rich opportunity to explore vocabulary, descriptive grammar, and social contexts while fostering cross-cultural awareness. When paired with digital tools, even learners outside Indonesia can meaningfully engage with these items as linguistic and cultural artefacts.

Introducing traditional clothes can begin with visual-based activities. Teachers can prepare curated digital slides or image collections, each featuring one or two traditional garments with labels, brief descriptions, and regional origins. For example, a slide might show a woman wearing *kebaya* and *jarik*, accompanied by the text: *Ini adalah pakaian tradisional Jawa untuk perempuan. Kebaya biasanya berwarna cerah dan terbuat dari brokat. Jarik adalah kain panjang yang dililitkan di pinggang* ("This is traditional Javanese clothing for women. The *kebaya* is usually bright in colour and made of brocade. The *jarik* is a long cloth wrapped around the waist"). Learners are asked to identify garments, colours, and materials, and complete fill-in-the-blank sentences based on the slide content.

A second slide might show a man wearing *baju koko* and *peci* during a religious ceremony. The accompanying text could read: *Baju koko dipakai oleh laki-laki Muslim di Indonesia, terutama untuk salat atau hari raya. Peci adalah penutup kepala berwarna hitam yang melambangkan kesopanan* ("Baju koko is worn by Muslim men in Indonesia, especially for prayer or religious holidays. Peci is a black head covering symbolising modesty"). With a focus on description and context, students practise using adjectives (*panjang*, *warna-warni*, *tradisional*—"long, colourful, traditional") and verbs such as *memakai* ("to wear") and *terbuat dari* ("made from").

In beginner-level classes, these visual tasks can be extended into matching games using platforms like Wordwall or Quizlet, where students pair images of garments with their names and definitions. Teachers can introduce key lexical fields such as clothing types (*baju*, *kain*, *celana*—"shirt, cloth, pants"), materials (*katun*, *sutra*, *tenun*—"cotton, silk, woven fabric"), and parts of the body they cover. Students may also be given digital worksheets where they label parts of traditional outfits and write simple descriptions: *Kebaya ini berwarna merah dan memiliki bordir di lengan* ("This *kebaya* is red and has embroidery on the sleeves").

To deepen cultural understanding, instructors can incorporate short video clips or museum tours featuring the production or ceremonial use of these clothes. For instance, a short documentary about *batik tulis* ("hand-drawn batik") production in Yogyakarta allows students to observe the process and follow along with terms like *malam* ("hot wax"), *canting* ("wax tool"), *kain putih* ("white cloth"), and *motif* ("motif"). Teachers can use the video to teach sequencing structures: *Pertama, kain dicuci. Kemudian, digambar dengan malam. Setelah itu, dicelupkan ke dalam pewarna* ("First, the cloth is washed. Then, it is drawn with wax. After that, it is dipped into dye"). This not only builds vocabulary but also grammar related to passive constructions and instructional sequences.

Students interested in art or design may also be encouraged to create their own digital *batik motif* ("batik design") using drawing apps or Canva. The teacher can provide a template for learners to colour and label: *Ini motif saya. Namanya 'Bunga Laut'. Warnanya biru dan hijau. Motif ini melambangkan ketenangan* ("This is my motif. Its name is 'Sea Flower'. Its colours are blue and green. This motif symbolises calmness").



Learners can then present their design to the class in a short oral presentation, thereby practising demonstrative phrases, colour adjectives, and symbolic explanation.

Intermediate learners can be guided to explore regional variations in traditional clothing. A virtual gallery project may be set up using Padlet or Google Slides, with each student assigned a province or ethnic group. For instance, one learner may present *Pakaianadatdari Sumatera Utara: Ulos Batak* ("Traditional clothing from North Sumatra: Batak ulos"), describing its use in weddings or funerals and explaining the symbolic colours: *Merah berartikeberanian, hitamberartikekuatan, dan putihberartikesucian* ("Red means bravery, black means strength, and white means purity"). These projects reinforce both comparative and descriptive grammar structures while offering insight into the diversity of Indonesian cultural expression.

