

ENGLISH GUIDE TRAINING AT GEMBA RAYA VILLAGE, KELAM PERMAI DISTRICT, SINTANG REGENCY

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ABSTRACT: *This community service program aims to strengthen the eco-tourism potential of Betang Ensaid Panjang by improving the English communication skills of local youths and cultural practitioners in Gemba Raya Village, Kelam Regency. Although the village possesses rich Dayak Desa cultural assets and strong community hospitality, limited English proficiency has hindered residents from effectively presenting their heritage to international visitors. To address this issue, the program provides tourism-oriented English training that emphasizes functional vocabulary, guiding expressions, cultural interpretation, and confidence-building strategies. The implementation combines classroom instruction, role-play simulations, storytelling practice, and field-based guiding activities that reflect real eco-tourism settings. The training is facilitated by lecturers supported by students. Through this approach, participants develop greater fluency, accuracy, and confidence in interacting with international tourists, enabling them to communicate cultural knowledge more effectively. The outcomes of this program are expected to enhance visitor satisfaction, expand economic opportunities, and strengthen community participation in sustainable, culturally grounded tourism development. Ultimately, the initiative contributes to positioning Gemba Raya Village as a model for community-based eco-tourism empowerment in West Kalimantan.*

Keywords: *Eco-tourism; English for Tourism; Community Empowerment;*

ABSTRAK : Program pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk memperkuat potensi ekowisata Betang Ensaid Panjang melalui peningkatan kemampuan komunikasi bahasa Inggris para pemuda dan pelaku budaya di Desa Gemba Raya, Kecamatan Kelam. Meskipun desa ini memiliki kekayaan budaya Dayak Desa serta nilai-nilai keramahtamahan yang kuat, keterbatasan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris masih menghambat masyarakat dalam menyampaikan dan menjelaskan warisan budaya mereka kepada wisatawan mancanegara. Untuk mengatasi permasalahan tersebut, program ini menyediakan pelatihan Bahasa Inggris berbasis kebutuhan pariwisata yang menekankan kosakata fungsional, ungkapan pemanduan, interpretasi budaya, serta strategi peningkatan kepercayaan diri. Pelaksanaan kegiatan menggabungkan pembelajaran kelas, simulasi peran, latihan bercerita, dan praktik pemanduan lapangan yang merefleksikan situasi ekowisata secara nyata. Pelatihan ini difasilitasi oleh dosen., serta didukung oleh mahasiswa. Melalui pendekatan tersebut, peserta memperoleh peningkatan kefasihan, ketepatan, dan kepercayaan diri dalam berinteraksi dengan wisatawan internasional sehingga mampu menyampaikan pengetahuan budaya secara lebih efektif. Hasil program ini diharapkan dapat meningkatkan kepuasan pengunjung, memperluas peluang ekonomi, serta memperkuat partisipasi masyarakat dalam pengembangan pariwisata berkelanjutan berbasis budaya. Pada akhirnya, inisiatif ini berkontribusi dalam memosisikan Desa Gemba Raya sebagai model pemberdayaan ekowisata berbasis komunitas di Kalimantan Barat.

Kata Kunci: Ekowisata; Bahasa Inggris untuk Pariwisata; Pemberdayaan Masyarakat;

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has long been recognised as a powerful vehicle for promoting local culture and empowering rural communities. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO, 2022) emphasises that sustainable and community-based tourism can provide significant socio-economic benefits while preserving cultural and natural heritage. In this context, eco-tourism is not merely about attracting visitors to enjoy the beauty of nature, but also about creating meaningful cultural exchanges and ensuring that local communities become the primary beneficiaries of tourism growth. Betang Ensaid Panjang in Kelam Subdistrict serves as a living example of how traditional culture and eco-friendly values can form a strong foundation for sustainable tourism development. Betang Ensaid Panjang's uniqueness lies in its architecture and the Dayak Desa community's daily practices, which reflect the values of sustainability, cooperation, and respect for nature. These aspects attract both domestic and international visitors who seek authentic cultural experiences. However, local guides' lack of English proficiency often prevents the community from fully showcasing its

heritage. As Arismayanti (2016) points out, language ability, especially English, is an essential tool in the tourism sector, as it determines how effectively guides can deliver narratives, answer questions, and create memorable visitor experiences. Without sufficient training, opportunities for deeper cultural understanding and long-term visitor satisfaction may be missed.

The Eco-Tourism Guide Training in English addresses this gap by equipping local youths and community members with practical English skills relevant to eco-tourism contexts. Unlike general English lessons, this program focuses on specialised vocabulary, guiding expressions, cultural interpretation, and hospitality language that participants can immediately apply in real situations. The training will combine classroom instruction with interactive methods, including role-plays, storytelling practice, and simulated guided tours. As Dewi, Paramartha, & Rasna (2018) demonstrate in their study on eco-tourism training in Bali, context-based and task-based learning methods significantly improve speaking fluency and participants' readiness to use English in guiding settings.

Moreover, the activity aims to improve language skills and instill greater confidence among participants. Many community members already have deep cultural knowledge and strong hospitality values, but they need encouragement and structured practice to perform confidently in front of international visitors. After receiving English for Tourism training, Sugiarti & Indrayani (2019) found that community members in Lombok reported increased self-assurance and motivation to engage in tourism activities. This demonstrates that language training, when combined with community empowerment, can significantly enhance local participation in eco-tourism.

Ultimately, the program is anticipated to have a ripple effect that extends beyond language improvement. By enabling participants to serve as competent eco-tourism guides, the community can enhance visitor satisfaction, generate more economic opportunities through homestays, handicrafts, and cultural performances, and preserve cultural values through respectful interpretation. The program also supports the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), providing quality education, promoting inclusive economic growth, and ensuring sustainable communities. In the long run, this

initiative aims to position Betang Ensaid Panjang as a model of community-based eco-tourism in West Kalimantan, where language, culture, and sustainability intersect to create enriching experiences for visitors and hosts.

