

**EMPOWERING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY: A COMMUNITY SERVICE
PROGRAM AT ANUBAN RANGAE SCHOOL**

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Alif Fatahilla Rachman^{1*}
fatahillaalif@gmail.com
Universitas Abdurachman
Saleh Situbondo, Indonesia

Ahmad Ridho Rojabi²
ahmadridhorojabi@gmail.com
UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq
Jember, Indonesia

Fa-is Taye³
school11@narathiwat3.go.th
Anuban Rangae School,
Thailand

Corresponding Author : fatahillaalif@gmail.com

Abstract

This article highlights the Community Service program carried out by students during the Field Study and Community Service Program, lasting approximately three months at Anuban Rangae School in Narathiwat, Southern Thailand. The implementation team, consisting of a student from the English Literature program at Universitas Abdurachman Saleh Situbondo and another from Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang, collaborated closely with an English teacher from Anuban Rangae School. Throughout their involvement, the team faced challenges due to ineffective and limited teaching methods. In response, they developed teaching programs, integrated interactive web-based applications, and introduced playful learning techniques. The resulting outcomes showed a significant positive impact, seen in the heightened enthusiasm and engagement of students towards learning, facilitated by diverse teaching strategies and media. Thus, the student-led Community Service program at Anuban Rangae School emerges as a promising approach for addressing prevailing educational challenges, enhancing learning experiences, and outcomes.

Key Words: community service program, english, indonesia-thailand

INTRODUCTION

The significance of the English language in Thailand mirrors its importance in many other developing nations. With technological advancements and the ubiquitous use of the internet permeating all spheres, English has become an indispensable tool (Wiriyachitra, 2002). In support of enhancing English language proficiency in schools, the Thai government extends opportunities to English teachers, both native and foreign, to teach across various educational levels in the country (Haryadi, 2023).

Anuban Rangae School, situated in the Rangae district of Narathiwat, Southern Thailand, has initiated several programs aimed at augmenting students' English language skills. However, these programs often fall short of realization due

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to their extracurricular nature, failing to instill a sense of obligation or perceived benefit among students. Furthermore, the lack of diversity in learning activities renders these programs ineffective in enhancing students' English proficiency.

The Thai government has undertaken numerous endeavors to enhance students' English language abilities, some in collaboration with other countries. For instance, Indonesian teachers have participated in programs teaching English at Nakhon Ratchasima Elementary School and a private elementary school in Bangkok, instructing various subjects including mathematics in English (Haryadi, 2023). Additionally, Indonesian practicum teachers were deployed to schools in the provinces of Nakhon Si Thammarat and Krabi for a five-month period (Fauziyah et al., 2021). Siliwangi University (UNSIL) also facilitated the dispatch of internship teachers to an Islamic high school in Nakhon Si Thammarat province, Southern Thailand (Auliya et al., 2020).

One English language skills development program that stands out for its relative success is the English Club, spearheaded by the Thai government. Mandatory across all levels of education in Thailand, this program underscores the government's commitment to bolstering English proficiency (Oeamoum and Sriwichai, 2020). Despite the government's adoption of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in schools, many Thai teachers encounter challenges in its implementation (Kustati, 2013). Factors contributing to this include insufficient professional development opportunities for teachers, limited time to implement CLT, student preference for accuracy over fluency, large class sizes, inadequate student cooperation, and misconceptions about CLT application (Teng & Sinwongsawat, 2015).

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

As previously noted, the English language skills development program at Anuban Rangae School lacks effectiveness due to a limited variety of learning activities. This deficiency aligns with research findings (Elyana et al., 2015), which suggest that the creativity of teachers in presenting diverse teaching methods influences students' motivation to learn. Teachers who employ a range of approaches, techniques, and materials tend to inspire greater interest and enthusiasm among students. Consequently, the absence of varied learning activities indirectly leads to student disengagement from the English language skills development program at Anuban Rangae School.

Examples like "English Day" and "One Day One Vocab" illustrate programs aimed at enhancing the English proficiency of Anuban Rangae School students. However, these initiatives are deemed ineffective and lacking in diversity because they exclusively target the improvement of a single skill: speaking.

Focusing solely on one aspect of language development, such as speaking, can create an imbalance in students' overall proficiency. This imbalance may breed

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dissatisfaction and diminish motivation among students, who may perceive a lack of opportunity to cultivate other vital skills like listening, reading, and writing.

Mastery of the four fundamental language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—is essential for effective communication in English on a global scale (Tantri, 2018). Hence, it is imperative to design English language skills development programs with a diverse range of activities, integrating multiple skill components. By doing so, students can feel more engaged and motivated to participate, leading to holistic development of their English language proficiency.

The Thai government's efforts to enhance the quality of English language education in schools have been evident through various initiatives, including the recruitment of teachers and interns from different countries. These endeavors shed light on several issues surrounding English language education in schools, often stemming from socio-cultural factors, thereby necessitating further actions to address these challenges. Recognizing these issues, the Faculty of Literature at UNARS took the initiative to collaborate with the Narathiwat Private Education Office in Thailand through an International Community Service (KKN) program. This program aims to assist English language instruction in Thai elementary schools, fostering collaboration in education, social development, and cultural exchange.