To support listening comprehension, teachers can use interview clips or vlogs where Indonesians discuss what traditional clothing means to them. For example, a woman might describe why she chooses to wear *kebaya modern* ("modern kebaya") for an event: *Saya memakai kebaya karenasayabanggamenjadi orang Indonesia. Kebaya membuatsayamerasaanggun dan percayadiri* ("I wear kebaya because I am proud to be Indonesian. Kebaya makes me feel elegant and confident"). Students can be asked to summarise the speaker's opinion or list the reasons mentioned in the clip. Such materials personalise the learning experience and introduce vocabulary around emotion and self-expression.

To further explore situational use, learners can participate in *What to Wear?* roleplays or decision-making games. Given a set of scenarios—*pernikahanadat, upacara bendera, kunjungan ke masjid* ("traditional wedding, flag ceremony, visit to a mosque")—students must choose appropriate traditional garments and justify their choices: *Saya memilih memakai baju koko dan sarung karena acara ini adalah salat Idul Fitri* ("I choose to wear baju koko and sarong because this event is Eid prayer"), or *Saya akan memakai kebaya dan jarik karena ini adalah pernikahan Jawa* ("I will wear kebaya and jarik because this is a Javanese wedding"). These tasks build functional language, vocabulary for cultural events, and conditional structures.

Where time allows, instructors may also incorporate basic comparisons with clothing from the students' own cultures. A guided writing task could involve completing a Venn diagram comparing traditional dress from Indonesia and the learner's home country: *Kebaya dan kimono sama-sama dipakai untuk acara khusus. Namun, kimono memiliki ikat pinggang besar yang disebut obi, sedangkan kebaya dipadukan dengan jarik* ("Kebaya and kimono are both worn for special occasions. However, kimono has a large waist belt called obi, whereas kebaya is paired with jarik"). This supports the use of comparative language and fosters intercultural reflection.

Another meaningful extension is the creation of digital fashion catalogues. In groups, learners design pages for a class e-book introducing Indonesian traditional clothes. Each page might include a labelled image, short description, region of origin, occasion of use, and symbolic meaning. Sentences are written in Indonesian, and the final product is compiled using Canva or Google Slides. Teachers can provide scaffolds like: *Nama pakaian: \_\_\_\_\_. Asal daerah: \_\_\_\_\_. Digunakan untuk: \_\_\_\_\_. Ciri khas: \_\_\_\_\_. Region of origin: \_\_\_\_\_. Used for: \_\_\_\_\_. Distinctive features: \_\_\_\_\_* ("Name of clothing: \_\_\_\_\_. Region of origin: \_\_\_\_\_. Used for: \_\_\_\_\_. Distinctive features: \_\_\_\_\_"). These mini-projects consolidate learning across vocabulary, structure, and cultural insight.

Finally, learners can be invited to reflect personally: *Apakah Anda ingin mencoba memakai pakaian tradisional Indonesia? Mengapa?* ("Would you like to try wearing traditional Indonesian clothing? Why?"). Students can write journal entries, record video reflections, or respond to prompts like: *Pakaian apa yang menurut Anda paling indah atau unik?* ("Which clothing do you think is the most beautiful or unique?"). Such reflections humanise the topic and promote the use of opinion and justification structures (*karena*—because) in a personal voice.

In sum, traditional clothing offers far more than visual interest; it enables the exploration of regional identity, social norms, symbolic meaning, and intercultural comparison. Supported by multimedia resources, collaborative tasks, and expressive projects, BIPA learners can encounter this aspect of Indonesian culture in a way that is meaningful, practical, and memorable. Through digital integration—slides, interviews, video clips, virtual galleries, and guided production—students not only expand their vocabulary and grammatical repertoire but also gain insight into what it means to dress with cultural awareness in the Indonesian context.



