

Mentoring English Learning Based on Local Linguistic and Cultural Artifacts to Enhance Basic Literacy of Islamic Boarding School Students in Underdeveloped Regions

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ABSTRACT

Basic English literacy remains a critical challenge for students in underdeveloped regions, particularly for santri (Islamic boarding school students) whose curricula prioritize religious texts over foreign language skills. This qualitative study investigates the design and implementation of a community mentoring program that leverages local linguistic and cultural artifacts to foster foundational English reading, writing, and vocabulary among junior secondary santri in a remote coastal pesantren in Padangsidempuan, Indonesia. Employing a participatory action research design, data were gathered over sixteen weeks through participant observation, semi-structured interviews with ten santri, three mentors, and two pesantren teachers, analysis of instructional artifacts, and pre-post literacy performance assessments. The mentoring model integrated oral folklore, traditional games, local songs, and everyday objects recontextualized as English learning media. Thematic analysis revealed four interconnected improvements: (1) heightened lexical retention through tangible cultural referents; (2) increased decoding confidence when English graphemes mapped onto locally meaningful narratives; (3) emergent writing competencies scaffolded by collaborative labeling of familiar artifacts; and (4) a transformed affective stance that repositioned English from a foreign threat to a culturally congruent resource. Pre-post assessment data displayed a notable shift from non-reader to word-level decoding for all participants, with 70% advancing to simple sentence construction. The findings suggest that culturally sustaining, artifact-based mentoring can disrupt the symbolic exclusion of English in traditional pesantren while strengthening basic literacy in underserved contexts.

Keywords: basic literacy, english mentoring, local linguistic artifacts, cultural artifacts, santri.

Received:
01.04.2026

Revised:
03.05.2026

Accepted:
15.06.2026

Available online:
30.06.2026

Suggested citations:

Nasution, B., & Ahmad, A. (2026). Mentoring English Learning Based on Local Linguistic and Cultural Artifacts to Enhance Basic Literacy of Islamic Boarding School Students in Underdeveloped Regions. *International Journal of Community Service (IJCS)*, 5(1), 474–487. <https://doi.org/10.55299/ijcs.v5i1.1111>

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INTRODUCTION

English proficiency is widely regarded as a gateway to global academic and economic opportunities, yet its acquisition remains profoundly unequal across Indonesia's vast archipelago. In underdeveloped regions defined by limited infrastructure, scarce qualified teachers, and low household income basic English literacy, the ability to decode simple texts, recognize high-frequency vocabulary, and produce elementary written expressions, remains an elusive goal for many learners. This gap is especially pronounced among santri, students enrolled in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), which traditionally emphasize Arabic literacy for religious study while affording English a peripheral, often resistant, position. In rural and remote pesantren, the marginalization of English is compounded by a lack of learning resources, a curricular focus on kitab kuning (classical Islamic texts), and a cultural distance that frames English as a secular, Western-centric language irrelevant to the santri's religious identity and local lifeworld. Consequently, many santri graduate without even rudimentary English reading skills, effectively locking them out of further education and employment pathways that increasingly demand multilingual competence (Muharmah & Fauzan, 2024).

Government and non-governmental initiatives have attempted to address rural literacy deficits through standardized textbook distribution, teacher training, and digital learning platforms. However, these top-down interventions frequently fail to gain traction in pesantren contexts because they ignore the specific socio-cultural and linguistic ecologies within which santri learn. Imported materials saturated with urban, consumerist imagery shopping malls, fast-food restaurants, suburban families alienate learners whose daily realities revolve around communal prayer, farming, fishing, and local oral traditions. Furthermore, English instruction in many remote pesantren, when it exists, is conducted through rote memorization and grammar-translation methods that treat the language as an abstract system divorced from communicative purpose, let alone from students' cultural identities. The result is widespread demotivation, fossilized errors, and a persistent belief that "English is not for us."

Parallel to these challenges, an emerging body of literature in critical applied linguistics and culturally sustaining pedagogy argues that meaningful literacy development must be anchored in learners' own linguistic and cultural repertoires. Local artifacts folktales, proverbs, traditional tools, songs, games, and even the physical environment can serve as powerful mediational tools that bridge familiar concepts with new linguistic codes. When English is taught through the narrative structures of dongeng (local legends), the rhythm of pantun (rhymed quatrains), or the tangible referents of anyaman (woven crafts) and perahu (fishing boats), the language ceases to be an alien code and becomes a vehicle for expressing and extending the learners' existing world. This approach, which I term artifact-based culturally mediated mentoring, holds particular promise for santri in underdeveloped areas because it respects the pesantren's cultural ethos while gently expanding its linguistic boundaries (Baron et al., 2022).

