# ART Program for Children and Teenagers: Act Locally, Think Globally

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| ARTICLE INFORMATION | ABSTRACT |
|---|---|
| **Kata Kunci:**<br>Anak usia SD<br>kemampuan membaca bahasa Inggris<br>kemampuan berbicara bahasa Inggris<br>Nilai-nilai kearifan lokal<br>Remaja usia SMP | Program ART merupakan program pengabdian masyarakat bagi anak usia sekolah dasar dan remaja usia sekolah menengah pertama yang dilaksanakan di Taman Bacaan Lokal yang berlokasi di Desa Cantilan, Desa Sukarame, Kabupaten Tasikmalaya. Kegiatan tersebut diprogram untuk mendorong anak berani bertanya, membiasakan anak membaca buku, dan mendorong anak agar mampu bercerita. Program ini melanjutkan program pengabdian masyarakat sebelumnya yang fokus pada peningkatan penguasaan kosakata siswa dan peningkatan keterampilan berbicara siswa. Program ini dilandasi oleh pemikiran "think globally" yang diwujudkan dengan belajar bahasa Inggris, dan "act locally" yang diwujudkan dengan menanamkan nilai-nilai kearifan lokal. Metode yang digunakan adalah praktik pengembangan masyarakat. Pre-test dan post-test dilakukan kepada peserta pada awal dan akhir program. Hasil pretest menunjukkan 17 peserta (94%) mendapat nilai sedang dan rendah (1-6), dan hanya 1 peserta yang mendapat nilai tinggi (7-10). Sedangkan hasil posttest menunjukkan terdapat 14 peserta (61%) yang memperoleh nilai tinggi (1-7) dan 7 peserta (39%) yang memperoleh nilai sedang (4-6). Dari hasil tes dapat disimpulkan bahwa tujuan program tercapai yaitu kemampuan membaca dan berbicara bahasa Inggris peserta serta pemahaman terhadap nilai-nilai kearifan lokal mengalami peningkatan. |
| | ***ABSTRACT*** |
| **Keywords:**<br>Elementary school-age children<br>Junior high school-age teenagers<br>English reading skills<br>English speaking skills<br>Local wisdom values | The ART Program is a community service program in the form of teaching English that focuses on improving speaking skills and providing local wisdom values through storytelling activities for elementary school-age children who live in Kampung Cantilan, Sukarame Village, Tasikmalaya Regency. This program is a follow-up program from the previous community service program, namely empowering English book libraries and teaching English which focuses on increasing vocabulary. The method used is the practice of community development adapted from Vincent (2009) starting from forming a team, formulating goals, determining target community, analyzing the needs of the target community, prioritizing problem solutions, preparing, implementing, reviewing and evaluating, and the last is determining new needs and target community. While the steps used in the learning process are: orientation, training, feedback, and continuation. Pre-test and post-test were carried out on seventeen participants at the beginning and end of the program. From the results of these tests, it can be interpreted that the English-speaking skills of elementary school age children in Kampung Cantilan have increased after participating in this program. Meanwhile, the results of the interviews proved that this program contributed in increasing children's understanding of local wisdom values. Thus, the objectives of the program are achieved.<br> |

## I. PRELIMINARY

The ART program is a community service program that encourages students to ask questions, read books and tell stories. This program is a continuance of the preceding programs. The initial program gave children access to Graded Reader books, mostly preparation level or starter level books because the average participants' English language skills are at that level (Mulyanti & Hakim, 2021). The second program was called "The

Sotell Program". In this program, Indonesian folklores were used as educational entertainment materials in order to enrich children English vocabulary (Mulyanti, et.al. 2022). The third one was named "The Localish Program". The objective was to increase children speaking skills through storytelling activities (Mulyanti, Hakim, & Wati, 2023). The previous programs were successful in their own right, but there is a recognized need to continue and elevate them further. The materials taught last year were tailored to their then-current levels. However, this year, we aim to raise the bar. To achieve this, we are providing books that are more challenging than before. The gap lies in the fact that while last year's program was successful, it wasn't sufficient to bring about the desired improvements. Therefore, there's a need for continued effort and progression from the previous achievements. Moreover, the categorization of participants has been increased, from previously only covering one category, elementary students, now junior high school students are added due to the large number of requests from junior high school age teenagers to take part in this program.