### CULTURE- BOUND METAPHORS

Culture-bound metaphors offer a unique gateway to Indonesian cultural perspectives, and integrating these metaphors into BIPA instruction can greatly enhance both linguistic fluency and cultural understanding. Metaphors encapsulate how Indonesians conceptualize abstract domains like time, emotion, and identity through culturally familiar imagery. For example, Indonesian speakers often describe time as elastic with the phrase *jam karet* (“rubber time”), reflecting a tolerant attitude toward flexible scheduling, whereas English speakers frame time as a finite resource (“time is money”) emphasizing punctuality. Such differences are not merely linguistic curiosities; they reveal underlying cultural norms and values. In the BIPA classroom, explicitly teaching these metaphors helps foreign learners grasp the worldview embedded in the Indonesian language. Mastering culture-bound expressions like *jam karet* enables students to interpret local communication in context and avoid misunderstandings—for instance, understanding that a casual reference to “rubber time” signals a culturally relaxed view of punctuality rather than a literal object. By engaging with metaphors, learners move beyond word-for-word translations and begin to *think* in Indonesian, developing what might be called “cultural semantic competence”. This deeper comprehension is crucial for true fluency, as meaning in language is often multi-layered and tied to cultural experience. Familiarity with common figurative idioms and proverbs becomes a marker of cultural literacy for BIPA students. In short, teaching Indonesian metaphors of time, emotion, and identity gives learners insight into “how Indonesians understand themselves and their world”—knowledge that pure grammar drills cannot convey [37]; [36] and [38].

One rich area of culture-bound metaphor in Indonesian is emotional expression. Indonesian figurative language frequently invokes the *hati* (literally “liver”, analogous to the “heart” in Western idiom) as the locus of emotion. Proverbs and idioms embed this cultural model: for instance, *makanhati*—“to eat one’s liver”—means to suffer in silence or internalize hurt, while *(ber)besarhati* (“big liver”) means to feel proud or gratified. Such expressions make sense only within the cultural understanding that the *hati* is the seat of feeling; a direct translation would bewilder learners without cultural context. By teaching the concept of *hati* as used in Indonesian metaphor, instructors equip learners to interpret and deploy these phrases appropriately. Likewise, metaphors of emotion illuminate cultural attitudes toward emotional behavior. A study by Huszka [35] on anger metaphors in Bahasa Indonesia found that anger (*marah*) is commonly conceptualized as a hot fluid that can boil over or overflow its container, as an explosive force, or even as a sharp object like a weapon. Many languages share the ANGER IS HEAT/EXPLOSION metaphor, but Indonesian usage places an *exceptional emphasis on self-control*—anger is something that must be contained to maintain social harmony. Huszka [35] also notes that overt displays of anger are culturally discouraged, as losing one’s temper risks threatening the common good or causing someone to “lose face” in public. Teaching these nuanced metaphors of emotion offers a dual benefit: students learn vivid new ways to express feelings in Indonesian, and they internalize subtle cultural norms about emotional restraint and politeness. For instance, if a BIPA student hears an Indonesian friend say *darahsayamendidih* (“my blood is boiling”), they will understand not only that the person is angry, but also appreciate the image of anger as *rising heat inside the body*—a metaphorical conceptualization shared across cultures yet colored by local beliefs about containing anger. Discussing why one “should not let the blood boil over” opens a cultural conversation about patience and indirectness in Indonesian society. In this way, pedagogical emphasis on metaphors fosters cultural empathy: learners come to see how Indonesians frame their emotional experiences and why certain behaviors (e.g. remaining calm rather than yelling when provoked) are culturally valued.

Another potent domain of metaphor is identity and social values, often conveyed through proverbs (*peribahasa*). Traditional proverbs encapsulate lessons about character, community, and ethics via metaphorical imagery rooted in everyday life. BIPA instructors can leverage these as authentic materials to discuss Indonesian cultural identity. For example, the proverb *bagaikacaterhempaske batu* (“like glass shattered against a rock”) portrays the devastation of heartbreak or crushing disappointment through a vivid image of fragile glass breaking irreversibly. Similarly, *bagaipunggukmerindukanbulan* (“like an owl longing for the moon”) poetically represents unrequited longing – a small owl gazing hopelessly at an unattainable moon. Such metaphors are not only linguistically rich; they also carry a cultural aesthetic that values indirect, image-laden expression of

