

ENHANCING THE CHILDREN CULTURAL LITERACY THROUGH POPULAR DAYAK MAANYAN FABLES IN PALANGKA RAYA

¹Ibnu Yustiya Ramadhan,²Nirena Ade Christy,³Stefani Ratu Lestariningsyas
⁴Ade Yusuf Ferudyn

^{1,2,3}Indonesian Language and Literature Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Palangka
Raya University, Palangkaraya, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia

⁴Out of School Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Palangka Raya University,
Palangkaraya, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia

Author's email:

¹ibnu.yustiya@fkip.upr.ac.id; ²nirenaadechristy@fkip.upr.ac.id; ³stefani.lestari@fkip.upr.ac.id
⁴ade.yusuf.f@fkip.upr.ac.id;

Corresponding author: ibnu.yustiya@fkip.upr.ac.id

Abstract. *This activity aims to introduce and preserve the local culture of the Dayak Maanyan through the reading of popular fables to children at the Amanda Orphanage in Palangka Raya City, Central Kalimantan. The fable reading serves as a means to enhance cultural literacy among the children. This community service method involves interactive storytelling of Dayak Maanyan fables, designed to teach cultural values and foster children's imagination and critical thinking skills. Success indicators include the number of active participants, their understanding of local culture, increased creativity and expression, as well as feedback from the participants and orphanage administrators. Through this activity, it is expected that orphanage children will gain a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the Dayak Maanyan cultural heritage, contributing to its preservation.*

Keywords: *Children Literature, Cultural Literation, Dayak Maanyan Fable.*

1. INTRODUCTION

A fable is a type of literary work that uses animal characters in its stories. This literary genre belongs to the tradition of classical literature, existing for ages and often passed down orally to children. It contains various moral teachings, educational values, heroism, customs, and the history of a community, presented as a medium of entertainment (Junaini, 2017). Such stories are valuable for shaping children's character and introducing them to local culture (Juanda, 2018).

Fables, being targeted at children, fall within the scope of children's literature. Children's literature is tailored in terms of language and content to suit their age, personality, and way of life (Wahyuni, 2016). Therefore, the function of fables aligns with the purposes of children's literature as outlined by Tarigan (2011), namely: (1) providing pleasure, (2) developing imagination and encouraging reflection on nature, humanity, experiences, or ideas in various ways, (3) offering new experiences, (4) broadening horizons, (5) introducing the universality of experiences, and (6) serving as a primary means of cultural inheritance.

In the context of orphanages, where children may have limited access to their cultural heritage, the reading of these fables serves as a bridge connecting them to their ancestral legacy. Through stories delivered in an engaging and interactive manner, children are not only encouraged to understand the values embedded in the tales but also to develop their imagination and critical thinking skills. This approach can also enhance their literacy abilities, which are crucial for their future education.

Additionally, this initiative can involve various stakeholders, such as educators, social workers, and prominent figures from the Dayak Maanyan community, working together to create a supportive and educational environment. This collaboration not only enriches the children's learning experience but also strengthens community ties in Palangka

Raya. Thus, introducing local culture through the reading of Dayak Maanyan fables in orphanages contributes not only to cultural preservation but also to building a strong moral and intellectual foundation for the children, preparing them to become knowledgeable individuals who positively contribute to society.

The Dayak Maanyan, a sub-ethnic group of the Dayak people in Central Kalimantan, possess a strong oral tradition (Diman, 2020). Several studies have explored Dayak Maanyan culture, such as Septiana et al. (2019) on Riak rituals and Efrata (2022) on cultural systems in the Dayak Maanyan community. Linarto et al. (2024) also analyzed the character values within Dayak Maanyan fables, resulting in a collection of fables that can introduce Dayak Maanyan culture. This study utilizes Linarto et al.'s findings to enhance children's cultural literacy by reading Dayak Maanyan fables.

Efforts to promote cultural literacy have been carried out through various means. For instance, Desyandri et al. (2024) enhanced cultural literacy through music education, while Fadhillah et al. (2022) incorporated traditional games from East Aceh Coast. In this activity, cultural literacy is fostered by reading Dayak Maanyan fables, complemented by other activities to measure participants' understanding of Dayak Maanyan culture.

