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## Implementation of the youth pledge in language month activities at Al-Irsyad High School, Banten and its influence on students

**Syahdan Naufal<sup>\*</sup>, Rofiroh, Khodikotul Athfaliah, Siti Mumbasiroh, Siti Faza Fauziah, Reni Valen Agustina, Siti Nisrina Nazihah, Dinda Esti Wulandari**

Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Jl. Ciwaru Raya, Cipare, Serang, Serang City, Banten 42117, Indonesia.

<sup>\*</sup>E-mail: [syyahdan4@gmail.com](mailto:syyahdan4@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates how the values of the Youth Pledge are implemented through Language Month activities at Al-Irsyad High School, Banten, in 2024. The event incorporated various competitions including trilingual speech contests, storytelling, and chain poetry, aiming to enhance nationalism, language appreciation, and student character development. Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through interviews, participatory observations, and documentation from students, teachers, and school administrators. Findings indicate that these activities significantly improve students' literacy, creativity, confidence, and sense of national identity. The integration of local culture and historical visits to Banten's heritage sites further deepens the appreciation of cultural diversity and promotes character education. The study concludes that Language Month serves not only as a commemorative event but as a practical educational platform for embedding the spirit of nationalism among youth.

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana nilai-nilai Sumpah Pemuda diimplementasikan melalui kegiatan Bulan Bahasa di SMA Al-Irsyad, Banten, pada tahun 2024. Acara tersebut mencakup berbagai kompetisi termasuk lomba pidato trilingual, mendongeng, dan puisi berantai, yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan nasionalisme, apresiasi bahasa, dan pengembangan karakter siswa. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi dari siswa, guru, dan administrator sekolah. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kegiatan-kegiatan ini secara signifikan meningkatkan literasi, kreativitas, kepercayaan diri, dan rasa identitas nasional siswa. Integrasi budaya lokal dan kunjungan sejarah ke situs warisan Banten semakin memperdalam apresiasi keragaman budaya dan mempromosikan pendidikan karakter. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa Bulan Bahasa tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai acara peringatan tetapi juga sebagai platform pendidikan praktis untuk menanamkan semangat nasionalisme di kalangan pemuda.

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## 1. Introduction

The Youth Pledge, declared on October 28, 1928, stands as a significant historical milestone for the Indonesian nation. In this declaration, Indonesian youth pledged their commitment to unite under one homeland, one language, and one nation. This pledge is not merely a symbol of unity; it has served as a powerful driving force that inspired the national struggle for independence. The values embedded within the Youth Pledge remain profoundly relevant and continue to serve as a foundational principle for younger generations to carry forward the legacy of their predecessors [1]. In the current era of globalization and rapid technological advancement, new challenges have emerged that influence the understanding and application of national values. It is therefore essential to identify and examine the impact of globalization and digital transformation on the values embodied in the Youth Pledge [2]. Within this context, Al Irsyad High School has initiated Language Month as an educational effort to instill the spirit of nationalism among students. This program is not only designed to enhance linguistic skills, but also to deepen students' understanding of national unity and identity.



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Language Month at Al Irsyad High School is held annually in October, in commemoration of the Youth Pledge. This highly anticipated event features a variety of competitions such as trilingual speech contests, chain poetry, and storytelling. These activities are strategically designed to introduce and reinforce national values among students. Through active participation in Language Month, students are expected to develop a stronger sense of nationalism and pride in being part of the Indonesian nation. Beyond mere celebration, Language Month also functions as a platform for exploring issues of national identity and cultural awareness amidst global transformations. By engaging students in discussions and creative initiatives, Al Irsyad High School seeks to cultivate a generation that excels academically and possesses strong social awareness and national consciousness. This initiative not only commemorates the Youth Pledge but also contributes to the holistic character formation of students—encouraging them to cherish and uphold Indonesian cultural values in an increasingly globalized world.