emotion. By learning these proverbs, foreign students access a reservoir of cultural wisdom and rhetoric. In the classroom, exploring a proverb like *bagaipunggukmerindukanbulan* can spark discussion about how Indonesian culture often conveys desire or sadness in a lyrical, resigned way, as opposed to more direct expressions in some other cultures. The pedagogical value here lies in cultural fluency: students practise interpreting figurative meanings and appreciate the cultural connotations—for instance, the owl and moon metaphor suggests a gentle, almost accepting view of unfulfilled love, reflecting a cultural tendency to find beauty in longing rather than just frustration [38]. As noted by Huszka et al. [38], each culture develops its own repertoire of salient metaphors shaped by its environment and values, and becoming familiar with them constitutes part of being culturally adept in that language. When BIPA learners recognize why Indonesians say *masukkadangkambingmengembik*, *masukkadangharimaumengaum* (“enter the goat pen bleating, enter the tiger pen roar”)—a proverb advising people to adapt to local norms – they not only learn a colorful phrase but also internalize the importance of *cultural adaptability* in Indonesian society [38]. This deeper semantic comprehension, where words are tied to values and worldviews, empowers learners to communicate more meaningfully. They start to pick up on allusions and subtext in conversation, responding in culturally appropriate ways. In sum, teaching culture-bound metaphors equips students with interpretative skills that go beyond dictionary definitions—an indispensable component of advanced language proficiency.

The challenge, however, is how to teach these metaphors effectively to foreign learners who may have little exposure to Indonesian culture. This is where thoughtfully applied digital technology can play a transformative role. Modern BIPA classrooms are increasingly multimedia-rich, and instructors can harness various digital platforms to make metaphor learning engaging, interactive, and memorable. Research in BIPA pedagogy shows that technology-enhanced lessons not only improve language skills but also sustain student motivation by presenting content in dynamic ways. In the case of metaphors, abstract ideas can be hard to grasp through text alone, so visual and audio media are especially valuable. For instance, an instructor might present the proverb *bagaipunggukmerindukanbulan* by first showing an image or a simple animation of an owl perched on a branch gazing longingly at a full moon. This visual metaphor illustration immediately conveys the sense of yearning in the phrase. Students can be invited to describe what they think the picture means, activating their interpretive skills. Only after this visual inference exercise would the teacher reveal the proverb text and its meaning, leading to a fuller discussion. By linking the figurative language to a concrete image, learners form a stronger mental association and are more likely to remember the expression. Similarly, short video clips or audio from Indonesian media can bring metaphors to life. A BIPA class might watch a brief excerpt from an Indonesian film or a YouTube vlog where a colloquial idiom is used in context – for example, a scene where a character says “*janganbesarkepala!*” (“don’t have a big head!”) to scold someone for arrogance. Hearing and seeing the metaphor used by native speakers, with appropriate emotional tone and gestures, helps students grasp its pragmatic usage. Such multimedia exposure reinforces the lesson: instead of learning in isolation, students experience how metaphors operate in real communication. This aligns with the general finding that BIPA learners benefit from rich input through multimedia, which provides authentic context and makes lessons more exciting. Indeed, multimedia platforms enable instructors to curate culturally authentic content—from news snippets to folk song lyrics—that exemplify metaphoric language in use.

One effective strategy reported in recent studies is to design interactive presentations and activities around local culture. Simanjuntak et al. [11], for example, created beginner-level Indonesian lessons infused with local North Sumatran cultural content using a graphic design platform (Canva). They found that the visual appeal of these custom materials kept students highly engaged while teaching basic language through a cultural lens. Inspired by this approach, a BIPA instructor could develop a slide deck or interactive module for metaphors of time and emotion. Each slide might introduce an idiom with a colorful illustration or cartoon – such as a clock made of rubber for *jam karet*[37], or a figure with steam coming out of their ears for an anger metaphor like *panashati* (“hot liver”, meaning someone is angry or agitated). With tools like PowerPoint or Prezi (or specialized e-learning tools like Genially and Nearpod), the slides can include clickable elements or quizzes. For instance, a slide could show three images (e.g. a rubber clock, a shattered glass, a person turning red) and ask students to match each image with the corresponding Indonesian metaphor they learned (*jam karet*

for a relaxed understanding of time, *patahhati* for heartbreak, *merahpadam* for furious). This kind of interactive exercise turns abstract phrase learning into a game-like activity, which reinforces retention. Immediate feedback can be given on-screen, and the class can discuss why a certain image matches a certain idiom, further delving into the cultural reasoning behind it.