The program specifically targets children in orphanages since fables are part of children's literature. For orphanage children, who may have limited access to their cultural heritage, reading fables acts as a bridge to connect them with their ancestral traditions. Through engaging and interactive storytelling, children are encouraged not only to comprehend the values within the stories but also to develop imagination and critical thinking skills. This approach also enhances their literacy skills, essential for their future education.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Dayak Maanyan Culture*

Culture is a product inherently created by a society. A community's understanding of its various experiences produces rules, customs, and values that guide its members through life. These enduring customs and values passed down across generations are known as culture.

Over time and with the progression of eras, culture inevitably undergoes change. New challenges compel societies to adapt, often altering their customs and values. In other words, as societies evolve, so does their culture, rendering it dynamic. This dynamism sometimes leads to the displacement and loss of certain customs and values within a society.

Indonesia, with its diverse population, is home to numerous cultures, including that of the Dayak Maanyan people, a subgroup of the Dayak in Central Kalimantan. The Dayak Maanyan are known for their rich oral tradition (Diman, 2020), which serves as the medium through which they share their worldview with fellow community members. This oral tradition preserves the cultural identity of the Dayak Maanyan people.

In contemporary contexts, traditional culture is often juxtaposed with modern culture. Traditional culture encompasses values, customs, and beliefs passed down through generations and serves as a guide for navigating life. According to Hirai (1983), all human activities maintained, preserved, and taught to a group over generations can be considered traditional culture.

Conversely, modern culture arises from developments across various fields, often spearheaded by Western societies. New technologies introduced by Western countries provide fresh ways for communities to interpret their surroundings, often bringing Western values into contest with indigenous traditions.

Conflicts between traditional and modern cultures can lead to the disappearance of one culture, often the traditional. To prevent this, efforts are made to preserve traditional culture, ensuring it endures for future generations.

The Dayak Maanyan community has made various efforts to preserve their traditional culture, such as documentation to safeguard their cultural knowledge. In academia,

documentation and analysis of Dayak Maanyan culture have been conducted as part of these preservation efforts.

For example, Diman (2020) analyzed the Dayak Maanyan's strong oral tradition and documented their songs to ensure these traditions could be understood and passed on. Effrata (2022) used phenomenological analysis to define the religious, artistic, and belief systems of the Dayak Maanyan, preserving knowledge about their culture. Similarly, Septiana et al. (2019) conducted ethnographic research on the Riak ceremony, documenting and explaining the processes involved in this ritual.

2.2 Fables and Cultural Preservation

Fable is a children's story that uses anthropomorphic animals as characters. As a form of children's literature, fables typically teach lessons through the actions and behaviors of their characters. Thus, fables are categorized as part of children's literature.

As part of children's literature, fables are an intriguing subject of literary study. As literary works, they can be viewed as imaginative transformations of reality, often incorporating values closely related to the societies from which they originate. According to Abrams (1971), literature is an imitation of the universe in which it is created. Moreover, fables, as works intended for children, should be rich in imaginative elements to nurture children's imagination, fantasy, and cognitive development (Muzaki, 2020). In other words, fables serve as a medium for imparting cultural teachings specific to the societies in which they were created.

In the context of cultural preservation, fables hold significant importance as children's literature. They can serve as tools for preserving culture, as demonstrated by various studies on literature and cultural preservation. For instance, Muliadi (2016) analyzed classical literature to document the cultural values it contains, while Saroni and Winata (2019) highlighted how the performance of the *Tarling* drama script *Dokter Palsu* contributes to the inheritance and preservation of Indramayu culture. Similarly, Yulsafli (2020) studied cultural codes within Acehese fables.

Based on these studies, research on the *Popular Dayak Maanyan Fables* book is warranted. This research can document the cultural aspects of Dayak Maanyan society embedded in their fables, thereby contributing to the preservation of Dayak Maanyan culture for future generations.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The methods used in this community service activity consist of various efforts designed to introduce the local Dayak Maanyan culture through the reading of popular fables and creative activities such as drawing and small dramas. A Fable Collection book titled "*Fabel Populer Dayak Maanyan*" is used as source material. This book consists of fables originated from Dayak Maanyan and is the result of previous studies done by another team.