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## 2. Method

This research method uses a qualitative method with a case study method to explore the implementation of the Youth Pledge values in Language Month activities. Sugiyono [3] states that the qualitative research method is a philosophically based approach to studying scientific situations (experiments) in which researchers act as instruments, data collection methods, and qualitative analysis emphasize meaning. The book [3] was conducted at Al Irsyad High School, Banten, held on October 30, 2024. The subjects of the study were Al Irsyad High School students who were involved in the activities, teachers who organized the event, and school administrators who played a role in planning. Data were collected through three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Interviews were used to gain an understanding of the values of the Youth Pledge and the influence of activities on student attitudes. Participatory observation was carried out during the event, recording the interaction and involvement of students, as well as the overall atmosphere of the activity. Documentation in the form of types of competitions, activity reports, photos, and videos that function for complete the data from results interviews and observations.

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## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Language Month Activities at Al-Irsyad High School, Banten

Language Month activities serve as a concrete implementation of commemorating the Youth Pledge, which has been creatively integrated into instructional materials to enhance classroom learning. Learning processes become more effective and targeted when educators understand the conditions and needs of their students—particularly in relation to instructional content, teaching methods, and the prevailing curriculum. Language Month has opened opportunities to gain deeper insights into students' attitudes, characteristics, and creativity through a variety of well-designed activities. These include storytelling competitions in both Serang Javanese and Indonesian, chain poetry contests, and trilingual speech competitions. Through these events, students demonstrated remarkable creativity and self-confidence in showcasing their abilities before a broader audience. Beyond merely participating in competitions, students were also invited to engage with the historical and cultural heritage of the Banten Sultanate. They were encouraged to independently explore and experience this cultural richness, thereby fostering a deeper appreciation of local traditions and identity. Such experiential learning contributes not only to the development of cultural awareness but also enhances students' pre- and post-classroom learning. Through direct observation of social contexts, students are able to draw meaningful connections between real-world experiences and their academic subjects.

Teachers also benefit from these activities by gaining a more holistic understanding of students' learning challenges and academic progress. Classroom observations are enriched by insights gained from extracurricular learning experiences. This dual-channel observation—both inside and outside the classroom—enables educators to identify learning difficulties and gaps in performance more accurately and to develop strategies for more comprehensive and student-centered teaching interventions. In essence, Language Month does not function merely as a ceremonial event but acts as a pedagogical tool to strengthen student engagement, promote cultural literacy, and bridge classroom learning with real-world understanding. It enhances both cognitive and affective dimensions of student development, which are critical for shaping holistic and competent individuals.

### 3.2. Activities in Language Month

Language Month is closely associated with an important milestone in Indonesian history—the Youth Pledge (Sumpah Pemuda) of October 28, 1928. One of the core commitments in the pledge emphasized the use of the Indonesian language as the unifying language of the nation. As a result, the month of October is nationally commemorated as "Language Month" (Bulan Bahasa), celebrating linguistic unity and cultural heritage. To celebrate Language Month, SMA Al Irsyad Banten organized a series of competitions and cultural visits under the theme "Young Generation as Nation's Successors and Guardians of Language". The activities included a trilingual speech contest (in Indonesian, English, and Arabic), a storytelling competition, and a chain poetry contest. Additionally, the program featured a literacy tour to the Banten Ancient Museum and the historical Kaibon Palace. The opening ceremony was held in the school auditorium and attended by school leaders, teachers, student participants from Grades X to XII, and Field Experience Practice (PLP) student-teachers from Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (Untirta).

The competitions began with participant registration, where representatives from each class received competition numbers and were given time to prepare. Each event was assessed according to relevant performance criteria. For instance, the speech and poetry contests were evaluated based on fluency, body language, costume presentation, and the thematic content delivered. A notable feature of the storytelling competition was the inclusion of Serang Javanese (Bahasa Jawa Serang) as a regional language, which was encouraged as an added value to promote local cultural preservation. Following the conclusion of all competitions, students, teachers, and PLP participants embarked on a literacy excursion. The first stop was the Banten Ancient Museum, where participants viewed historical theater presentations and examined relics that illustrate the rich cultural past of the region. The program culminated in a visit to Kaibon Palace, offering students a direct encounter with Banten's architectural and historical legacy. The closing event included the announcement and awarding of competition winners. As part of their post-event reflection, students were asked to produce written summaries or video blogs, fostering metacognitive learning and reinforcing the cultural and linguistic insights gained throughout the Language Month activities.