In practice, many digital strategies can be combined to teach culture-bound metaphors in meaningful ways. A possible toolkit for BIPA instructors includes:

- **Visual storytelling:** Present a short comic strip or digital story that incorporates a target metaphor in context. For example, a simple story about an exchange student's first day in Jakarta could show an appointment running late with the caption "*Jam karet!*". Students follow the story and infer the idiom's meaning from context, aided by visuals, before the class discusses it.
- **Interactive quizzes and polls:** Use online quiz platforms (e.g. Kahoot!, Quizizz) to run a fun review of metaphors. Quiz items can show a phrase or scenario and ask learners to pick the appropriate metaphor. A question might display an image of a frustrated person turning red and ask: *Which idiom best fits this situation?* (A correct answer: *darahnyamendidih*, "his blood is boiling"). Real-time polls on platforms like Mentimeter can similarly be used to gauge understanding and prompt peer discussion.
- **Multimedia annotations:** Leverage video-editing or annotation tools to embed questions or explanatory notes directly into a video clip that features metaphorical expressions. For instance, using Edpuzzle, a teacher might select a scene from an Indonesian drama or vlog where a character says "*jangansampai naik darah*" ("don't let your blood rise"), a common metaphor used to advise someone not to lose their temper. At that moment, the teacher can pause the video and insert a brief explanation about the metaphor's literal and figurative meanings, or pose a question like: *What emotion is being conveyed here? Why do Indonesians associate rising blood with anger?* This method promotes active viewing and listening, prompting learners to notice figurative language in authentic contexts and reflect on its cultural connotations.
- **Online collaborative glossaries or blogs:** Have students co-create a digital idiom journal. Using a platform like Padlet or a class blog, each student picks a new Indonesian metaphor or proverb, researches its literal and figurative meaning, and posts an entry with an example sentence and an illustrative image or GIF. Over time the class builds a rich, student-generated repository of culture-bound expressions. The act of creating a digital entry (and possibly commenting on each other's posts) deepens their engagement and ownership of the learning process.
- **Digital role-play or simulations:** Use virtual scenarios to practise metaphors. For example, a teacher might set up a role-play in a messaging app simulation or a private Facebook group where students adopt Indonesian personas and have to respond to situations using idiomatic language. One prompt could be an imaginary friend texting that they failed an exam; students must reply with a comforting Indonesian proverb (perhaps *sudahjatuh, tertimpatanga*, "already fell, then got hit by a ladder", akin to "when it rains, it pours") in an appropriate context. Such activities encourage learners to actively use metaphors, not just recognize them, and doing it through a digital medium mimics real-life communication channels.

These methods illustrate how technology can amplify the teaching of metaphors by making lessons interactive, contextual, and student-centered. Importantly, the use of digital media aligns with findings that culturally rich content combined with multimedia enhances motivation and retention. Andriana et al. [23] demonstrated this synergy by using an Indonesian storybook rich in cultural metaphors (*Dongeng Cinta Budaya*), complemented by multimedia presentations of related songs, dances, and images to immerse learners in the material. Students in their program responded enthusiastically, expressing that the experience helped them connect with "the real Indonesia" rather than just abstract language lessons. This example underlines a key pedagogical point: integrating culture and technology creates a more holistic learning experience. The

technology provides immediacy and engagement, while the cultural metaphors provide depth of content. Rather than viewing culture and technology as separate add-ons, the two can be woven together so that technology becomes a medium for cultural storytelling and exploration. In doing so, BIPA classes can move beyond rote learning to what might be called experiential learning of language: students experience Indonesian ways of thinking and feeling through the metaphors presented, and technology helps simulate that experience in the classroom.

