Mentoring Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teacher in Implementing the Storytelling Method in English Language Learning

Risa Rahmawati¹, Machmud Yunus²*, Deni Supriadi³, Nina Siti Kurnia⁴, Sri Wulan⁵, Derry Ridwan Maoshul⁶, Asep Saprudin⁷

¹Program Studi PGMI, STAI Al-Ma'arif Ciamis, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

²,³Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab, STAI Al-Ma'arif Ciamis, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

⁴,⁵,⁶ Program Studi PGMI, STAI Al-Ma'arif Ciamis, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

⁷Program Studi MPI, STAI Al-Ma'arif Ciamis, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Background: this article describes a community service program in the form of mentoring Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers in implementing the storytelling method in English language learning at MI Andalan Cijantung, Ciamis. English learning at the elementary level requires contextual and enjoyable strategies to increase students' motivation and participation; however, teachers often face challenges in applying interactive methods. Objective: this program aimed to enhance teachers' competence in using storytelling as an alternative teaching strategy.Methods: a qualitative descriptive approach was employed, with data collected through classroom observations, interviews with participating teachers, and documentation during the mentoring process.Result: the results indicate that the storytelling method creates a positive and enjoyable learning atmosphere, improves students' English vocabulary mastery, and increases students' motivation and active participation in learning activities. Teachers were able to effectively integrate pictures, gestures, flashcards, and simple classroom English expressions into their teaching. In addition, storytelling supported students' character development through the integration of moral and Islamic values within the stories.Conclusion: it can be concluded that teacher mentoring in storytelling is an effective and contextual approach that can be recommended as an alternative strategy for improving the quality of English language learning in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

Keywords: storytelling; english learning; madrasah ibtidaiyah; vocabulary; teacher mentoring

ABSTRAK

Latar Belakang: Artikel ini mendeskripsikan program pengabdian kepada masyarakat berupa pendampingan guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah dalam mengimplementasikan metode storytelling pada pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di MI Andalan Cijantung, Ciamis. Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di tingkat sekolah dasar memerlukan strategi yang kontekstual dan menyenangkan untuk meningkatkan motivasi dan partisipasi siswa; namun demikian, guru masih sering menghadapi kendala dalam menerapkan metode pembelajaran yang interaktif.Tujuan: Kegiatan ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kompetensi guru dalam menggunakan metode storytelling sebagai alternatif strategi pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris.Metode: Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi pembelajaran di kelas, wawancara dengan guru peserta pendampingan, serta dokumentasi selama proses pendampingan.Hasil: Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan bahwa metode storytelling mampu menciptakan suasana pembelajaran yang positif dan menyenangkan, meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata Bahasa Inggris siswa, serta meningkatkan motivasi dan partisipasi aktif siswa dalam proses pembelajaran. Guru mampu mengintegrasikan media gambar, gerak tubuh, flashcards, dan penggunaan ekspresi Bahasa Inggris sederhana di kelas secara efektif. Selain itu, storytelling juga mendukung pengembangan karakter siswa melalui integrasi nilai-nilai moral dan keislaman dalam cerita yang disampaikan.Kesimpulan: Pendampingan guru dalam penerapan metode storytelling terbukti efektif dan kontekstual, sehingga

dapat direkomendasikan sebagai strategi alternatif untuk meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

Kata kunci: storytelling; pembelajaran bahasa Inggris; Madrasah Ibtidaiyah; kosa kata; pendampingan guru

INTRODUCTION

English is one of the subjects introduced at the basic education level, including in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), with the aim of familiarizing students with basic vocabulary, simple expressions, and fostering early interest in foreign languages (Indah Rezeki et al., 2021). At this level, English learning is not oriented toward mastery of complex grammatical structures, but rather toward developing listening and speaking skills in a natural way(Kanaan et al., 2025). Therefore, English instruction in MI needs to be designed in a contextual, meaningful, and enjoyable manner that aligns with students' cognitive, emotional, and social development, so that learning activities can support both language acquisition and positive learning experiences(Satriani, 2019).

However, in practice, English learning at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level is often still dominated by conventional teaching methods that rely heavily on rote memorization and teacher-centered instruction (Yunus et al., 2025). Such approaches tend to limit students' opportunities to actively use the language, resulting in low motivation and minimal participation during learning activities. Several recent studies highlight that learning methods emphasizing interaction, communication, and student involvement are more effective in increasing students' interest and engagement in English learning at the elementary level. These findings underline the importance of encouraging teachers to adopt creative and innovative teaching strategies that are more responsive to students' learning needs.

One teaching method that is considered relevant and effective for young learners is storytelling (Satriani, 2019). Through storytelling, English vocabulary and simple expressions can be introduced in a natural and meaningful context, making it easier for students to understand and remember new language items. Storytelling also creates a positive and enjoyable classroom atmosphere, allowing students to participate actively without feeling pressured or anxious (Romadlon & Azmi, 2024). Moreover, stories can be designed to reflect students' daily experiences and cultural backgrounds, enabling teachers to integrate character education and moral values, including Islamic values, into English learning in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

Although various studies and community service activities have demonstrated the benefits of storytelling in improving students' motivation, confidence, and participation in English learning, structured mentoring programs for teachers in implementing this method are still limited, particularly in the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Many teachers face challenges in selecting appropriate stories, adapting language levels, and integrating values within the storytelling process. Therefore, this community service activity in the form of teacher mentoring was conducted at MI Andalan Cijantung, Ciamis, to strengthen teachers' competence in applying the storytelling method in English learning. This article aims to describe the implementation process and outcomes of the teacher mentoring program, as well as its contribution to improving the quality of English learning in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

This community service activity was designed as a Community Service Program (PkM) using a qualitative descriptive approach, focusing on mentoring and training teachers in implementing the storytelling method in English language learning at MI Andalan Cijantung, Ciamis. The program was conducted over a three-week period, from November 3 to November 21, 2025, during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The activity involved a systematic mentoring process aimed at improving teachers' pedagogical skills and confidence in delivering English lessons through storytelling. The subjects of the program included teachers of MI Andalan Cijantung as the primary participants, with students involved indirectly through classroom implementation of the storytelling method during English learning sessions.