The current community service program is entitled "The ART Program". It is the abbreviation from the words Ask, Read, and Tell. This program aims to maintain local culture and also to increase global competitiveness. The aims of this program are to improve children's English language skills and also to instill local wisdom values in children and teenagers through Sundanese folklore, i.e., legends and fables, which contain local wisdom held by the community. Local wisdom is defined as "noble values that apply in community life to, among other things, protect and manage the environment sustainably" (Law Number 32 of 2009 about Environmental Protection and Management in Article 1 Paragraph 30).

Apart from implanting local wisdom, this program objective is also to improve English reading and speaking skills. Many studies show that storytelling can enhance children' speaking skills (Dharmayanti, & Wardana, 2022; Elyani, Arief, Amelia & Asrimawati, 2022; Purba, et al., 2022; Swari, 2022; Zuhriyah, 2017; Mulyanti, 2023), and also improve reading skills (Anggraeni, Herlina, & Tarwana, 2023; Yulianawati, Nurhadi & Mayasari, 2022; and Hà & Bellot, 2020). The findings show that storytelling is a good technique in improving English reading and speaking skills. Based on the findings from previous researches, storytelling is used as a technique to teach English reading and speaking skills in this program. It is expected that children will be able grasp ideas and communicate the ideas in English in their daily life. The difference between this program and the preceding programs are in the purposes and the lessons given in the program.

## II.   PROBLEM

The ART Program is a thoughtful initiative designed to tackle the lack of English education in elementary schools and support the early learning of English in junior high schools. It matches the Ministry of Education and Culture's goals, highlighting how crucial it is for people to be good at English, especially during the fourth industrial revolution.

By implementing the ART program, the community service team demonstrates its commitment to bridging the gap in English education for the younger generation. The program likely aims to integrate English language learning into the local curriculum or provide supplementary English classes to elementary school-age children (Gen Alpha) and junior high school-age teenagers.
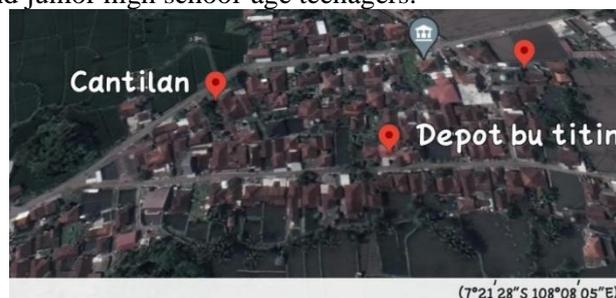

Figure 1. Kampung Cantilan

## III.   METHOD

Community Development Practice from Vincent II (2009) is used as a method in this community service program. It starts from team formation, goals formulation, target identification, need analysis, solution to problems, preparation, implementation, review & evaluation, and the final is new needs and goals determination.

Figure 2. Community Development Practice

The ART program begins with a pre-test and ends with a post-test in the form of an interview which is used as data to determine the initial abilities of participants and to determine whether there has been an increase in participants' abilities before and after the program is implemented. The teaching materials in the program were adjusted to the participants' initial abilities.

This program aims to improve the ability to read and speak English as well as to instill local wisdom values in children and teenagers in Localish Reading Center. This program was carried out in five sessions. The duration of each session is 2 hours. In each session, the activities are divided into three parts, i.e., storytelling session, teaching session, and book reading session. There were 35 participants who took part in this program and 18 of them attended all sessions completely.



Figure 3. Processes in ART Program

**Time and Place of the Program**

The ART program lasts for 8 months, from planning to reporting processes. The implementation phase comprises 5 sessions, commencing on September 16th, 2023, and concluding on November 7th, 2023. The program took place at the Localish Reading Center, located in the area of Cantilan village, Sukarame, Tasikmalaya.

