

**TEACHING GREEN: A CASE STUDY ON EMBEDDING
SUSTAINABILITY CONCEPTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
TEACHING AT SMP NEGERI 12 SEKAYU**

A THESIS

by:

Ida Musirini

Student Number: 06012622428005

Magister Program in Language Education



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FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
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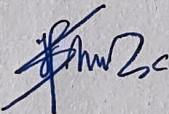
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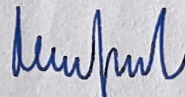
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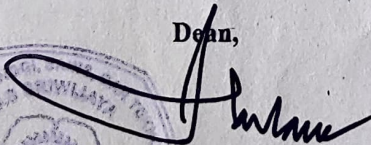
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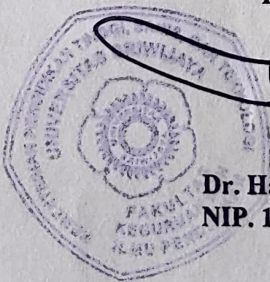


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Day : Wednesday

Date : July 9th, 2025

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned,

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Certify that the thesis entitled "Teaching Green: A Case Study on Embedding Sustainability Concepts in English Language Teaching at SMP Negeri 12 Sekayu" is my work, and I did not do any plagiarism or inappropriate quotation against the ethics and rules commended by the Ministry of Education of Republic of Indonesia Number 17, 2010 regarding plagiarism in higher education. Therefore, I deserve to face court if I am found to have plagiarized this work.

Palembang, July 14th, 2025

The Undersigned,



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DEDICATION

With thoughtful appreciation and sincere affection, I dedicate this thesis to those who have consistently supported me throughout every stage of this academic endeavor,

My husband

Denny Saputra, for always standing beside me with love, patience, and support.

My children

Adam Azzahry, Ibrahim Kenzo, Muhammad Azzio, and Naomi Azura, for always cheering me on and giving me the strength to keep going.

My parents and my brothers

for always loving me unconditionally since forever.

Education builds civilization

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, all praise and gratitude are devoted to Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala for bestowing upon the writer the strength, guidance, and capability to complete this academic journey.

Peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad SAW, whose life and teachings continue to illuminate the path of humanity.

This thesis is submitted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in the Magister Program in Language Education at Sriwijaya University.

On this occasion, the writer wishes to extend gratitude and deep appreciation to the following individuals and institutions whose support and contributions have been invaluable throughout the completion of this thesis.

1. The Government of Musi Banyuasin Regency and The Department of Education and Culture of Musi Banyuasin Regency, for providing scholarships and opportunities for me to continue my study at the master's level, as well as for supporting the realization of this scholarly work.
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4. All lecturers and staff of the Magister Program in Language Education at Sriwijaya University, for their knowledge, support, and assistance in the academic journey.

Palembang, July 14th, 2025

The Writer



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TEACHING GREEN: A CASE STUDY ON EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY CONCEPTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AT SMP NEGERI 12 SEKAYU

ABSTRACT

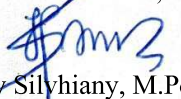
As sustainability education gains global prominence, integrating sustainability concepts into English Language Teaching (ELT) has become increasingly important, particularly in the Indonesian context. This case study explores the integration of sustainability principles into the English curriculum at SMP Negeri 12 Sekayu, emphasizing the dual role of ELT in promoting environmental awareness and developing students' language skills. Using a qualitatively-driven mixed-methods design within a teacher research framework, data were collected from 42 seventh- and eighth-grade students through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to assess their sustainability consciousness in three dimensions: awareness (knowingness), attitudes, and behaviors. The results indicated a high level of sustainability consciousness among students, with grand mean scores of 3.29 for knowingness, 3.27 for attitudes, and 3.27 for behaviors. Among the three pillars of sustainability, social sustainability emerged as the area with the highest awareness and commitment, while economic sustainability showed relatively lower engagement. Furthermore, students reported positive changes in personal habits, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and promoting sustainable practices within their families and communities—demonstrating the internalization of sustainability values and their roles as agents of environmental change. In light of these insights, the study recommends integrating sustainability into ELT through contextualized reading materials, project-based learning tasks, and classroom activities that promote sustainable actions. Although conducted in a semi-urban context, the research illustrates ELT's potential to support sustainability education and calls for further studies to broaden its applicability.