The implementation of the PkM program was carried out in three main stages. The planning stage involved an initial needs analysis to identify teachers' challenges in English instruction, followed by the preparation of training materials tailored to the madrasah context. The implementation stage consisted of workshops and hands-on mentoring sessions that guided teachers in selecting appropriate stories, simplifying language use, and applying storytelling techniques in the classroom. During this stage, teachers practiced using various stories such as Roro Jonggrang, R.A. Kartini, Sangkuriang, The Fox and the Crow, The Lion and the Bear, and The Lion and the Mouse as learning media. The evaluation stage was conducted through joint reflection sessions, where teachers shared experiences, discussed challenges encountered during classroom implementation, and provided feedback on the effectiveness of the storytelling method in engaging students.

Data for this community service program were collected through multiple qualitative techniques to ensure comprehensive understanding of the mentoring outcomes (Santos et al., 2020). Observations were conducted during classroom learning activities to examine how the storytelling method was implemented and how students responded to the learning process. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with participating teachers to explore their perceptions, responses, and challenges in applying storytelling in English lessons. In addition, documentation in the form of photographs, lesson plans, teaching materials, and reflection notes was collected to support observational and interview data. The data were analyzed through stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, with a focus on identifying patterns related to the effectiveness of the storytelling method in enhancing English learning at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the community service activity indicate that teacher mentoring in implementing the storytelling method had a positive impact on the English learning process at MI Andalan Cijantung, Ciamis. Based on observations and interviews, approximately 85% of participating teachers stated that the storytelling method helped them deliver English learning materials more easily and engagingly. During classroom implementation, teachers used simple stories relevant to students' daily lives, supported by visual media, flashcards, and expressive gestures. Students appeared more enthusiastic, actively responded to

questions, and were more confident in pronouncing English vocabulary. Approximately 80% of students showed increased active participation during the learning process.

Interview results revealed that storytelling not only enhanced cognitive aspects such as vocabulary mastery, but also affected students' affective and character development (Ekawati et al., 2022). The stories delivered by teachers contained values of honesty, cooperation, responsibility, and Islamic values relevant to the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. These findings support previous studies indicating that storytelling is effective in increasing students' motivation and language skills at the elementary school level. Thus, teacher mentoring through storytelling can serve as an effective, contextual, and enjoyable solution for English learning in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

Picture 1 Socialization of English Learning Activities

Picture 2 Implementation of the Storytelling Method

Picture 3 Practice of the Storytelling Method

The mentoring activities also contributed to improving teachers' confidence and pedagogical creativity in teaching English at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level. Through continuous guidance and classroom practice, teachers became more skilled in selecting appropriate stories, simplifying language use, and adapting content to students' developmental levels. This mentoring process encouraged teachers to move away from teacher-centered instruction toward more interactive and student-centered learning, making English lessons more dynamic and meaningful for young learners(Ardita et al., 2024; Muhammad Zaenuri et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the storytelling method created a more positive learning atmosphere in the classroom. Students were more willing to participate actively, respond to questions, and practice English vocabulary without hesitation (Elkhimry, 2022; Romadlon & Azmi, 2024). The combination of stories, visual media, and expressive delivery helped maintain students' attention throughout the lesson (Silviyanti et al., 2022). As a result, learning activities became more enjoyable, which supported sustained student engagement and improved classroom interaction between teachers and students (Kanaan et al., 2025).

In addition to improving language skills, the implementation of storytelling supported character building and value internalization among students. Stories used in English lessons were intentionally designed to reflect moral values and Islamic principles relevant to the

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah context. This approach allowed students to learn English while simultaneously developing positive attitudes such as honesty, cooperation, responsibility, and respect. Therefore, mentoring teachers in implementing storytelling not only enhanced English learning outcomes but also contributed to holistic student development in madrasah-based education.

CONCLUSION

The Community Service Program (PkM) in the form of mentoring Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers in implementing the storytelling method in English language learning at MI Andalan Cijantung, Ciamis was successfully carried out and had a positive impact on the learning process. This mentoring program improved teachers' understanding and skills in designing and implementing English learning that is more creative, communicative, and suitable for MI students' characteristics.

The application of the storytelling method proved effective in increasing students' learning motivation, active participation, and English vocabulary mastery. In addition, this method also supported students' character development through the integration of moral and Islamic values conveyed contextually through stories. The learning atmosphere became more enjoyable and meaningful for students.

The implications of this PkM activity indicate that the storytelling method can be used as an alternative strategy for English language learning in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. It is recommended that teachers continuously develop story variations and supporting media, and that schools provide support for teacher competence development. Future PkM activities may focus on sustainable mentoring and more quantitative measurement of learning outcomes.

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