**Tools and Materials:**

The tools utilized in the program include storybooks, flashcards, videos, hand puppets, and pictures. The stories selected for the storytelling activity are Sundanese folklore, specifically fables and legends.

Figure 4. Story books

The library offers a selection of 36 graded reader preparation level books, 36 graded reader level 1, 2, and 3 books, along with 10 local storybooks, making a total of 81 books available for their use. During the reading sessions, the participants have the freedom to choose the storybooks they prefer to read. The student members assist and guide them in comprehending the stories.

**The Activity Steps:**

During each session, three activities occur: storytelling, English learning, and reading storybooks. The learning process adheres to steps adopted from O'Galperin (1979, cited in Sudipa, Rajeg & Laksminy, 2014). He emphasizes the importance of prioritizing skills over knowledge for the successful execution of the learning journey within a community. The steps outlined by O'Galperin (1979) are as follows:

**1.    Orientation**

During this phase, the teacher delivers a comprehensive introduction and guidance on the upcoming lessons. This encompasses explaining topic titles, essential skills, content within each topic, teaching methods, evaluation techniques, and the expected outcomes, using language that is understandable for children in elementary and junior high school."

**2.    Drills**

During the drilling phase, children engage in exercises based on their acquired knowledge. In the initial storytelling activity, drilling occurred through question-and-answer sessions conducted either individually, in groups, or collectively. In the second storytelling session, drilling took the form of a game using flashcards, prompting children to guess words corresponding to the displayed images. Moving to the third storytelling session, drilling involved retelling the story in Sundanese, the participants mother tongue, followed by the facilitator translating their utterances into English for repetition by the students. Finally, in the last two storytelling sessions, drilling was conducted through role-playing, where children assumed roles from fables and imitated the movements depicted by the characters using the Total Physical Response (TPR) method.

Figure 5. Flashcards used in the program

Figure 6. Flashcards used in the program

### 3. Feedback

During the feedback phase, participants receive feedback regarding their performance in the drilling phase. The feedback primarily consists of corrective measures and is complemented by rewards in the form of praise when participants execute the exercises effectively.

### 4. Continuation

The continuation phase is the phase for evaluation. In this phase, we assess the success of the orientation, drilling, and feedback phases occurs. If these three phases have been successful and meet the expected competencies, then the subsequent session can take place.
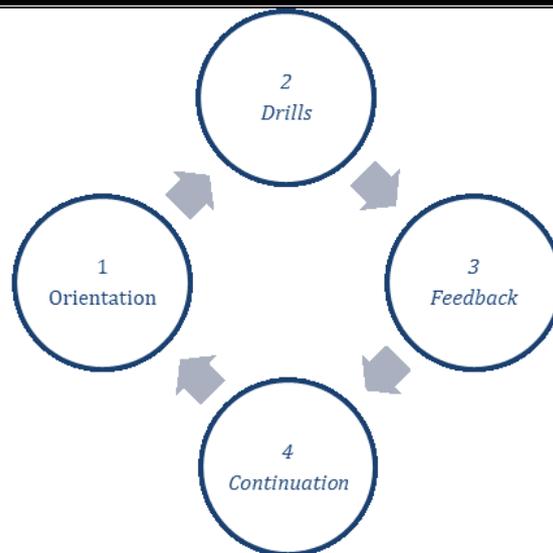
Figure 7. Steps in Learning Activity

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This activity commences and concludes with pre-test and post-test conducted through interviews. The guidelines for pre-test and post-test are:

1. Ask if the participant is aware of Sundanese folklore. Specify. (Points 1-10)
2. Inquire about the content of one of the known folktales. (Points 1-10)
3. Request the participant to narrate the folktale in English. (Points 1-10)
4. Ask about the social values embedded in the folktale. (Points 1-10)

Evaluation categories:

| 0 | : Participant cannot answer |
| 1-3 | : Participant doesn't know but attempts to answer |
| 4-7 | : Participant answers, but hesitantly |
| 7-10 | : Participant can respond clearly and articulately |

This set of instructions aims to evaluate the participants' familiarity with Sundanese folklore, their comprehension of specific stories, their ability to retell a folktale in English, and their understanding of the social values encapsulated within the tales. The scoring system assesses the participants' responses within different proficiency levels.