It should be noted that using technology in teaching metaphors also allows for flexibility to cater to different learning styles. Visual learners benefit from images and videos; auditory learners benefit from hearing metaphors used in dialogues or songs; kinesthetic learners may enjoy interactive games or creating digital content themselves. Moreover, online platforms enable access to a wealth of authentic resources—for example, teachers can pull in Indonesian social media posts or memes that use current slang metaphors, giving advanced BIPA students a taste of real-world language usage in a controlled learning environment. The pedagogical value of this approach lies in engagement and authenticity: learners are more likely to invest effort when materials are relatable and presented appealingly, and they acquire language that is alive and culturally loaded, not just a list of translated idioms.

In conclusion, the integration of culture-bound metaphors and technology in BIPA instruction exemplifies how language teaching can simultaneously address semantic depth and student engagement. Metaphors of time, emotion, and identity serve as fertile ground for cultural learning—each metaphor is a story, a piece of Indonesian heritage in miniature, carrying values and perspectives that foreign learners need to grasp for true fluency. By leveraging digital tools, educators can turn the teaching of these metaphors into an interactive cultural journey: from visualizing “rubber time”, to dramatizing emotions that “boil over”, to exploring proverbs that encode communal ideals. This illustrative example shows that when cultural content and modern technology converge in the BIPA classroom, the outcome is a richer, more meaningful learning experience. Students not only learn Indonesian words and grammar, but also engage with Indonesian ways of thinking, all through immersive and enjoyable activities. Such an approach prepares BIPA learners to communicate with nuance and cultural insight – ultimately enabling them to step into Indonesian society with a better understanding of the metaphoric language that Indonesians live by. As Huszka et al. [38] argue, metaphors are “a vital link between language and thought” that encode a community’s values. Teaching that link through creative technological means helps bridge the gap between the foreign and the familiar for learners, turning classroom lessons into stepping stones toward genuine intercultural communication.

## V. CONCLUSION

The integration of cultural content and digital technology in BIPA instruction represents a progressive and holistic approach to teaching Bahasa Indonesia to foreign learners. This concluding section synthesises the key insights from the detailed exploration above, highlighting how culture and technology together enhance the BIPA learning experience, and discussing the broader implications for educators, learners, and Indonesia’s language promotion efforts.

**Cultural Integration Enhances Linguistic and Intercultural Competence:** One overarching conclusion from our review is that incorporating Indonesian cultural elements into language teaching significantly enriches the learning process. BIPA students who engage with local customs, traditional arts, folklore, cuisine, and other cultural content are not only more motivated, but also develop a socio-cultural intuition that pure language drills cannot provide. They learn to use Indonesian in context—understanding *when* to say things and *how* to behave—not just the literal meanings of words. This cultural grounding leads to more holistic learning outcomes: improved communicative competence, higher retention of vocabulary (because words are tied to vivid cultural experiences), and the ability to interpret nuances and implied meanings. For instance, a student exposed to concepts like *gotong royong* (“mutual cooperation”) through real examples will better grasp the pragmatic tone of phrases like “*marikitakerjabakti*” (“let’s do communal work”) than one who only encountered it in a dictionary. Culture-based teaching helps learners “think” in Indonesian, aligning their language use with local values such as respect, modesty, or communal harmony. Ultimately, such students can

interact more naturally and appropriately with native speakers, having gained a sense of “cultural literacy” alongside linguistic skills.

