

**DESIGNING CHILDREN’S BOOKS TO SUPPORT THE
INCLUSION OF ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY IN ELT**

A THESIS

by

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LANGUAGE AND ART EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**



**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY**

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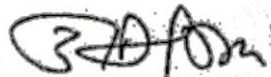


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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the author's core reasons for keeping going: the dearest family and those the writer has ever met have put their trust and care in the writer.

Special dedication wished upon (alm.) Datuk H. Abraham Ilyas, an astounding author, and this thesis author's grandfather.

Motto:

"Man Proposes, God Disposes"

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Finally, the author hopes this thesis will benefit students studying English and pursuing learning media development, such as visual narratives and advanced science, technology, and arts.

Palembang, March 2024

The Author

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DESIGNING CHILDREN'S BOOKS TO SUPPORT THE INCLUSION OF ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY IN ELT

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to include ecological sustainability into English Language Teaching (ELT) for junior high school students by creating and producing two children's books: "Where Does the Water Go" and "Forest Fire." The research identified a need for climate change education using the ADDIE model in ELT materials. The books were developed and refined through expert validation and student feedback from one-to-one and small-group evaluations. Both books achieved high validity and practicality scores, demonstrating their effectiveness in promoting ecological literacy and positive student attitudes. This research highlights the potential of children's books in ELT to foster active engagement and global ecological responsibility among students.

Keywords: children's books, ecological sustainability, English Language Teaching

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses (1) the background of the study, (2) its problems, (3) its objectives, and (4) its significance.

1.1 The Background of the Study

With the unstoppable advance of climate change, humanity faces an unparalleled and daunting task in this era. Primarily caused by human activity, this ecological transformation disturbs the fragile equilibrium of natural systems, resulting in severe repercussions such as rising sea levels, exacerbated weather patterns, and a significant decline in biodiversity. NASA issued a strong warning in 2023, emphasizing sustainable development as the cornerstone for guaranteeing a prosperous and sustainable future for future generations. The message was received with great urgency. UNESCO (2020) strongly supports sustainable education, promoting educational models that equip learners with the knowledge, skills, and ethical foundations to effectively address this significant global challenge. The statement aligns with the views presented by Locke et al. (2013), who emphasize the crucial significance of sustainable development in successfully navigating the challenging circumstances of the 21st century.

However, despite the vital need for action echoing in educational circles, there must be more connection in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching methods. There needs to be a clear gap between the recognized significance of climate change education in promoting environmental awareness and responsible citizenship and its inclusion in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses. The study by Ratinen and Uusiautti (2020) highlights the urgent requirement for more vital climate change education programs. In addition, McBride et al. (2013) clarify that many educators need to be more prepared to negotiate the many aspects of this intricate subject matter. The need for more readily available instructional materials adds to this difficulty, which remains a significant obstacle to its smooth integration into teaching methods.

Indonesia is among the many nations impacted by the urgent global issue of climate change. The adage, 'The climate is what you expect; the weather is what you get,' highlights the unpredictable atmospheric conditions in areas such as Tanjung Sakti Pumu - Lahat, South Sumatra, where the impact of climate change is apparent (Ratnawati, et al., 2023). The most extended period without rain lasts for more than 11 months, which has worsened the occurrence of forest fires. These fires not only endanger the variety of plant and animal life but also provide substantial hazards to populations and ecosystems. Furthermore, waste management has emerged as a crucial concern in places located along waterways. The Department of Environment and Land of South Sumatra (2023) highlights the necessity of cooperative endeavors to tackle inadequate waste disposal methods. By implementing environmental cleanup programs, adopting sustainable waste management practices, and enforcing waste disposal regulations, governments, non-governmental organizations, and the general public can collaborate to reduce the environmental impact and foster a healthier, more sustainable future for Sumatra Selatan.

Indonesia's educational scene offers fertile ground for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), exemplified by MI Walisongo's green school, where holistic approaches with character building, participatory learning, and environmental action prove effective (Suryani et al., 2019). This resonates with the national curriculum's recent shift towards fostering a "Pancasila profile" valuing ecological responsibility and social justice (Kemdikbud, 2022). However, moving beyond producing mere materials (Prihantoro, 2019) requires curricula that cultivate critical thinking, empathy, and ecological citizenship. While integrating climate change education is positive, precise details on how the Pancasila profile will translate into action for ESD remain indispensable.

