

The Use of Children's Traditional Games as an Effort to Preserve Indonesia's Cultural Heritage and Increase Students Speaking Skills

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Abstract

This study aims to understand the efforts and strategic steps that can be taken to preserve traditional games in keeping with Indonesia's cultural legacy and to identify the factors that necessitate the use of children's traditional games in student speaking skills. This research method uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological approach. In-depth interviews, documentation, and observation are the methods of data collection employed in this study. To obtain a natural knowledge of the research data, the data collection, reduction, interpretation, and conclusion-drawing processes are conducted dialogically using the data analysis technique known as interactive data analysis. The findings of this investigation show that there are 4 strategic steps that partners can take to preserve traditional games as a cultural heritage, including education and socialization, revitalization and modernization, community empowerment and engagement, as well as collaboration with the private sector. There are 7 factors that require the use of traditional children's games at MIS Syababul Qorib, including the decline in interest in traditional games, preservation of local culture, the influence of globalization, the developmental benefits of traditional games for children, the lack of opportunities to play at school, support for character education, stimulate student speaking skill and the increased social interaction in the digital era.

Keywords: Traditional Games; Cultural Heritage; Speaking Skill

INTRODUCTION

Traditional Games are part of the nation's culture and traditions whose presence must be maintained and preserved. Each region in Indonesia has traditional games that are characteristic of it. According to Anggita (2018), traditional games are essentially a cultural heritage of the nation and an inheritance from ancestors whose existence must be preserved, and as children of the nation, it is our duty to maintain the existence of these traditional games. The socialization of traditional games must be carried out continuously so that they become a cultural heritage always recognized by the wider community. In other words, there must be a use of traditional games themselves. This is done to anticipate the loss or disappearance of traditional games in Indonesia. According to Wulansari (2017), traditional games are a cultural product that holds great value for children in terms of fantasizing, recreating, creating, and exercising, which simultaneously serve as a means to practice social life, skills, manners, and agility. In principle, play carries an enjoyable meaning, without any external coercion on the child, and prioritizes the process of exploring one's potential over the outcome. Even though traditional games are quite old, they play a very humanistic educational role in people's learning, especially for children. According to Misbach (2006), it is said so because traditionally, traditional games can naturally stimulate various aspects of children's development, namely, motoric, cognitive, emotional, linguistic, social, spiritual, ecological, and values/morals. Traditional games have even become a regional symbol, where each area uses traditional games as part of its regional

identity. This research has a partner, MIS Syababul Qorib Perbaungan, where Perbaungan, as one of the cities located in the Serdang Bedagai district, with its diverse cultures, must continue to maintain the existence of traditional games through its use. According to Dadan and Widodo (2020), the conservation and the use of traditional children's games are very beneficial for tourism development. Various traditional children's games, such as gobak sodor, egrang, benting, congklak, and others, have elements of art, sports, entertainment, and education, which are favored by tourists, especially those interested in niche tourism such as art and culture. It would be better to introduce and preserve traditional games in their respective regions as part of living cultural heritage. The use of cultural heritage is inspired by several motivations, including: (1) the motivation to protect cultural and historical heritage, (2) the motivation to preserve the existence of rich cultural diversity with its unique characteristics; (3) the motivation to refresh certain identities among specific groups in society, (4) the economic motivation for certain aspects of cultural heritage value and the potential to be developed into a source of income from tourism. Moreover, the use of traditional games is part of the living cultural conservation. The concept of conservation is divided into four: preservation, restoration/rehabilitation, reconstruction, and revitalization. In revitalizing traditional games, the essence of traditional game culture will not change too much because it only modifies the "packaging" adapted to the developments of the modern era. According to Mahardika and Buana (2021), it cannot be denied that the position of traditional games is increasingly being displaced due to the easy and rapid influence of modern culture entering Indonesia. The use of children's traditional games is very beneficial in preserving culture. Various traditional children's games such as hide and seek, marbles, kites, congklak, and others have elements of art, sports, entertainment, and education that can be used as one of the strategies for preserving and maintaining the existence of traditional games as a cultural heritage of the nation. The diversity in traditional children's games contains local wisdom and can simultaneously enhance children's basic abilities in social interaction. For example, the games congklak and engklek can train patience and sportsmanship, while the game of marbles can hone skills in interacting and appreciating others.