The reading of popular Dayak Maanyan fables is conducted by two individuals, with the fables selected based on criteria such as relevance to the values being taught, appropriateness for the children's age group, and the uniqueness of the stories. Each session begins with the reading of a selected fable by team members. After the reading, a discussion is held with the children to explore the story and the cultural values embedded within. This discussion is guided by team members knowledgeable about Dayak Maanyan culture to ensure that the children fully understand the story and its significance.

Following the discussion, the children are encouraged to express their understanding of the fable through creative activities. First, they are guided to draw their favorite characters from the fables and explain why they chose those characters. This activity allows the children's comprehension of the fable to be measured through their explanations. Additionally, this trains their critical thinking and ability to express

opinions.

Furthermore, small drama activities are organized where the children reenact scenes from the fables they heard. They take on roles of the characters and perform scenes they remember or found interesting. This activity trains the children to perform in front of an audience and enhances their ability to express emotions and ideas through drama.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The introduction of local culture through the reading of popular Dayak Maanyan fables was held at the Amanda Orphanage, located at Jl. Ishkar Udang KM. 9, Tjilik Riwut, Palangka Raya. The event was attended by all the staff and children of the orphanage. The main goal was to enhance the children's knowledge and cultural literacy through the Popular Dayak Maanyan Fable book. A series of activities were conducted, including reading the fables and creative sessions like drawing and small drama performances. These activities were designed to introduce the local Dayak Maanyan culture found in the Popular Dayak Maanyan Fables.

On the first day, the event began with the team explaining its purpose to the staff and children at Amanda Orphanage to help participants understand the intended outcomes. The first activity was reading the Popular Dayak Maanyan Fables. Two team members read two fables chosen by the children: *The Monkey and the Ape* and *The Wild Chicken and the Crocodile*. These stories featured animals commonly found in Kalimantan forests, making the children more interested in listening. Before reading, the children were asked a few introductory questions to gauge their prior knowledge of Dayak Maanyan culture. Most of the children were unfamiliar with the local culture but recognized the animals featured in the fables.

After listening to the readings, the children participated in a discussion about the fables. This discussion aimed to provide a deeper understanding of the local culture within the stories. It also helped assess the children's ability to identify and understand the cultural values embedded in the fables. Older children, such as those in upper primary, junior high, and senior high school, were able to articulate the values they learned and recall the most interesting parts of the stories.

The next activity involved drawing. The children were asked to draw their favorite characters from the fables and explain why they chose them. This activity fostered creativity and trained the children to provide arguments for their choices.

The children enthusiastically drew their favorite characters. Most chose characters that conveyed positive messages, such as the Squirrel, who reminded others to correct their mistakes, the respectful Wild Chicken, and the friendly Crocodile who was open to knowing others. Some children also picked amusing characters, like the clever and agile Monkey and Ape.

After completing their drawings, each child explained why they chose a particular character. Most were able to articulate their reasons well, citing lessons they learned from the fables. This showed that the children could grasp the cultural values embedded in the stories.

Before concluding the first day, the team presented a physical copy of the Popular Dayak Maanyan Fable book to the orphanage staff. The book was intended to enrich the orphanage's reading materials and encourage the children to read other fables in the collection.

The second day's activities focused on small drama performances. The children were asked to portray characters from the fables they had read. They reenacted scenes they remembered and found interesting. The team provided guidance and support to help the children perform the drama.

This activity trained the children's memory and honed their imagination. They interpreted the fables they heard and expressed the characters, dialogue, and scenes they selected. This also helped measure their ability to understand and retell the stories

and their embedded values.

Additionally, the team's guidance encouraged the children to develop confidence in performing before an audience. The activity also helped them improve their communication and teamwork skills as they collaborated with peers to stage the scenes. Proper guidance enabled the children to develop communication skills, showcase the values learned from the fables, and express emotions and ideas through the chosen scenes. Thus, this small drama activity became an effective educational tool to support the children's cognitive and emotional development.