The idea for this research originates from the circumstances we are currently facing. We want to connect ELT classes with ecological awareness by exploring the field of media creation, specifically designed to incorporate discussions on climate change into EFL training. This undertaking aligns with Bokova's (2015) passionate call for a "drastic change in thinking," promoting a move from mechanical

memorization to more interactive and stimulating teaching methods that foster active involvement and student empowerment.

The study aims to provide focused and influential English Language Teaching (ELT) materials promoting ecological sustainability awareness in EFL classes. The resources will be carefully tailored to meet learners' specific requirements and preferences, aiming to make education effective and engaging while empowering students to take charge of their learning. This is in perfect agreement with the support for early intervention and the acknowledgment of children's inherent ability to develop eco-conscious habits, as advocated by Tamrin and Magfirah (2019).

This inquiry aims to highlight the capacity of children's literature as an effective means of spreading awareness and understanding of climate change and sustainability. Based on the research conducted by Lee (2015) and Restanto (2017), we propose that illustrated stories are highly beneficial for inspiring young students and improving their vocabulary. Children's books, with their engaging stories and vivid descriptions, have the power to explain complicated climate ideas to young minds. This helped to develop eco-literacy, a deep understanding of ethical principles related to the environment, as defined by McBride et al. (2013) and taught through educational methods. Leavenworth and Manni (2020) emphasize that these narratives can spark conversation and inspire proactive actions among young readers, equipping them to become responsible global citizens.

Previous research has explored the intersection of children's literature and ecological sustainability. For instance, Silvhiany et al. (2023) researched incorporating "connected learning and eco-justice pedagogy" into creative writing courses for aspiring educators. Their study showcased how picture book projects can augment awareness and writing proficiency. Rosidah et al. (2022) explore visually captivating methods of instructing junior high pupils about eco-sustainability, focusing on aligning the curriculum and utilizing resources suitable for their age. This study focuses on the influence of children's literature on English teachers and pupils, emphasizing how narrative reading and vivid imagery can stimulate language learning and ecological comprehension. It recognizes the significance of utilizing ELT resources for environmental education. This study

aims to expand upon the research conducted by Restanto (2017) on the relationship between picture books and narrative comprehension. It explores how engaging narratives and diverse perspectives can promote ecological awareness and language development among junior high students. Additionally, this research aims to bridge the gap between English language teaching and environmental education. This study contributes to the increasing focus on environmentally conscious education in English Language Teaching (ELT) contexts by examining how children's literature might foster an understanding of sustainability.

This research is a focused reaction to the urgent need for action in both the ecological and educational fields. The main goal is to unite the divide in EFL classes, with the ultimate purpose of developing a group of environmentally knowledgeable persons empowered to bring about good change to support a sustainable future. Doing this fully supports UNESCO's (2023) main objective of integrating education into the worldwide efforts to reduce the harmful impacts of climate change.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

The following questions were created to reflect the research questions based on the study's background:

1. What are the requirements for incorporating ecological sustainability into English Language Teaching (ELT) as perceived by Junior High School students and teachers?
2. How does incorporating children's books impact students' knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes toward climate change and ecological sustainability concepts?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were as follows:

1. To understand the need to incorporate ecological sustainability into English Language Teaching (ELT) from the viewpoints of Junior High School Students and teachers.

2. To investigate how incorporating children's books impact students' knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes toward climate change and ecological sustainability concepts.

1.4 Significance of Study

The study intends to improve the integration of ecological sustainability for English teachers. The study showcases how children's books can effectively spark student interest in reading, providing teachers with valuable resources to promote engagement and enhance classroom dynamics.

This research exposes students to various viewpoints on environmental concerns through compelling narratives and vivid images, promoting a more profound comprehension of ecological sustainability and its significance. The study investigates the efficacy of children's literature in stimulating students' interest in reading and actively participating in the English language, perhaps resulting in enhanced reading comprehension and general linguistic abilities.

This study offers schools an excellent tool for assessing the appropriateness of media used in EFL instruction to enhance climate awareness. It ensures that schools include impactful and captivating resources in their curriculum.

In conclusion, the importance of this study resides in its capacity to convert ELT classes into agents that promote ecological consciousness and accountable behavior. This research facilitates the development of a more environmentally aware future generation by providing instructors with efficient resources and instructional materials, involving students in relevant educational activities, and advocating for sustainable behaviors in schools.

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