Games that have developed in the 4.0 revolution era currently emphasize individual play activities and do not involve direct contact by interacting in community or social environments. The games that are being developed also have very little social value present in society. Most traditional games are expressions of original culture and ways of life that contribute to the identity of a community group. Nowadays, Traditional games are becoming less popular by children, and there are even many children who do not know what traditional games are. The disappearance of traditional games is caused by several factors, namely: (a) the lack of facilities and places to play, (b) the narrowing of time, especially with the increasing presence of modern games from abroad that do not require space, are not constrained by time whether it is day, morning, evening, or night, and do not require waiting for others to play, and (c) the interruption of cultural transmission by previous generations who did not have the opportunity to document, record, and socialize these as cultural products of society to the next generation (Anngita, 2018). According to Arya and Adiya (2015), Traditional games need to be protected, developed, and used to remain viable and continue to exist. As children of the nation, it is our duty to preserve the existence of these traditional games. Traditional games are not merely games; they contain values and cultural elements embedded within them. According to Jayendra (2018), traditional games are essentially a form of regional culture that grows and develops within the community and is passed down from generation to generation, both directly and indirectly. Traditional games as a cultural heritage have great potential to instill valuable character traits beneficial for the character development of children. According to Naafi and Irawan (2022), unfortunately, as time progresses and civilization continues to evolve, it forces culture and technology to

advance further to support the lives of the current generation. Children enjoy games based on gadgets or digital platforms more than traditional games that rely on tools provided by nature (Herawati, Ningrat, et al., 2021). Therefore, the socialization of traditional games must be carried out frequently and continuously. The manifestation of joy and traditional games shows a sense of pride in the community's traditions to create enjoyable conditions and activities. The preservation of traditional games to introduce local wisdom values to young children can be a very effective alternative in teaching one's own culture, which is reflected in daily behavior.

Pamungkas, Maryatun, et al. (2023) state that traditional games also have many benefits and values, one of which is the value of honesty, cooperation, leadership, harmony, discipline, and socialization. He studied the formation of Jogja values in early childhood character development through the use of traditional children's games. Early childhood Jogja character characteristics may be fostered through the reconstruction and revitalization of the traditional game sluku-sluku batok. Muliadi, Asyari (2024) said that traditional games serve as a substantial medium for understanding and experiencing these values practically. They conducted research on Exploring Traditional Wisdom: Value Education in Sasak Tribe Games, Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. In this research, it is expected to provide a better understanding of the importance of preserving traditional games as part of local cultural heritage and their contribution to children's value education in the modern era. Based on the previous research mentioned above, this study shares similarities in revitalizing traditional games, while the differences lie in the focus of the study and the research objects.

Through traditional games The ability to communicate effectively is one of the most important linguistic skills in communication and education. In the context of education, speaking skills are not only about evaluating students' ability to articulate ideas clearly, but also about building confidence, critical thinking skills, and social interaction. However, in practice, many students still struggle to express their thoughts clearly due to teaching methods that are not very varied and lack interactivity.

In the era of education 4.0, foreign language proficiency, especially in English, has become a primary necessity in various aspects. However, in reality, based on the results of the Education First Standard English Test survey, Indonesia still ranks 5th among the 9 other ASEAN countries. This results in Indonesia still being a country with low English proficiency. English language skills have become a very important aspect in this era of globalization because English is the most widely used international language in the world (Guntara, 2017). We cannot deny that every person in the world needs to be proficient in speaking English. The teaching of English is aimed at developing students' competencies that will be beneficial in their professional performance in the future (Mukminatien et al., 2020).

According to Hartiwi & Zahraini (2016) examined the improvement of speaking skills in playgroup children at PAUD Taman Belia Candi Semarang. The study identified that many children had issues such as unclear pronunciation and difficulty following instructions. Utilizing a Classroom Action Research approach, the researchers introduced the traditional game "Jamuran" as a strategy to enhance speaking abilities. Findings indicated that the use of the game significantly improved the children's speaking skills, prompting the researchers to advocate for the incorporation of traditional games into educational practices.