METHOD

A. Activity Method

1. Community Service Team Formation

The initial stage of this community service activity is forming a community service team. This requires a solid, collaborative team to contribute positively to community service. This community service team consists of lecturers from the English Language Education study program at STKIP Persada Khatulistiwa Sintang.

2. Observation

During this observation phase, the community service team surveyed Ensaid Panjang Village and Gemba Raya Village, Kelam District, Sintang Regency. The community service team observed the situation and conditions of the partners and

analysed the problems they faced. The information obtained during the observation process was then analysed to determine strategies to address the issues faced by the partners.

3. Community Service Preparation

In preparation for the community service, the Community Service team collaborated to design an interactive and relevant training curriculum, including basic English language materials, conversation exercises, and an introduction to global culture. The training modules were designed with active participation and enjoyment in mind, including language games, group discussions, and cultural activities.

4. Community Service Implementation

This training activity will be led and mentored by a team of lecturers from the English Language Education Study Program at STKIP Persada Khatulistiwa. One lecturer will serve as the chairperson, and

two other lecturers will serve as members. The chairperson will direct the program and coordinate the training activities, while the other two lecturers will act as presenters. The community service team will provide basic English training and instruction during this activity. Teaching methods include language games, role-playing, daily conversation simulations, and practical workshops tailored to local needs. In addition, there will be a special session on communication skills in a cultural and natural context, such as how to introduce local products in English to international visitors or potential business partners and provide information about the natural conditions of their surroundings as an added attraction.

5. Community Service Report Preparation

The final stage is the preparation of the Community Service Report. At this stage, the community service team

will prepare an activity report, which will then be presented as an article for publication in an accredited Community Service journal. Implementation reports will also be prepared and submitted to universities, local governments, and other stakeholders as evidence of the university's contribution to empowerment.

RESULT

To enhance English communication skills among community members in Gemba Raya Village, the first step is to provide accessible and context-based language exposure. Since residents often interact with visitors at Betang Ensaid Panjang and surrounding eco-tourism sites, training sessions must prioritise simple, functional English expressions that can be used immediately during tours, greetings, and cultural explanations. This ensures that learning feels relevant and directly connected to their daily eco-tourism activities.

A practical way to strengthen English ability is through regular community-based learning circles. These informal groups allow participants to practise speaking in a supportive environment, free

from the pressure of formal classrooms. Consistent practice helps build fluency, develops natural conversation flow, and reduces anxiety when facing international guests.

The community can also benefit from learning materials tailored to their cultural setting. Modules focusing on Dayak Desa traditions, Betang architecture, weaving practices, and forest-based knowledge enable participants to learn English while discussing topics they are already familiar with. This culturally grounded approach increases motivation because learners see the direct value of English as a tool to proudly present their heritage.

Confidence-building is essential for local youths and cultural practitioners. Role-play activities, where participants simulate real guiding scenarios, are highly effective because they mirror the actual challenges guides face. Scenarios may include welcoming guests, explaining rituals, answering questions, or leading visitors through the longhouse area—making them more mentally prepared for real interactions.

Another important confidence-building strategy is peer feedback. When participants receive positive and constructive comments from fellow learners and supervisors, they gain

reassurance about their progress. This collaborative environment reflects the cooperative values of the Dayak Desa community and helps reduce self-doubt, particularly among younger participants new to the tourism industry.

Cultural practitioners, who already possess deep knowledge of traditions, can be empowered through storytelling training. By practising how to narrate legends, rituals, and histories in simple English, they strengthen both their linguistic and cultural presentation skills. This ensures that visitors receive accurate, engaging narratives, while practitioners gain pride in being cultural ambassadors.

To access tourism-oriented training, the community service team implements workshops directly in Gemba Raya Village. Holding training sessions within the village makes participation easier and ensures that lessons relate directly to local tourism contexts.

These workshops combine classroom learning with field practice. Participants first study tourism vocabulary, guiding expressions, and cultural interpretation techniques. Afterwards, they are guided to practise at eco-tourism spots such as Betang Ensaid Panjang, allowing them to apply what they have learned in real settings. This blended approach effectively

bridges the gap between theory and practice.

Partnership with local leaders also plays a crucial role in sustaining the training. By involving adat leaders, youth groups, and women's weaving collectives, the program ensures that training aligns with local needs and supports broader community empowerment. This collaboration strengthens ownership and encourages more residents to join the learning activities.

Through these strategies, the community of Gemba Raya Village becomes better equipped to interact with international visitors, present its cultural heritage confidently, and support the growth of eco-tourism. The English training not only improves communication skills but also enhances economic opportunities and reinforces cultural pride. Ultimately, this initiative helps position the village as a strong example of community-based eco-tourism in Kelam District.

CONCLUSION

The community service initiative carried out in Gemba Raya Village demonstrates that empowering residents with practical English skills is essential for strengthening eco-tourism at Betang Ensaid Panjang. By providing culturally relevant training, integrating real guiding

simulations, and fostering supportive learning circles, the program helps participants improve not only their communication abilities but also their confidence in interacting with international visitors. Through the collaborative work of lecturers and students, the community gains accessible, tourism-oriented English instruction tailored to their cultural environment. As a result, local youths and cultural practitioners are better equipped to act as knowledgeable and confident eco-tourism guides. Ultimately, this initiative contributes to sustainable tourism development, enhances visitor satisfaction, and supports the long-term preservation of Dayak Desa cultural heritage in Gemba Raya Village.

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