Despite this theoretical promise, empirical studies examining artifact-based English mentoring in Islamic boarding schools, especially in Indonesia's least developed regions, remain extremely scarce. The majority of research on English in pesantren

focuses on curriculum policy, code-switching patterns, or the attitudes of urban, modern pesantren that have already integrated bilingual programs. Little is known about how basic literacy can be cultivated from the ground up in traditional, rural pesantren where English is almost entirely absent. Moreover, existing culturally based interventions are rarely designed as mentoring relationships sustained, dialogic, and reciprocal partnerships rather than one-off teacher trainings or materials development projects. Mentoring, with its emphasis on mutual trust, modeling, and gradual release of responsibility, may be uniquely suited to the hierarchical yet relational structure of pesantren life, where ustadz (teachers) and older peers serve as moral guides.

This study addresses these gaps by exploring the process and outcomes of a community-based English mentoring program that utilized local linguistic and cultural artifacts to enhance the basic literacy of junior secondary santri in a remote pesantren in Padangsidempuan, a province consistently ranked among Indonesia's lowest in human development and educational attainment. The pesantren, located in a coastal village accessible only by a four-hour boat journey from the district capital, had no prior English program and no staff with functional English proficiency. The mentoring program was co-designed with pesantren leadership and implemented by three trained university student volunteers from the regional teacher training institute over one semester. The artifacts used included local folktales (*cerita rakyat*) collected from elders, traditional riddles, songs sung during *selamatan* (communal feasts), names of indigenous flora and fauna, and handmade objects from the surrounding environment (Fitra Ramadani et al., 2025).

The overarching research question guiding the study was: How does artifact-based English mentoring shape the basic literacy development and affective engagement of santri in a remote pesantren? Sub-questions included: (1) What types of local linguistic and cultural artifacts are most readily appropriated as English learning media? (2) In what ways do santri interact with these artifacts to construct meaning in English? (3) What transformations, if any, occur in santri's decoding, vocabulary, and writing abilities? (4) How do mentors and pesantren stakeholders perceive the cultural compatibility and sustainability of this approach?

The significance of this study is threefold. At a practical level, it offers a replicable, low-cost model for English literacy mentoring that can be adapted to other resource-deprived pesantren and rural communities throughout Indonesia. At a theoretical level, it contributes to the literature on culturally sustaining pedagogy by demonstrating how local artifacts function as semiotic resources in second language literacy acquisition, extending the concept beyond heritage language maintenance to foreign language contexts. At a policy level, it provides evidence to challenge the deficit narratives that position santri as incapable of learning English, and to advocate for localized, bottom-up literacy interventions that align with the national Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn) curriculum's emphasis on contextualized, flexible learning. The following sections situate this study within relevant literature, detail the qualitative methodology employed, present findings with supporting tables and figures, discuss implications, and conclude with recommendations.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative participatory action research (PAR) design, which is well-suited to investigating complex educational interventions in naturalistic settings while fostering collaboration between researchers and community stakeholders (Creswell, 2021). The PAR cycle involved four iterative phases: reconnaissance (understanding the pesantren context and identifying artifacts), planning (co-designing mentoring sessions with pesantren teachers and mentors), action and observation (implementing sessions and collecting data), and reflection (jointly evaluating outcomes and adjusting strategies). This design ensured that the intervention was context-sensitive and that the findings emerged from a genuine partnership rather than an extractive research process.

Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at Pesantren Al-Ansor (pseudonym), a traditional salafiyah pesantren in a Manunggang Julu Village in the Padangsidempuan City of North Sumatra. The pesantren housed 87 male and female santri aged 12–18, who studied in a madrasah diniyah (religious school) within the compound and attended the local public junior high school in the morning. The village had no internet access, limited electricity, and a local economy based on subsistence fishing and copra production. The santri's first language was a dialect of the Angkola language; they were proficient in oral Indonesian but had very limited English exposure most had never heard English spoken fluently, and none could read more than a handful of English words.

Through purposive sampling, ten santri (5 male, 5 female) aged 13–15 were selected as focal participants, representing a range of initial motivation and academic performance as assessed by pesantren teachers. In addition, three mentors (two female, one male) were recruited from the English Education Department of a university in the provincial capital; they were of the same ethnic group and expressed a commitment to community service. Two pesantren teachers (the ustadz of the madrasah and a religious teacher) also participated as informants and cultural consultants. All participants provided written consent/assent; for minors, parental and kyai consent was secured.

