

Creative Storytelling – Disseminating the Ideal City and Healthy, Accessible House

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Abstract – Urban environmental degradation has become a current strategic issue because of the lack of awareness. Young generation have an important role to maintain the environment. And the awareness should be nurtured as early as possible. The creative storytelling about the ideal healthy city, especially related to healthy home, is a very important activity to increase the awareness. A storytelling book with colourful illustrations were proposed in three elementary schools and one junior high school (for visually impaired students). The method had proven to be effective to increase the understanding on healthy city. The *Kisah Kota Kita* (Our City's Story) book, written by Dian Kusuma Wardhani and Watiek Ideo, contains 10 short stories, encyclopaedia, and unique facts about healthy city. After telling the story, the elementary school children were involved in the visual artistic activities producing drawings and small home models. Meanwhile, to create a bridge of proper communication with children with visual disabilities, a healthy home model were produced. For the visually impaired students, the creative poetry writing was proposed to measure the understanding on healthy homes.

Keywords – Community Service, Storytelling, Healthy and Beautiful City, Healthy Home

1. INTRODUCTION

The world is facing extreme environmental problems which threatens its sustainability. The problems of resource depletion, global climate change, plants and animals extinction, the loss of wildlife habitats, increasing pollution, and poverty (Miller, 2003).¹ Urban environment has further deteriorated because of the fast-paced development which abandons the environmental condition. The

urban destruction became prominent also because of the lack of environmental awareness.

Actually, young urban residents have a very important role to counter this circumstances. Positive values such as sustainable development and environmental awareness should be nurtured as early as possible through family and educational institution. The awareness of healthy city had to be increased with effective and interesting method. The healthy city topic was less covered in schools'

subjects, and the education methods were found less effective because of its less appealing method, limited books and materials. A healthy and accessible home issue plays a main role in the healthy city issue, since children’s observation and application of environmental awareness starts from their own homes. Therefore, the concept of healthy home had to be introduced in an interesting story-telling way.

2. LITERATURE AND THEORY

Well-thought planning shapes the cities, towns, regions, and also rural areas. It creates vision for the community, identifies current problems, analyzes trends, engages community members in dialogue about goals and issues, and sets the framework for growth and change. Ideally, planning should involve all segments of the community, and aimed to shape the city’s purposes for citizen’s health, safety, and well-being. Planning was done in some sections; transportation, housing, health, neighbourhood development, urban design, environment, disaster prevention. (<https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/document/What-Is-Planning.pdf>).²

The *Kisah Kota Kita* (Our City Story) book, written by Dian Kusuma Wardhani and Watiek Ideo, contains 10 short stories, encyclopaedia, and unique facts about environment.³ Storytelling with the book was selected because it has colourful illustrations and the corresponding stories. The stories presented in the books were:

- Taman Cahaya (The Park of Lights),
- Jalur Populer (The Popular Tracks),
- Toko Merah (The Red Shophouses),
- Poster Heboh (The Festive Posters),
- Titian Persahabatan (The Friendship Bridge),
- Kantor Jingga (The Orange Office),
- Stasiun Pelangi (The Rainbow Train Station),
- Pasar Pagi (The Morning Market),
- Festival Air (The Water Festival),
- Pawai Sampah (The Garbage Parade).

The illustrations of the book are found very interesting and could be easily understood by the children.



Figure 1. The book cover design, which is very interesting, attracting the children to read the book.

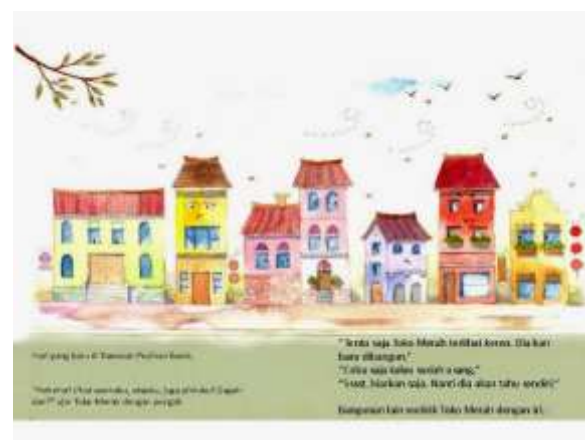


Figure 2. Sample of the book’s illustration about the Toko Merah (Red Shophouses),



Figure 3. Sample of the book illustration on the Taman Cahaya (Park of Lights),

3. DATA AND METHODS

The book *Kisah Kota Kita* (Our City’s Story), with 10 short stories was selected for the story-telling program. The story-telling were conducted in 4 schools with two different audience (based on age). Three elementary schools and one junior high school (for the visually impaired) were involved in the

story-telling activities. The method was found capable in increasing the awareness of the children on the topic. To complete the story-telling, the elementary school children were later involved in the visual artistic activities producing drawing and small home models to measure their understanding on the topic. Total of 207 students were involved from the Kutisari 2 Elementary School (70 students), the Siwalankerto II Elementary School (75 students) and Siwalankerto III Elementary School (62 students).