Keywords: *Sustainability Education, English Language Teaching, Environmental Awareness*


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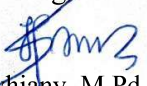

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This part discusses: (1) background of study, (2) problem of study, (3) objective of study, and (4) significance of study.

1.1 Background of Study

Sustainability education has emerged as a critical theme in recent decades due to the growing awareness of climate change and environmental degradation. Educators across the globe are increasingly called upon to incorporate sustainability concepts into their teaching to prepare students for the ecological challenges of the future (Redman, Wiek, & Barth, 2021). Education sectors at all levels have responded by embedding sustainability into curricula and classroom practices, aiming to raise environmentally responsible generations (Filho et al., 2020). At the global level, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have played a pivotal role in encouraging schools to integrate sustainability and environmental education into their programs (Aleixo et al., 2020).

In this context, the English language—being a global medium of communication—has a unique and strategic role in promoting sustainability values. Guslyakova et al. (2021) argue that English is a powerful platform for addressing global issues such as sustainability and facilitating intercultural exchange. Similarly, Cebrian et al. (2020) emphasize that Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) should be embedded across all levels of education, including English language instruction. Gan (2023) further illustrates that sustainability topics can be meaningfully integrated into English learning through customized and context-driven teaching strategies. Such integration not only enhances students' language competence but also deepens their environmental awareness.

While the integration of sustainability education has gained momentum globally, its implementation in semi-urban schools in Indonesia remains underexplored. SMP Negeri 12 Sekayu is characterized by distinct geographical and social attributes that offer both opportunities and challenges in the integration

of sustainability concepts within the framework of English language education. The institution's proximity to Pantai Bongen places it in a region that is particularly susceptible to the adverse effects of climate change, manifested through phenomena such as increasing temperatures, seasonal flooding, and coastal erosion. These environmental realities not only significantly influence the daily lives of students but also create a pertinent and authentic context for issue-based environmental education. Such contextual settings allow for the engagement of students in reading, analyzing, and discussing English texts that pertain to critical topics including coastal conservation, marine ecosystems, and strategies for climate change adaptation. Conversely, the effectiveness of delivering sustainability-focused content is impeded by constraints such as limited educational resources and a relatively low level of environmental literacy within the surrounding community. These challenges necessitate a thoughtful approach by educators in addressing the complexities of teaching sustainability in an English language context. Thus, leveraging the local context not only serves as an innovative pedagogical strategy but also enhances the relevance of English language learning by cultivating environmental awareness among students from an early age. The site serves as a powerful entry point for contextual learning, allowing sustainability themes to be meaningfully connected with English language instruction.

Moreover, Sekayu has recently faced unusual climate-related phenomena, such as prolonged droughts and unpredictable rainfall patterns, which have directly influenced the lives of students and their families—particularly those involved in farming and local businesses. These real-life environmental challenges make sustainability concepts more tangible and relatable, providing authentic content for English teaching materials. By drawing from local realities, this study brings forward a novel approach that combines language learning with localized environmental awareness, aiming not only to improve students' English proficiency but also to cultivate responsible and informed young citizens capable of responding to the ecological challenges around them.

Being relatively distant from urban centers, the school also experiences limitations in accessing up-to-date educational resources relevant to global issues.

Therefore, it is both a challenge and an opportunity to examine how English instruction at this school can be adapted and enriched with sustainability materials that are locally contextualized and meaningful for the students.