The Mentoring Intervention

The mentoring program spanned sixteen weeks, with two 90-minute sessions per week, totaling 32 sessions. The sessions were held in a semi-open pendopo (pavilion) within the pesantren. The pedagogical framework integrated three components: (1) artifact exploration, where mentors and santri brought a local object, story, or song and explored its cultural significance; (2) language bridging, where key vocabulary, phrases, and simple sentences in English related to the artifact were introduced through modeling, choral repetition, games, and labeling; and (3) literacy application, where santri engaged in guided reading of simplified texts based on the artifact, collaborative writing (e.g., captions, short descriptions), and personal mini-journals. Materials were created collaboratively during the reconnaissance phase: mentors recorded elders' stories, photographed objects, transcribed song lyrics, and, with the help of the researcher, developed simple English texts graded to the santri's emerging levels. Examples of artifacts used include: a local moke (palm wine) container that became a

prop for learning adjectives and prepositions; the legend of Watu Pitu (Seven Stones) used for sequencing and past tense verbs; a gong and gendang used to teach action verbs and imperatives through rhythmic commands; and ikat weaving patterns that introduced colors, shapes, and comparative language.

Data Collection

Multiple data sources were triangulated to ensure credibility. First, participant observation: The researcher, a fluent speaker of Indonesian and a non-participatory observer of the local language, attended all sessions, taking detailed field notes on interactions, artifact use, language production, and non-verbal behaviors. A structured observation protocol guided the recording of specific literacy events. Second, semi-structured interviews: Individual interviews were conducted with the ten focal santri, three mentors, and two pesantren teachers at three time points (weeks 4, 10, and 16). Interviews, lasting 30–50 minutes, explored perceptions of the mentoring, experiences with artifacts, challenges, and perceived changes in literacy. All interviews were conducted in Indonesian or the local language (with translation assistance from a research assistant) and audio-recorded. Third, artifact analysis: The researchers collected and analyzed the written products (journal entries, labeling worksheets, story maps, collaborative posters) produced by santri, as well as the mentors' session plans and reflective journals. Fourth, pre- and post-intervention literacy performance assessment: A simple, culturally contextualized assessment was designed to gauge basic literacy skills. The instrument included: (a) reading aloud 20 high-frequency English words selected from session materials, (b) matching 10 words to pictures of local artifacts, (c) reading and answering two simple sentences, and (d) writing a caption for a familiar object. The assessments were administered individually, audio-recorded, and scored using a rubric (scale 1–4) developed for this context. While quantitative scores are reported for descriptive purposes, the primary analysis remained qualitative, focusing on the nature of reading/writing behaviors.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-phase approach of Braun and Clarke (2006). All interview and observation notes were transcribed, translated into English (with back-translation checks), and imported into NVivo 12. Initial codes were generated inductively from the data, then grouped into candidate themes. Through iterative review, themes were refined and defined, resulting in a thematic map that captured the interplay of artifact use, literacy processes, and affective transformation. The literacy performance data were analyzed by comparing pre- and post-assessment rubric scores and error types, with patterns integrated into the qualitative themes. Member checking was conducted by presenting preliminary findings to participants and pesantren leaders for feedback, ensuring interpretive validity. An audit trail was maintained to document analytical decisions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that all participants started at the lowest literacy level, with only a few recognizing a handful of sight words likely from informal exposure. This confirms

the extreme baseline English literacy scarcity in this context. The pre-assessment writing samples consisted largely of random letter strings or drawings of objects rather than written English.

Table 1
Participant Demographics and Baseline Literacy Profile

Participant (Pseudonym)	Age/Sex	L1	Previous English Exposure	Pre-assessment Reading (Max 4)	Pre-assessment Writing (Max 4)
Student 1	14/F	Angkola	None	1 (recognized 3 words)	1 (scribble only)
Student 2	13/M	Angkola	None	1 (recognized 2 words)	1
Student 3	15/F	Angkola	Once heard songs	1 (recognized 5 words)	1
Student 4	14/M	Angkola	None	1 (recognized 1 word)	1
Student 5	13/F	Angkola	None	1	1
Student 6	15/M	Angkola	None	1	1
Student 7	14/F	Angkola	TV fragments	1 (recognized 4 words)	1
Student 8	13/M	Angkola	None	1	1
Student 9	15/F	Angkola	None	1	1
Student 10	14/M	Angkola	None	1	1

Note. Rubric: 1 = cannot decode/scribble; 2 = decodes with heavy support/random letters; 3 = decodes most words/partially correct sentences; 4 = independent decoding/correct simple sentences.