### 3.3 Influence Language Month Activities

Language is not only a means of communication but also one of the most valuable assets of a nation. The proper and correct use of language is essential in shaping a civilized national identity [4]. Language Month activities serve as a strategic moment to strengthen the sense of patriotism, especially in the realm of language and literature. At Al-Irsyad High School, Banten, Language Month is celebrated through three main competitions: a trilingual speech contest, a storytelling competition, and a chain poetry contest. These competitions were followed by all students from Grades X, XI, and XII. In addition to these activities, the students were taken on an educational visit to the Old Banten Archaeological Site Museum. These initiatives had significant positive impacts on student development, particularly in the following aspects:

1. **Improving Literacy.** The Language Month program at Al-Irsyad High School encourages students to explore various reading sources related to the competitions they participate in. These include speeches, storytelling, and poetry. Students were motivated to read and write more, thus improving their literacy levels and broadening their horizons. The museum visit further supported this goal, as it provided extensive exposure to historical narratives and cultural artifacts related to Banten's history.
2. **Enhancing Self-Confidence.** By showcasing their talents in public competitions, students had the opportunity to express themselves in ways not typically possible in regular classroom settings. Participating in speech, storytelling, and poetry competitions fostered their public speaking abilities and significantly boosted their self-confidence.
3. **Strengthening Love for Language and Literature.** Language Month provided a space for students to develop their language proficiency across different forms. In the trilingual speech contest, students practiced using more than one language, expanding their linguistic capabilities. The storytelling contest allowed students to use local languages, such as Javanese-Serang (Jaseng), thus fostering appreciation for regional languages and instilling pride in cultural heritage. In the chain poetry competition, students learned to appreciate the aesthetic power of language through rhyme, rhythm, and diction as mediums for self-expression.
4. **Promoting Creativity.** The competitions triggered students to develop new ideas and enhance their imaginative capacities. The requirement to create vlogs documenting their experiences during Language Month further stimulated creativity and encouraged the use of digital technology to express narratives.
5. **Increasing Solidarity.** Several activities were carried out in groups, such as the speech and chain poetry competitions. These required students to collaborate, debate ideas, share perspectives, and reach consensus, ultimately strengthening bonds of solidarity and teamwork among peers [5-10].

These findings and discussions represent the outcomes of the community engagement program carried out at Al-Irsyad High School. The implementation process was supported by photographic documentation and structured observations, starting from the preparation stage to the final reflection sessions. The photos presented capture the sequential activities and provide visual evidence of student involvement and engagement throughout the Language Month program.



Figure 1. – (a) Language month competition, (b) Language month competition.



Figure 2. – (a) archaeological museum banten ; (b) palace kaibon.

## 4. Conclusion

The implementation of Language Month activities at Al-Irsyad High School, Banten demonstrates a strategic effort in actualizing the values of the Youth Pledge, especially in promoting national unity, identity, and linguistic pride. By integrating language-based competitions such as trilingual speech, storytelling, and chain poetry contests, the school has effectively cultivated a spirit of nationalism while enriching students' understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity.

The activities have shown a significant influence on students in several dimensions. These include enhanced literacy, elevated self-confidence, improved creativity, and stronger appreciation for both national and regional languages. In addition, the collaborative nature of many activities fostered solidarity among students and strengthened their sense of community and shared identity. The visit to the Old Banten Archaeological Museum further contextualized historical and cultural narratives, making the values of the Youth Pledge more tangible and relatable to students' lives. Language Month has proven to be more than a commemorative event; it is a transformative educational initiative that bridges classroom learning with experiential and cultural engagement. The program has successfully embedded national values into educational practices, thus fostering character development, civic awareness, and a deep-seated love for language and literature. Continued efforts to integrate such values throughout the academic year are highly recommended to sustain and amplify the program's impact on student development.

## Acknowledgement

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the entire Al-Irsyad High School, Banten community for their unwavering support, active participation, and collaboration in successfully organizing the Language Month program. This series of activities not only provided students with the opportunity to enhance their linguistic competencies but also served as a meaningful platform to foster nationalism, unity, and cultural appreciation among peers. We deeply appreciate the commitment of all parties involved, from dedicated teachers to enthusiastic students who actively engaged in every aspect of the program.

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