CONCLUSION

Reading fables to children can enhance their understanding of the values embedded in the stories, which often carry local cultural elements. The intriguing characters in the fables increase children's interest in listening to and reading the stories. The local cultural values embedded in the fables are more easily understood by children. Additionally, creative activities like drawing and small dramas deepen their understanding of the fable characters. By choosing their favorite characters to draw and explaining their choices, children are encouraged to think critically about why the characters in the fables act the way they do and what cultural values they teach. Performing small dramas further helps children understand the characters by expressing their dialogue and acting out scenes.

REFERENCES

- Abrams, M. H. (1971). *The mirror and the lamp: Romantic theory and the critical tradition* (Vol. 360). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Desyandri, D., Zuryanty, Z., & Mansurdin, M. (2020). Pelatihan pembelajaran seni musik sebagai sarana literasi budaya untuk guru sekolah dasar: *Music arts learning training as a means of culture literacy for elementary school teachers*. *PengabdianMu: Jurnal Ilmiah Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 5(2), 119–126. <https://doi.org/10.33084/pengabdianmu.v5i2.1022>
- Diman, P. (2020). Nyanyian adat masyarakat Dayak Maanyan: Suatu pendekatan hermeneutika. *Enggang: Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, dan Budaya*, 1(1), 40–56. <https://doi.org/10.37304/enggang.v1i1.2461>
- Effrata, E. (2022). Fenomenologi sosial suku Dayak Maanyan. *Jurnal Sociopolitico*, 4(1), 13–22. <https://doi.org/10.54683/sociopolitico.v4i1.55>
- Hirai, N. (1983). Traditional cultures and modernization: Several problems in the case of Japan. Dalam *Cultural identity and modernization in Asian countries*.
- Juanda, J. (2018). Eksplorasi nilai fabel sebagai sarana alternatif edukasi siswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra*, 18(2), 294–303. https://doi.org/10.17509/bs_jpbsp.v18i2.15517
- Junaini, E., Agustina, E., & Canrhas, A. (2017). Analisis nilai pendidikan karakter dalam cerita rakyat Seluma. *Jurnal Ilmiah Korpus*, 1(1), 39–43. <https://doi.org/10.33369/jik.v1i1.3202>
- Lazarus Linarto, P. P., Perdana, I., Christy, N. A., Apriliani, S., & Harapani, S. N. (2024). Interpretasi nilai karakter dalam cerita fabel Dayak Maanyan Kabupaten Barito Timur. *Enggang: Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, dan Budaya*, 4(2), 354–370. <https://doi.org/10.37304/enggang.v4i2.14525>
- Muhammad, A. F., Hariadi, J., Kurniawan, R., Rangkuti, Y. A., Syahputra, M., & Irwansyah, D. (2022). Membumikan kembali olahraga dan permainan tradisional di era digital melalui literasi budaya di wilayah pesisir Aceh Timur. *Jurnal Bina Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 3(1), 40–46. <https://doi.org/10.55081/jbpkm.v3i1.760>
- Muliadi, M. (2020). Telaah nilai-nilai dalam sastra klasik sebagai upaya pemertahanan budaya. *Prosiding ASBAM Ke-5*.
- Saroni, S., & Winata, N. T. (2019). Pementasan naskah drama Tarling "Dokter Palsu" karya Hj. Dariyah sebagai upaya pewarisan dan pemertahanan budaya Indramayu. Dalam *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Linguistik dan Sastra (SEMANTIKS)* (Vol. 1, hlm. 671–681).
- Septiana, D., Santosa, R., & Sumarlani, S. (2019). Riak in Dayak Maanyan ritual tradition (An ethnolinguistics study). *Langkawi: Journal of The Association for Arabic and English*, 5(2), 79–90. <http://dx.doi.org/10.31332/lkw.v5i2.1378>
- Tarigan, H. G. (2011). *Prinsip-prinsip dasar sastra*. Bandung: Penerbit Angkasa.
- Wahyuni, D. (2016). Kreativitas berbahasa dalam sastra anak Indonesia. *Madah: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, 7(2), 127–146. <https://doi.org/10.31503/madah.v7i2.44>

The Fourth International Conference on Government Education Management and Tourism
(ICoGEMT-4)
Bandung, Indonesia, January 25, 2025

Yulsafli, Y. (2020). Kode-kode budaya dalam fabel masyarakat Aceh. *Jurnal Metamorfosa*, 8(2), 137-153.