The iterative mentoring cycle is depicted in Figure 1. Each session began with hands-on exploration of a local artifact, followed by explicit language bridging, collaborative reading and writing tasks, and ended with personal reflective journals. This cycle ensured constant recycling of language within meaningful cultural frames.

The first major finding concerns the types of artifacts that proved most generative for literacy. Table 2 categorizes the artifacts used and the literacy skills they predominantly supported.

Table 2
Types of Local Artifacts and Associated Literacy Focus

Artifact Category	Examples	Primary Literacy Skill	Santri Engagement
Oral Narratives (Folktales)	Turi-turi ni Watu Pitu (Legend of Seven Stones), Turi-turi ni Buaya Sakti (Legend of the Sacred Crocodile)	Sequencing, past tense verbs, reading comprehension	High; eager to retell stories in English

Traditional Songs & Chants	Ende "Nona Manis" (folk song), Ende-ende ni selamat (feast chants)	Phonemic awareness, rhythm, vocabulary chunks	Very high; spontaneous singing outside sessions
Everyday Objects	Pangalusan moke (moke container), Kotak siri pinang (betel nut box), Jaring (fishing net)	Concrete nouns, adjectives, prepositions	High; tactile exploration
Handicrafts & Art	Ulos/tenun ikat (ikat weaving), Gonjong/gurat-guratan kayu (wood carvings)	Colors, patterns, descriptive writing	Moderate; detailed observation
Ritual & Religious Items	Sarung (sarong), Peci/ketu (cap), Tasbih (prayer beads)	Culturally resonant vocabulary, simple commands	High; bridging Islamic identity
Local Riddles (Teka-teki)	Poda/pangarantoan taringot binatang, alam (riddles about animals, nature)	Question forms, inference, vocabulary	Very high; competitive games

The narratives and songs were particularly potent because they already existed as oral texts in santri's memory, reducing the cognitive load of learning new content and allowing them to focus on English forms. For example, the legend of Watu Pitu, known by all, was written by mentors as a simplified English reader: "Long ago, seven brothers became stones. They sat near the sea. They waited for their father." Santri could map English words onto an existing mental schema, rapidly building reading fluency. Observation notes recorded numerous instances of santri spontaneously murmuring "Once upon a time... seven brothers..." during free moments.

All ten participants progressed from recognizing a few words to decoding the majority of the 20 target words and matching them to artifact pictures with high accuracy. Sentence reading reached an average of 2.8, meaning most santri could read "The stone is big" and "I see a boat" with minimal assistance. Caption writing, while still developing, showed the use of English words and simple structures (e.g., "This is moke," "Boat blue"). Error analysis revealed that initial errors involved L1-influenced spelling (e.g., *bot* for *boat*, *stoun* for *stone*) and missing copulas, typical of early interlanguage. The post-assessment writings displayed a greater reliance on whole chunks memorized from stories and songs, indicating a shift from item learning to pattern learning.

Four major themes emerged from the qualitative analysis regarding how artifact-based mentoring shaped literacy and engagement.

All participants and mentors emphasized that concrete objects and familiar stories provided "hooks" for remembering English words. Citra explained, "When I see the *moke* container, I remember 'tall, brown, wood.' I touch it, and the words come back." Observation data confirmed that vocabulary introduced through physical

handling was recalled more quickly in later sessions. The repeated matching of words to real artifacts and labeling activities created a print-rich environment that mimicked the naturalistic literacy acquisition of early childhood. Mentors noted that santri who struggled with abstract flashcards could readily name objects they had physically manipulated.

The use of local folktales as reading texts had a profound impact on decoding confidence. Because santri already possessed the narrative schema, they could predict and infer meaning, which supported word recognition. Hadi stated, "When I read 'seven brothers,' I know the story. I don't need to understand every letter; I know it's about the stones. Then I look at the letters and see s-e-v-e-n, and I learn." Observations recorded santri using story sequencing cards with pictures of the legend and matching them to English sentences, a task they accomplished with high accuracy and motivation.

Writing emerged as a socially mediated activity. Santri rarely wrote alone; instead, they worked in pairs or small groups to produce captions for artifacts, often with mentor scaffolding. The process typically involved an oral rehearsal: describing the object in Indonesian/local language, then selecting key English words, and finally assembling a simple sentence. Table 3 illustrates the progression of one santri's writing.