METHOD

In this research, qualitative research was used with a phenomenological approach. According to Nasir, Nurjana, et al. (2023), the phenomenological research approach attempts to understand human life events within the framework of societal thought and behavior as understood or perceived by the individuals themselves. Phenomenological research provides answers to ontological problems. MIS Syababul Qorib Perbaungan is the focus of this study, which has a

direct bearing on the question of whether children's traditional games still exist and whether they should be preserved as a component of Indonesian culture. The method employed to identify informants is purposive sampling. In-depth interviews, documentation, and observation are the methods of data collection employed in this study. The data analysis technique used is interactive data analysis, where the processes of data collection, data reduction, data interpretation, and conclusion drawing are conducted dialogically to achieve a natural understanding of the research data (Milles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Observation and interviews, including in-depth interviews, were used to gather data for this study. The data obtained from the in-depth interviews were subsequently analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA Analysis is an approach to comprehending "how" from the perspective of the participant to be in the position of that participant. This analysis also aims to "understand" something; there are two definitions of understanding in this context: understanding interpretation in the sense of recognizing or sympathizing, and understanding in the sense of interpreting. This phenomenological study's primary focus is on the significance of the participants' varied experiences, events, and statuses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

In this research, the research team conducted interviews with partners aimed at providing efforts and strategic steps that can be taken by the partners in preserving traditional games as cultural heritage. There are 4 strategic steps, including education and socialization, revitalization and modernization, community empowerment and community involvement, and collaboration with the private sector. In addition, this research also provides knowledge about the factors that necessitate the use of traditional children's games at MIS Syababul Qorib. There are 7 factors, including the decline in interest in traditional games, the preservation of local culture, the influence of globalization, The developmental advantages of traditional games for kids, the lack of opportunities to play at school, support for character education, stimulate student speaking skill and increasing social interaction in the digital era.

The phenomenon that has emerged today, with the rapid advancement of technology, necessitates that certain groups pay attention to the existence of children's traditional games. Children's traditional games have a significant impact on the psychological development, character, and social life of children in the future. These traditional children's games are also a cultural element that gives a distinctive character or color to a culture, making them a cultural asset. This culture is an element of a society in maintaining its existence and identity amidst other communities. Traditional games are one of the treasures of the nation's cultural heritage. Traditional games are born from the culture of the community and are believed to contain elements of the noble values of the local culture. With such characteristics, traditional games have the potential to be a means of character development, especially for young children whose learning is indeed play-based. With such characteristics, traditional games have the potential to become a means of character development, especially for young children whose learning is indeed play-based. However, unfortunately, the onslaught of "modern" and "foreign" games, as well as the allure of electronic media such as cartoons and games that can be played through gadgets, often pushes traditional games aside because they are considered outdated. On average, a player currently plays online games using a smartphone and a sufficient internet connection. There are also some players who spend hours, even whole days, playing it, and there are those who spend all their watch time playing online games.

Revitalization must be carried out continuously, purposefully, and integratively to achieve specific goals that reflect a permanent and stable state, while also being dynamic. The use of

traditional games is an enjoyable step that facilitates the character-building process for children. The right way to revitalize traditional games is by implementing traditional games through the application of demonstration methods in traditional games. This will have a positive impact on character building in children. Traditional games have the characteristic of being very easy to play, yet they still possess their own unique characteristics according to the function of the game. The rules of the game are made simple, like songs or chants that are very easy to hear, speak and memorize. Additionally, there are variations in how it is played, and it does not require many tools. Traditional games primarily use body parts as their equipment. In order for the noble qualities found in traditional games to cultivate attitudes that represent the local culture in which the kid lives, it is imperative that traditional games be investigated and cultivated from an early age. The existence of traditional games as a cultural heritage of the archipelago will be preserved and not eroded by the rapid tide of modernization.

Discussion

In this research, the research team conducted interviews with partners aimed at providing efforts and strategic steps that can be taken by the partners in preserving traditional games as cultural heritage. The steps and efforts that can be taken are as follows:

1. Education and Socialization
 - a. Incorporating traditional games into the education curriculum
 - a. Schools can hold special classes or extracurricular activities about traditional games to introduce and preserve them for the younger generation.
 - b. Organizing seminars and workshops
 - a. Involving cultural figures, teachers, and parents in understanding the importance of traditional games for child development and cultural heritage.
 - c. Creating a book or learning module
Compiling a guidebook or educational materials that explain the history, rules, and benefits of traditional games.
2. Revitalization and Modernization
 - a. Adapting traditional games into a digital format
Developing applications or digital games based on traditional games to make them more appealing to today's generation of children.
 - b. Organizing a competition
Teachers can organize competitions or tournaments of traditional games to attract public interest.
 - c. Documenting traditional games
Creating tutorial videos, documentaries, or articles that explain how to play and the history of traditional games.
3. Community Empowerment and Public Engagement
 - a. Encouraging the role of families in preserving traditional games
Parents can teach their children traditional games at home as part of family activities.
 - b. Forming a traditional games community
This community can serve as a platform for the public to learn, play, and develop traditional games together.
 - c. Organizing traditional games activities in public spaces
City parks or open spaces can be locations for regularly playing traditional games.
4. Collaboration with the Private Sector
 - a. Collaboration with the creative industry
Developing products based on traditional games, such as toys, merchandise, or technology-based games.