**Technological Integration Broadens Access and Engagement:** The second major insight is that technology, when thoughtfully applied, serves as a powerful catalyst for BIPA education. Digital tools have proven their ability to increase student engagement through interactivity, multimedia input, and personalised learning pathways. Whether it was the use of Zoom to maintain live interaction during the pandemic, Canva to create visually appealing cultural materials, or language apps and MOOCs to reach learners worldwide, technology consistently appears as an enabler of innovation in BIPA. It allows teachers to simulate immersive environments—virtual tours, audio-visual aids, online collaboration—that capture students’ attention and cater to various learning styles. It also makes BIPA more accessible: someone with an internet connection in a country with no Indonesian classes can now learn through online courses or virtual exchanges. Moreover, technology supports adaptive learning; as we discussed, AI-driven platforms could in the near future tailor exercises to individual needs, an especially pertinent benefit given BIPA’s diverse audience (from academic scholars to business people to athletes). The strategic use of technology thus aligns BIPA with global trends in education, meeting modern learners’ expectations for engaging, flexible, and self-paced learning experiences. Importantly, however, our examination also underscored the need for balance: technology on its own does not guarantee better learning – it must be integrated with sound pedagogy. Successful BIPA programmes used tech not as a gimmick, but as a tool to amplify proven teaching practices (like facilitating communication, providing instant feedback, or showcasing authentic language use).

**Synergy of Culture and Technology—an Innovative Pedagogical Model:** Perhaps the most significant conclusion is that the combined integration of culture and technology yields benefits greater than either could alone. Throughout the article, numerous examples illustrated this synergy: using video recordings of cultural performances to teach language, employing interactive apps to explore traditional crafts or foods, having students create digital stories based on folklore, and so on. In each example, technology served as a bridge that could bring cultural content into the classroom in a vivid and manageable way. Conversely, cultural content gave substance and context to the use of technology, ensuring that digital activities were meaningful and grounded in real Indonesian life. This dual integration addresses both the *heart* and *mind* of learners—engaging their emotions and identity through culture, and their curiosity and intellect through interactive media. As a result, BIPA lessons become memorable experiences. A student is likely to recall learning the word *gerhana* (eclipse) if they learned it while discussing the myth of *Buto Ijo* (“Green Giant”) swallowing the sun during a traditional Javanese eclipse ritual, especially if they watched a short clip of villagers banging pots and pans to “frighten” the eclipse demon—an engaging cultural anecdote delivered via multimedia. Such integrative lessons stick in the memory far better than rote word lists or abstract grammar drills.

**Implications for BIPA Educators and Programme Designers:** For instructors and curriculum developers, these conclusions suggest a clear direction forward: embrace a curriculum that is culturally-rich and tech-enabled. This means seeking out or creating teaching materials that present language in its cultural context (like dialogues set in markets, stories from various regions, magazine articles on Indonesian traditions) and pairing these with appropriate technological supports (such as audio recordings, interactive slides, digital quizzes, etc.). Teacher training is crucial—educators may need support to enhance their own cultural knowledge and to develop their digital literacy. Those who might be very proficient in Indonesian teaching but less familiar with, say, Eastern Indonesian customs, should be encouraged to expand their repertoire of cultural content; similarly, those hesitant about technology should receive mentorship or workshops to try out new tools in a low-risk setting. Programme designers should also consider infrastructure: investing in better internet connectivity, up-to-date devices or software, and digital libraries of Indonesian content will pay dividends in the quality of instruction. At the same time, equity issues cannot be ignored—efforts should be made to ensure that technological benefits reach all learners (for example, by providing offline alternatives or lending devices to those without access, as feasible).

**Learner Outcomes and Experience:** From the learner’s perspective, a BIPA programme shaped by the integration of culture and technology promises a more stimulating and relevant journey to Indonesian



proficiency. Learners are likely to find the language less foreign or intimidating when it comes wrapped in stories, images, and practices that they can relate to or find intriguing. Instead of experiencing Bahasa Indonesia as a set of disembodied words and rules, they encounter it as a living language of a vibrant culture—one that they progressively understand and become part of. This fosters not only linguistic ability but also a positive attitude and motivation. We saw evidence that students taught in this way were more enthusiastic, participated more actively, and expressed appreciation for learning “the real Indonesia” beyond just textbook dialogues. Ultimately, such learners are better prepared for real-life use of Indonesian. When they arrive in Indonesia or interact with Indonesians, they are less prone to culture shock, more adept at interpreting body language and implicit cues, and more respectful communicators. They understand why an Indonesian counterpart might indirectly say “*nantisayapikir-pikirdulu*” (“I will think about it later”) instead of giving a direct refusal, because they have learned about cultural norms of politeness and saving face. These nuanced skills are the hallmark of someone who has not only learned *about* Indonesia, but learned to some extent how to *think* in Indonesian.