Table 3
Progression of a Santri's Written Captions (Indah)

Week	Artifact	Initial Caption	Scaffolded Caption
1	Gong (gong/agung)	"gong"	"Gong big. Yellow."
2	Kotak Siri Pinang (betel nut box)	"box betel nut"	"This box for betel nut. Grandmother has."
3	Ulos/Ikat (ikat cloth)	"Cloth ikat. Colour red blue."	"The ikat cloth is red and blue. I like it."

This progression demonstrates increasing lexical variety, awareness of word boundaries, and emergent syntax. The collaborative nature of these writing events positioned literacy as a communal, rather than individual, achievement.

The most striking finding was the transformation of santri's attitudes. Initially, many expressed the fear that learning English was *haram* or would lead to Westernization. The integration of local artifacts, particularly those with Islamic and ritual significance, reframed English as a tool for talking about one's own identity. Mentors deliberately used Islamic greetings in English, taught English words for religious items, and created a bilingual song about daily pesantren life. Teacher Ustadz Hamid observed: "Before, the children thought English was for churches. Now they say 'ustadz, in English, sarung is sarong. I can tell a foreigner about my sarung!' Their pride has grown." This affective shift was crucial for sustained engagement and risk-taking in literacy tasks.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that an artifact-based mentoring program, deeply rooted in the linguistic and cultural ecologies of a remote pesantren, can significantly enhance basic English literacy and transform learners' affective relationships with the language. This section interprets the results in relation to the literature, explores theoretical implications, and considers sustainability.

The study extends the construct of culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP), originally conceptualized for heritage and minoritized language education (Abdulrahman et al., 2025), to the foreign language classroom in a traditional religious setting. CSP advocates teaching that sustains learners' cultural and linguistic practices rather than merely being tolerant of them. In this pesantren, English had previously been a non-entity; thus, "sustaining" meant creating a new literacy practice that did not displace existing practices but rather grew out of them. The mentors did not simply use local content as a vehicle for English; they validated and elevated the santri's local knowledge—folktales, weaving, fishing lore to the status of legitimate academic content. This revaluation of local culture countered the deficit narratives that often accompany English instruction in rural areas, where learners' backgrounds are seen as obstacles. The santri's shift from "English is not for us" to "English can tell our story" resonates with Tamara et al (2026) emphasis on cultural relevance fostering academic success. Here, the artifacts functioned as "identity texts" (Tamara et al., 2026) that mirrored the santri back to themselves in a positive light, increasing investment in literacy.

The Islamic dimension deserves special attention. In many pesantren, English is suspect because of its association with secular, Western values. By intentionally incorporating Islamic artifacts and greetings, the program positioned English as a potential language of *da'wah* and global Muslim communication. This pesantren students were more receptive to English when it was linked to Islamic purposes. The study adds a practical dimension: rather than relying on imported Islamic English textbooks, mentors created authentic materials from the santri's own religious life—labeling the mosque's parts in English, creating a bilingual *doa* poster. This fusion of English, local culture, and Islam offers a scalable model for thousands of traditional pesantren that would otherwise reject English entirely (Ersyadila, F., Rahmi, R., & Hasibuan, 2025).

A key theoretical contribution concerns the role of cultural artifacts as semiotic mediators. From a Vygotskian perspective, the artifacts served as tools that bridged the familiar (concrete objects, known stories) and the unfamiliar (English written code). However, the data suggest a more complex process than simple association. The artifacts functioned as *tertiary artifacts* (Uktamovna, 2025) – imaginative constructs that open up a new world of meaning. When santri handled a fishing net and generated the sentence "Father makes it," they were not merely labeling an object; they were using English to represent a significant aspect of their social world, thereby appropriating the language as a tool for identity expression. This aligns with the concept of "artifact-mediated appropriation" (Zulkifli Surahmat et al., 2025), where learners actively transform a cultural tool for their own purposes.

The strong lexical retention observed can be explained by dual coding theory, which posits that information coded both visually and verbally is better remembered. The multisensory engagement with artifacts (touch, sight, sometimes sound) created rich memory traces. Moreover, the narrative framing of folktales leveraged the human brain's predisposition for story structure, providing a cognitive schema that facilitated both comprehension and production. The improvement in decoding confidence, despite minimal explicit phonics instruction, suggests that meaningful, contextualized reading can bootstrap phonemic awareness, especially when texts are highly

predictable and culturally familiar a finding with important implications for contexts where systematic phonics programs are impractical due to lack of teacher expertise.