b. Supporting cultural tourism

Promoting traditional games as part of the cultural tourism appeal in certain areas. With these strategic steps, traditional games can continue to thrive and be passed down to future generations, thus not being eroded by the passage of time. In addition, this research also provides knowledge about the factors that necessitate the use of children's traditional games at MIS Syababul Qorib. The use of children's traditional games at MIS Syababul Qorib is important due to the following factors:

1. The Decline in Interest in Traditional Games
 - a. Kids are more drawn to online games such as video games and social media.
 - b. Changes in play patterns that are more individual and technology-based are shifting traditional games that are more physically interactive.
2. Preservation of Local Culture
 - a. Traditional games are a component of the cultural legacy that reflects local values.
 - b. If not revitalized, this game could become extinct and unknown to the younger generation.
3. The Influence of Globalization
 - a. The influx of foreign culture is changing children's entertainment preferences.
 - b. Children are more familiar with modern games than with traditional games passed down by their ancestors.
4. The Benefits of Traditional Games for Child Development
 - a. Physical aspect: Games like hopscotch or tag help children stay active and healthy.
 - b. Social aspect: Traditional games teach cooperation, sportsmanship, and social interaction.
 - c. Cognitive aspect: Training concentration, strategy, and creativity in playing.
5. Lack of Play Opportunities at School
 - a. A packed curriculum reduces children's playtime at school.
 - b. Facilities and open spaces at schools are increasingly limited for traditional games.
6. Support for Character Education
 - a. Traditional games instill positive values such as honesty, responsibility, and togetherness.
 - b. Helping children understand the culture of mutual cooperation and diversity.
7. Improving Social Interaction in the Digital Era
 - a. Traditional games reduce dependence on gadgets and enhance direct communication among children.
 - b. Helping to build better social skills compared to virtual interactions.

Due to the above factors, schools as educational institutions play an important role in revitalizing traditional games so that they remain known, played, and passed down to the next generation. However, after being given the space to speak through play activities, the students began to show more courage in expressing their opinions, answering questions boldly, and using vocabulary confidently. This improvement is evident from the results of observations and audio recordings during the event. The major players are showing progress in the following aspects:

1. **Speaking fluency:** more confident in conveying ideas even with simple sentence structures.
2. **Vocabulary:** students use more vocabulary relevant to the context of communication games.
3. **Participation activity:** students are more confident and enthusiastic in engaging in games based on oral and written communication.

In addition, the players also showed a positive attitude towards the learning that was conveyed. They feel that this method is enjoyable, not boring, and makes it easier for them to learn to speak without feeling pressured and with full confidence.

These findings indicate that traditional games can be an effective medium for improving students' speaking skills. Activities that emphasize cooperation and social interaction also encourage students to speak more naturally.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion, the use of traditional children's games and increase students speaking skill is an important step in preserving Indonesia's cultural heritage amidst the tide of modernization. Traditional games not only serve as a means of entertainment but also hold high educational, social, and cultural value. Through games like congklak, engklek, and gobak sodor, children can develop motor skills, creativity, and strengthen social interactions. Unfortunately, traditional games are increasingly marginalized by technological advancements and changes in modern lifestyles. Therefore, the use of traditional children's games efforts must be carried out sustainably so that traditional games remain alive and recognized by the younger generation, especially at MIS Syababul Qorib. Utilization of Technology in Learning Traditional Games Using digital media or applications to introduce traditional games to children in the digital era. This can be done through tutorial videos, virtual games that depict traditional games, or even game-based educational platforms. Traditional game competitions can be made engaging and educational so that children are more enthusiastic about participating. Using traditional games in learning English can bring benefits to students, such as increased motivation and interest in learning English, expanding vocabulary, and improving listening and speaking skills. Improving grammar. In addition, traditional games can also enhance students' skills and help them understand the culture and traditions related to the English language.

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