**Cultural Diplomacy and Indonesia’s Global Presence:** There is a broader national perspective to consider. The success of BIPA programmes in blending culture and language contributes to Indonesia’s soft power and cultural diplomacy goals. Each foreign student who gains a deep appreciation of Indonesian culture becomes an informal ambassador, sharing positive impressions and understanding of Indonesia in their home country. Programs that feature cultural events (like food fairs, batik workshops, virtual reality tours of Borobudur, etc.) within the language curriculum can engage local communities and media, raising Indonesia’s profile internationally. As noted, even something as simple as a food-based lesson that grabs local attention can lead to increased interest or enrolment in Indonesian classes—effectively spreading the love for Indonesian culture through educational channels. Therefore, stakeholders such as the Indonesian government, embassies, and cultural centres should view support for culturally-integrated, tech-forward BIPA initiatives as investments in international relations. The evidence suggests these programmes foster mutual understanding and goodwill, aligning with the spirit of exchange in ASEAN, and far beyond.

**Challenges and Considerations:** While advocating this integrated approach, it is important to acknowledge and plan for challenges. Not all institutions may have equal resources to implement technology—bridging the digital divide remains a priority. Teachers might initially face a steep learning curve both in mastering new tools and in confidently teaching cultural topics (especially if dealing with cultures outside their own island or ethnicity within Indonesia). There is also the careful task of selecting which cultural content to include—it must be authentic yet accessible, avoiding stereotyping or overload of exotic detail that might overwhelm learners. A curricular balance is needed: core linguistic competencies should still be systematically developed, with culture-technology elements woven in to support those competencies rather than sidetrack them. Additionally, feedback mechanisms should be in place—regular assessments or action research—to evaluate what is working and what might need adjustment. For example, a high-tech approach like VR for language immersion is exciting, but educators should gather student feedback on its effectiveness and ensure it truly aids learning, not distract from it.

**Future Directions:** Looking ahead, BIPA programmes could increasingly adopt blended learning models that maximise both in-person cultural immersion and online flexibility. For instance, a student might complete interactive e-learning modules on Indonesian history or geography (in Indonesian), then in class engage in discussions or projects building on that knowledge. As artificial intelligence in education grows, we might see intelligent tutors guiding students through personalised cultural scenarios—imagine an AI role-play partner that can simulate various social contexts (from buying something in a traditional market to attending an Indonesian wedding) and provide feedback. However, technology should always be harnessed to serve the humanistic goal of language education: fostering real communication and cross-cultural connection. As such, real encounters—whether physically through study tours, homestays, and classroom guests, or virtually through video exchanges and online communities—should remain central. These are the experiences that truly solidify language skills and intercultural empathy.

In conclusion, the evolving field of BIPA instruction demonstrates that language teaching, when informed by pedagogical innovation, cultural sensitivity, and technological responsiveness, can serve as a

powerful bridge between cultures. Bahasa Indonesia's bid for a more prominent role on the global stage will depend not merely on expanding the number of learners, but on ensuring that instruction for those learners is immersive, meaningful, and attuned to the complex realities of intercultural communication in the 21st century. By continuing to integrate Indonesia's rich cultural tapestry into the fabric of language lessons, and by employing the best tools that modern technology offers, BIPA programmes can produce graduates who are not only proficient in Indonesian, but also warmly disposed to Indonesia's people and way of life. These culturally and digitally empowered learners will be well-equipped to act as agents of cross-cultural friendship, scholarly collaboration, and economic partnership between Indonesia and the world. In the broader scope, the model of BIPA we have discussed can stand as an inspiring example for other less commonly taught languages seeking internationalisation: that the key to winning hearts and minds through language lies in offering an education that speaks to both the intellect and the soul – combining rigorous language training with genuine cultural insight, all delivered through engaging and innovative means.

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Given that the authors are non-native English speakers, artificial intelligence has been employed to enhance the language of this paper.

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