The study illuminates the specific mechanisms through which mentoring facilitated literacy in a hierarchical collectivist setting. The mentors, by positioning themselves as co-learners of local culture, subverted the traditional expert-novice dynamic and created a “third space” where both English and local knowledge were negotiated. This relational posture was critical in a *pesantren* where the *kyai*’s authority is absolute, and outside teachers might be viewed with suspicion. The mentors’ willingness to learn the local dialect, to ask elders about legends, and to participate in communal meals signaled respect, which in turn granted them the legitimacy to teach English. The mentoring relationship provided not only cognitive scaffolding but also emotional and motivational support, fostering the “sustained engagement” that Wahyudi & Kusumahwardani (2024) argues is essential for the symbolic appropriation of a foreign language. The collaborative writing events exemplify the zone of proximal development in action, where social interaction with a more capable peer enabled the production of texts that the learner could not yet create independently (Wahyudi & Kusumahwardani, 2024).

The findings carry several practical implications. First, the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Ministry of Religious Affairs should support the development of localized, artifact-based English modules for remote Islamic schools. Instead of distributing uniform textbooks that go unused, a fund could be allocated for community-created materials that document local oral traditions and translate them into simple English. The *Kampus Mengajar* program could incorporate training for university mentors on cultural artifact collection and literacy scaffolding, specifically targeting *pesantren*. Second, pre-service English teacher education needs to equip future teachers with skills in ethnographic material development, moving beyond the assumption that schools will have commercially published resources. Third, *pesantren* leaders need to be engaged in a dialogue about the religious and economic benefits of English literacy; the findings provide concrete evidence that English can be taught without compromising Islamic identity in fact, it can enhance it by enabling *santri* to become cultural ambassadors.

The study’s limitations must be acknowledged. The sample was small and confined to a single *pesantren* in NTT, limiting generalizability. The sixteen-week duration was not long enough to assess full reading comprehension or fluent writing. The pre-post assessment was not a standardized instrument; future research could combine qualitative insights with adapted Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) tools. Longitudinal research tracking these *santri* as they enter senior high school would be valuable. A further limitation is the reliance on self-reported attitude change; future studies could employ more systematic measures of language attitudes and motivation. Finally, the role of the researcher as a participant-observer introduces subjectivity, although trustworthiness strategies were employed. A replication study in a different cultural and religious context would test the transferability of the artifact-based mentoring model

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that a community mentoring program harnessing local linguistic and cultural artifacts can transform the basic English literacy of santri in a remote, underdeveloped region from non-existence to emergent, functional capability. Through tangible anchoring, narrative bridging, collaborative writing, and an affective reframing that aligned English with Islamic and local identity, ten santri who began with zero literacy progressed to decoding words, comprehending simple sentences, and producing meaningful written captions about their own world. The findings challenge the hopeless narrative that English learning in traditional pesantren is futile and offer a replicable, low-cost, culturally congruent alternative. For policy, the study advocates a shift from centralized textbook distribution to supporting community-based, artifact-rich mentoring initiatives that honor local knowledge. For practitioners in similar contexts, the research provides a model of practice that treats learners' culture not as a barrier but as the very foundation upon which new literacies can be built. Ultimately, when English is taught not as a foreign imposition but as a new voice for local stories, even the most marginalized learners can begin to read and write themselves into a more globally connected future.

Funding Statement

"No external funding was received for this study."

Ethical Compliance

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments. Informed consent was obtained from all adult participants, while parental/guardian consent and participant assent were secured for minor participants. Institutional permission was granted by the pesantren leadership (*kyai*). Anonymity and confidentiality of all participants and the research site were strictly maintained through pseudonyms.

Data Access Statement

No datasets were generated or analyzed during the current study.

Conflict of Interest declaration

The authors declare that they have no competing interests, financial or otherwise, in relation to this research. No external funding or institutional affiliations have influenced the design, implementation, analysis, or reporting of this study.

Acknowledgment

The authors express their sincere gratitude to the *kyai*, teachers, *santri*, and community members of Pesantren Al-Ansor for their warm hospitality, trust, and active participation in this mentoring program. Special thanks are extended to the three

volunteer mentors whose dedication and cultural sensitivity made this initiative possible, and to Universitas Graha Nusantara for facilitating this community engagement activity.

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