Story-telling with YPAB junior high school children, was also conducted with creative method because of the visual barrier. Two healthy home models were produced by the undergraduate students in advance of the community service event. During the event, the junior high school children studied about the importance of the healthy homes through fingering the home models. Later on, the creative poetry writing was proposed to measure the understanding on healthy homes. There were 30 visually impaired students and 4 visually impaired teachers involved in the story-telling process.

The program was prepared in 3 months, in collaboration of Library @ Petra, Architecture Program and four schools and external supporting team. The activities were done by community service team consisting of 6 persons, and approximately 200 undergraduate students. The activities were held in 21st April, 22nd April, and 28th April, 4 hours each day. Some activities are described in the following pictures.



Figure 4. Welcoming speech from the Head of Library@Petra



Figure 5. The Interactions between students - participants.



Figure 6. The Result of painting workshop with elementary students



Figure 7. The Storytelling and reading session of “Kisah Kota Kita” book.



Figure 8. The Storytelling and reading session of “Kisah Kota Kita” book.



Figure 9. Opening speech by Gunawan Tanuwidjaja, ST. M.Sc. as the Leader of Community Service



Figure 10. The Storytelling and reading session of “Kisah Kota Kita” book.



Figure 11. Making 3D model houses together with elementary students



Figure 12. Storytelling with assistance of 3 dimensional healthy home to the visually impaired students.



Figure 13. Storytelling with assistance of 3 dimensional healthy home to the visually impaired students.



Figure 14. The Storytelling with assistance of 3 dimensional healthy home to the visually impaired students.



Figure 15. The Storytelling with assistance of 3 dimensional healthy home to the visually impaired students.



Figure 16. Handover of books and 3 dimensional architectural model for YPAB junior high school

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

These activities gave benefits to the students to understand more on the healthy-ideal city life. The students became interested in taking simple green initiative, taking care of the natural environment in healthy-ideal city especially in their home's setting. The students' imagination and creativity were also sharpened while creating 2 dimensional and 3 dimensional arts/craft about the healthy city and healthy homes. The visually impaired students learned about the spatial arrangement of the healthy home with 3 dimensional model.



Figure 17. Result of 3 Dimensional models created by elementary students and PCU students.



Figure 18. Poetry reading about Healthy Home, created by junior high school students.

The teachers of elementary school and inclusive junior high school received new books and arts/craft tools to be used as the teaching material for healthy city topic. They also learned about how to create fun and interesting educational event with environmental awareness material.

The activities were delivered creatively. Some technical obstacles were present such as group division of the undergraduate students and school children. The activities were liked by the principals, teachers and school children, because of the fun nature and the insightful environmental issue. The community service team received input from the principal and teachers that the interaction was actually too long because each school had different time arrangement, therefore it was recommended that the maximum time of community service program to be limited to 2 hours.

5. CONCLUSION

Library@Petra and Architecture Program suggested that it is important to develop the community service which relates to the literary and architectural aspect, because of the existence of urban environmental degradation. The involvement of young urban residents have to be developed with creative and fun methods. The creative storytelling on the ideal-healthy city, especially related to healthy home, is a very important activity to increase the awareness. The *Kisah Kota Kita* (Our City's Story) book was found suitable for the project execution. Besides the story telling, visual artistic activities and poetry making could be developed to enhance the students' understanding of the material and also their creativity.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Parties to be acknowledge in the Programs were:

- Library@Petra
- Head of PPM Petra Christian University, Ir. Resmana Lim, M.Eng.
- Book Producers: Mrs. Watiek Ideo, Mrs Ika Aira Dewanto
- Supporting Team: Rachmad Priyandoko S.Sn., Ns. Tika Yulia Estuningtyas Widyastuti., S.Kep., Setia Rakasiwi S.Sn., Evanti Andriani Suwandi, ST, Mercyruth Manyakory
- Partner Schools:
 - Kutisari 2 Elementary School
 - Siwalankerto II Elementary School
 - Siwalankerto III Elementary School.
 - YPAB Surabaya (The Educational Foundation of Blind Children) Junior High School
- Architecture and Interior Students of PCU

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