Several previous studies have emphasized the significance of embedding sustainability into language education. Yu et al. (2024) highlight the impact of interdisciplinary curriculum designs and innovative classroom strategies in increasing students' environmental literacy. Ge et al. (2023) explore trends in China's sustainable foreign language education, emphasizing the need for culturally sensitive and digitally enhanced instruction that fosters sustainable citizenship. Meanwhile, Oknasari et al. (2023), in their evaluation of green school programs in Tangerang, found that implementation gaps persist and that proactive strategies are needed to align school governance with sustainability goals.

While these studies offer valuable insights, there remains a clear gap in research regarding the integration of sustainability into English language instruction at the junior high school level in semi-urban or rural Indonesian contexts. Most existing literature focuses on urban schools or higher education, leaving the challenges and opportunities in more remote settings underexplored.

This study seeks to address that gap by investigating how sustainability concepts can be effectively integrated into English language teaching at SMP Negeri 12 Sekayu. Using a case study approach, the research aims to explore teaching strategies that are both innovative and locally relevant. Additionally, it examines how such integration affects students' environmental awareness and understanding. The findings of this study are anticipated to provide tangible exemplars of how English language educators can effectively incorporate sustainability-related content into their pedagogical practices by drawing upon locally pertinent contexts, such as the environmental challenges surrounding Pantai Bongen Sekayu. These insights are intended to serve as a practical reference for the development of lesson plans, the adaptation of instructional materials, and the enhancement of student engagement in discussions focused on sustainability issues within the English language framework.

Moreover, by illustrating an approach grounded in contextual relevance to sustainability education, this study aspires to make a significant contribution to the broader national initiatives aimed at embedding Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) within the junior high school curriculum in Indonesia. Such integration not only aligns with global educational goals but also fosters a generation of students who are not only linguistically proficient but also environmentally conscious and equipped to contribute meaningfully to sustainability discourse.

Based on this background, the researcher aims to explore how sustainability concepts can be integrated into English teaching at SMP Negeri 12 Sekayu and to examine the impact of this approach on students' understanding and awareness of environmental issues.

1.2 Problems of Study

The problems of the study are formulated in the following questions:

1. What is the level of students' sustainability consciousness in terms of awareness, attitudes, and behaviors at SMP Negeri 12 Sekayu?
2. What aspects of sustainability (environmental, social, economic) do students show the strongest and weakest awareness or commitment toward at SMP Negeri 12 Sekayu?
3. How do students demonstrate that their personal habits have changed to support environmental sustainability at SMP Negeri 12 Sekayu?

1.3 Objectives of Study

In accordance with the above problems of study, the aims of this study are:

1. to examine the level of students' sustainability consciousness in terms of awareness, attitudes, and behaviors at SMP Negeri 12 Sekayu.
2. to identify which aspects of sustainability—environmental, social, or economic—students are most and least aware of or committed to at SMP Negeri 12 Sekayu.

3. to investigate the students demonstrate that their personal habits have changed to support environmental sustainability at SMP Negeri 12 Sekayu.

1.4 Significance of Study

This study hopefully gives a significant contribution to ones in the field of English language teaching which are as follows:

1. For Teachers

This study offers actionable strategies and insights into effectively incorporating sustainability concepts into English language curricula, thus enhancing their instructional methods and promoting professional growth. By identifying and addressing challenges associated with this integration, teachers are better equipped to overcome obstacles and deliver more impactful lessons.

2. For Students

The integration of sustainability into English language teaching fosters a deeper understanding of environmental issues and cultivates greater environmental awareness. This approach not only enriches their learning experience but also helps them develop essential critical thinking and problem-solving skills related to sustainability.

3. For School

The study supports curriculum enhancement by aligning educational practices with contemporary global issues, thereby strengthening its role as an innovator in education and potentially improving its reputation within the community.

4. For Other Researchers

This study provides valuable data and methodological insights that can serve as a reference for future research on integrating sustainability into various educational contexts, contributing to a broader academic discourse on effective teaching practices and sustainability education.

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