This program employs various engaging activities, such as interactive storytelling utilizing Q&A interactions, flashcard games, Total Physical Response (TPR), and roleplay methods. These activities are thoughtfully designed to ensure that participants actively participate both mentally and physically while absorbing learning materials. Through these methods, children and teenagers not only engage cognitively by interacting with the content but also physically immerse themselves in the learning process, fostering a more comprehensive understanding and retention of the educational materials provided in the program. The list and details of activities for each session are as follows:

Table 1. Activities in ART Program

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|---|---|
| Session 1 Storytelling: Si Kabayan West Java Local Folklore (tale) | Learning based on questions that include: Characters, settings, conflict, solution, and moral values. The questions are designed to encourage participants to answer using English language while critically thinking about the story conveyed. |
| | Local wisdom values are instilled, such as: Do not become a lazy person like Si Kabayan, etc. |
| Session 2 Storytelling: Situ Bagendit | Storytelling based on repetition. The participants are encouraged to recite several sentences and phrases from the |

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| West Java Local Folklore (legend) | folktale. The learning focuses on introducing the components within sentences: Sentence structure: Subject + predicate + object > *Nyai Bagendit hated beggars* Subject + predicate + complement > *The old beggar was very sad.* |
|---|---|
| | Instilled within are local wisdom values such as: Do not behave arrogantly like Nyai Bagendit. |
| Session 3 Storytelling: Lutung Kasarung West Java Local Folklore (legend) | While telling the story, participants engage in a game using flashcards, displaying images that express descriptive words. They are guided to express their feelings using English language. |
| | Instilled within are local wisdom values such as: Purbalarang: do not be arrogant or envious like her Purbasari: to be gentle, compassionate towards animals, kind-hearted, etc. Lutung Kasarung: helping Purbasari who was abandoned in the forest. |
| Session 4 Storytelling: The Turtle and the Monkey West Java Local Folklore (fable) | The participants are guided to retell the fable entitled "The Turtle and the Monkey" using a question-and-answer approach. The learning focuses on the generic structure of a narrative text. |
| | Instilled within are local wisdom values such as: we should not be cunning, malicious, or greedy, we must exhibit kindness, cleverness, intelligence, etc. |
| Session 5 Storytelling: Sangkuriang West Java Local Folklore (legend) | The final storytelling session is the legend of Sangkuriang. In this session, the participants are asked to act in accordance with the characters in the story. Children themselves choose the character they want to portray. |
| | This legend holds local wisdom values such as: Honesty, patience, mutual cooperation, etc. |

In the first storytelling, Tales of Si Kabayan, the storytelling was assisted by pictures on a screen and a paper. The participants are triggered to be active in the storytelling process by being asked questions related to the story. The participants are also allowed to ask questions. The questions asked by the instructor is intended to make the participants answer the questions using words on the theme of doing (jumping, running, screaming, crying, etc.) and feelings (angry, sad, happy, disappointed, etc.) and also lead to an understanding of the stages the text goes through (generic structure of narrative text). In the last session, local wisdom instilled in the stories were discussed, such as, do not give bad labels to children, do not break promises, we should love our family members, etc.

In the subsequent storytelling, the Legend of Situ Bagendit, hand puppets were used as the media. Using hand puppets to tell the story and repeating chosen phrases and sentences serves as a method to solidify sentence structures in the participants' minds. Repetition aids in internalizing language patterns and improving understanding. This interactive approach, combining visual aids with verbal elements, makes the learning process engaging while reinforcing memory, attention, and language skills. It helps participants grasp the story's narrative, themes, and linguistic elements more effectively, contributing to both language acquisition and cognitive development in an enjoyable and memorable manner.

In the third storytelling, the legend of Lutung Kasarung, participants utilize flashcards featuring descriptive images to express emotions and thoughts in English while engaging in storytelling. This interactive activity prompts the association between visuals and specific English descriptive terms, fostering vocabulary growth and language expression. Discussing feelings in English enhances language fluency and communication skills within the context of the storytelling sessions. This approach integrates storytelling, visual aids, and language practice to actively involve participants in the narrative while enhancing their linguistic abilities in an enjoyable and immersive manner.

In the fourth session, by approaching the retelling of The Turtle and the Monkey fable through a series of questions and answers, participants can break down the narrative into its structural elements, including orientation (setting, characters), conflict, resolution, and reorientation (moral lesson). This method helps in comprehending the essential components of a narrative text and understanding how they contribute to the story's overall structure and message.

The last story is Sangkuriang, it was presented in the last session (fifth session). The story is delivered with pictures. The participants were guided to retell Sangkuriang story using Bahasa Indonesia, Sundanese and English. Participants were told the types of local wisdom in the story, such as we should help one another, we should be honest, and we should be patient.



Figure 8. Activities in the ART Program

After the program concluded, an evaluation was conducted to assess the participants' English-speaking and reading skills post-implementation. The results can be seen from the answered questions, which are: Do you know any Sundanese folklores? Could you tell me one of the stories? Would you please narrate the story in English? What are the moral or social values of the folktales? These questions aim to assess whether the participants have read the book, understood the story, are able to retell the story in English, and comprehend the social or moral values embedded in the story.

The results obtained from the post-test are as follows:
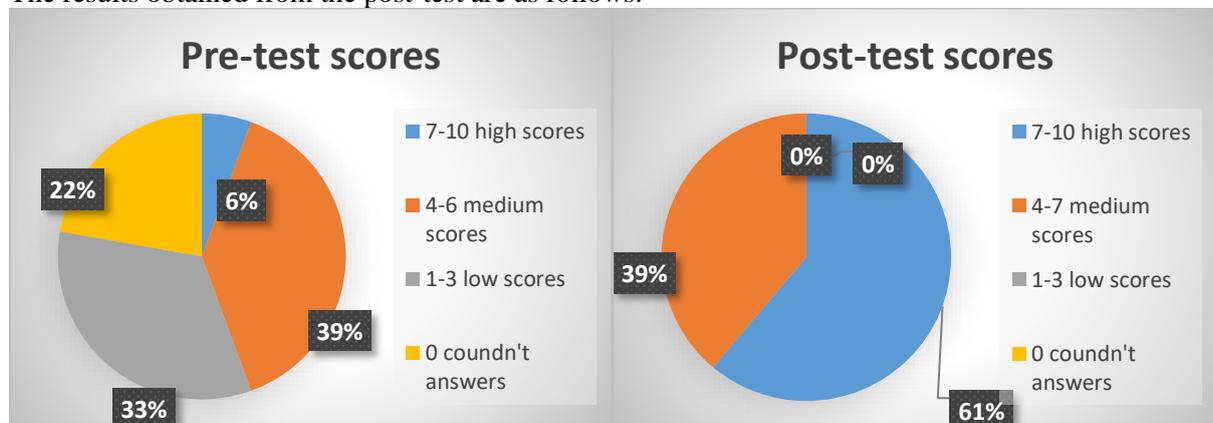


Gambar 9. Diagram Pretest and posttest results

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The results of the pre-test and post-test provide comparison before and after the program. From the pretest, 17 participants (94%) got medium and low scores, and only one participant who got high score. Meanwhile, the posttest results show that there were 14 participants who got high scores (61%) and 7 participants (39%) who got medium scores. There were none who got low scores. From the results above, it is proven that the ART Program significantly improved reading and speaking skills of the gen Z and gen Alpha in Localish reading center.

Number 4 in the pretest and posttest show the participants understanding of local wisdom values. Before program, some of the participants have learnt local wisdom values of other stories and have understood the general meaning of the term from the prior program. In the ART program, we taught the local wisdom values more thoroughly in the new stories and we also introduce local wisdom values to new participants who do not join the former program. In pretest, participants who understood local wisdom was 22%, and in posttest, it increased to 50%.
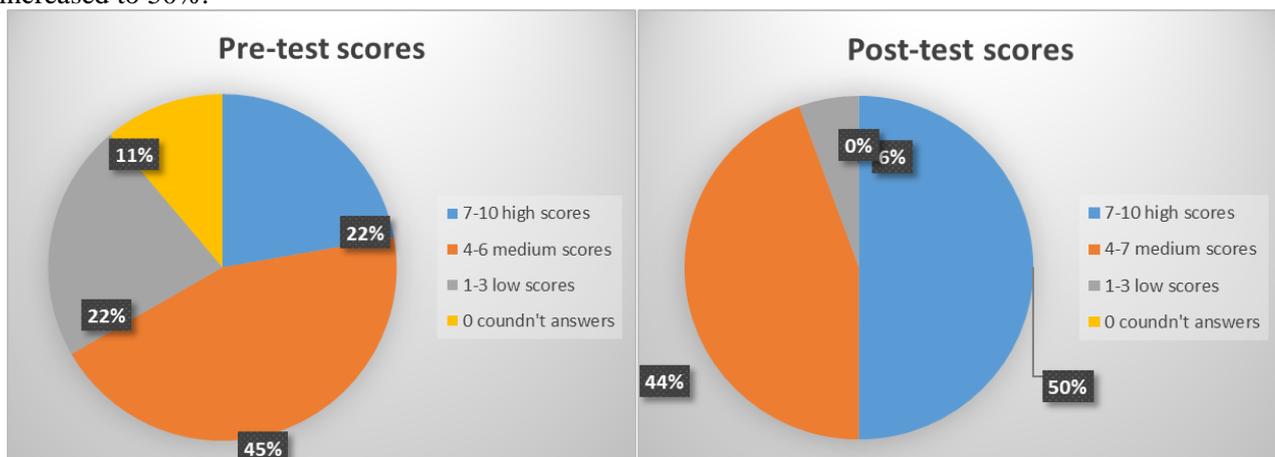


Gambar 10. Diagram Local wisdom pretest-posttest results

## V.  CONCLUSION

From the results above, the improvement in reading and speaking skills increased from 6% to 61%, and the understanding of local wisdom values increased from 22% to 50%, it can be concluded that the ART program was significantly enhanced reading and speaking skills and also instilled the understanding of local wisdom values of the participants in the Localish reading center.

The Ask, Read, and Tell (ART) methodology is integral in fortifying students' reading and speaking prowess. It establishes a cyclical process wherein students inquire, actively read, and subsequently articulate or discuss the material. The "Ask" phase ignites critical thinking, prompting inquiries that deepen comprehension. Actively engaging in the "Read" phase hones reading skills, comprehension, and vocabulary. Finally, the "Tell" phase sharpens speaking abilities as students articulate their understanding. This iterative method intertwines reading and speaking, forging a symbiotic relationship where improved comprehension significantly influences verbal expression. Ultimately, ART cultivates comprehensive content understanding while enhancing students' capacity to communicate ideas confidently and coherently.

Moreover, it is also crucial that local wisdom values were discussed at the end of each storytelling session, highlighting essential moral lessons found within stories. Values such as honoring promises, avoiding negative labels for children, emphasizing love and respect within families, are incredibly significant teachings that can positively impact individuals and communities. These values often serve as guiding principles for personal conduct and social interactions, promoting harmony, empathy, and a sense of responsibility towards oneself and others.

Discussing and reflecting on these local wisdom values from stories can be instrumental in promoting ethical behavior, fostering empathy, and building a compassionate and harmonious society. Encouraging individuals to embrace these values can lead to a more empathetic, understanding, and morally conscious community.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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