Abdurachman Saleh University Situbondo (UNARS) has established a partnership with the Narathiwat Private Education Office in Thailand, with the International Community Service program being one of its manifestations. Through this program, students are deployed to various schools across Thailand. In July 2023, the Faculty of Literature at UNARS dispatched two students to participate in this program, with one of them being myself, assigned to Anuban Rangae School. At this institution, I am responsible for teaching English to students in grades 2 and 3, with each class comprising approximately thirty students. Additionally, I am tasked with leading the English Club sessions twice a week. The overarching objective of the International Community Service activities at the school is to provide students with fresh English learning experiences, aiming to enhance their foundational skills and boost their confidence in communicating in English.

Anuban Rangae School serves as a key partner in this International Community Service endeavor, selected based on the premise that the school has not previously engaged English teachers from Indonesia for cultural exchange. Moreover, the existence of a preliminary cooperation agreement between both institutions facilitates the smooth implementation of the International Community Service program.

METHOD

This initiative spans approximately three months and involves a team comprising two individuals: one student from Abdurachman Saleh University

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Situbondo and another from Muhammadiyah University Tangerang. Additionally, the team receives support from an English teacher. Engaging a total of 40 students from classes 2-2 and 3-2, the sessions occur twice weekly, each lasting an hour, scheduled on Wednesdays and Fridays.

The methodology for addressing the partner's challenges revolves around diversifying learning activities, encompassing:

1. Development of Learning Programs:
 - Designing tailored programs concentrating on Reading, Writing, and Listening skills.
 - Crafting innovative lesson plans that cater to students' needs and researching effective teaching methodologies for each skill.
2. Utilization of Interactive Media:
 - Incorporating suitable interactive media for English language instruction.
 - Examples include web-based applications aimed at enhancing vocabulary and pronunciation skills, specifically focusing on animals.
3. Learning Through Play:
 - Creating and facilitating learning activities infused with elements of play.
 - Implementing inventive games designed to inspire children's engagement and foster English language acquisition.

To assess program implementation and ensure its continuity, various evaluation measures can be employed.

1. Observation Process: The implementation team consistently observes students' progress towards the learning objectives for each skill. This monitoring is conducted through a variety of methods including tests, formative assessments, regular observations, and gathering feedback from the students themselves.
2. Outcome Evaluation: Following the conclusion of the program, the team undertakes a comprehensive evaluation of the students' learning outcomes. This assessment includes measuring the advancements made in their English language proficiency across Reading, Writing, and Listening skills. Typically, this evaluation is carried out through final assessments.
3. Ongoing Support: Drawing insights from the evaluation findings, the team identifies areas necessitating improvement or fine-tuning within the learning programs. Collaboratively, the English teachers and KKN students devise strategies for enhancement and adaptation. They also extend the

necessary support to the students, ensuring the sustained development of their English language proficiency.

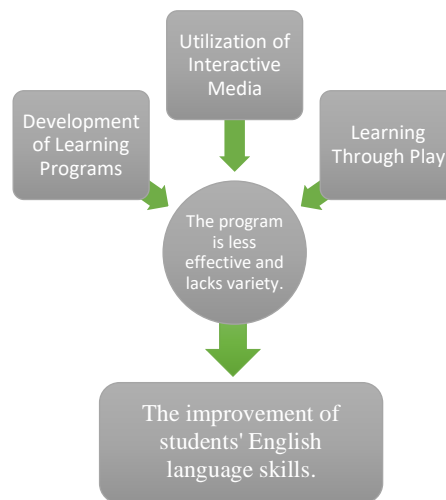


Figure 1. The Scheme of Community Service Program Activities

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The primary challenge faced by the partner is the lack of diversity in learning activities, which are primarily centered around a single skill: speaking. The solutions provided by the implementer encompass three key aspects: (a) emphasizing the development of the three other language skills—reading, writing, and listening; (b) integrating interactive media, such as Web-based Apps, to enhance students' vocabulary and pronunciation; and (c) incorporating playful learning methods to boost students' engagement with English.

(a) Focusing on the development of three skills (reading, writing, and listening).

1. To enhance the reading skill, the implementer designs several short English-language stories. These stories are specifically tailored to the students' English proficiency level and are themed around both English-Mathematics and English-Natural Sciences concepts.



Figure 2. Reading Class

2. In the aspect of developing listening skills, the implementer incorporates English-language videos for children into the learning process. Subsequently, students are tasked with noting down at least one sentence they hear in the video. This exercise serves to enhance their listening abilities.



Figure 3. Listening Class

3. In addressing writing skills, activities often intertwine with those focused-on listening. The implementer begins by playing English-language videos for children, prompting students to transcribe at least one sentence heard in the video to enhance their listening proficiency. Additionally, in certain sessions, basic vocabulary is introduced, followed by students' written practice of these words.



Figure 4. Writing Class

(b) Implementing interactive media, such as Web-based Apps, to enhance students' vocabulary and pronunciation skills.

The utilization of interactive learning media fosters an engaging learning environment, ensuring the attainment of learning objectives. This positive impact is reflected in heightened student interest and improved learning outcomes (Pratama & Hasanah, 2024).

The implementer employed a Web-based App, developed as part of the IMaLT (Instructional Media and Language Teaching) course requirement. This application features an array of animal-themed vocabulary with accompanying audio pronunciations. It also includes interactive games where students must correctly pronounce animal names to progress. Additionally, there's the Animal Matching Game, challenging students to match images with hidden animal names, bolstering memory recall of previously learned vocabulary.

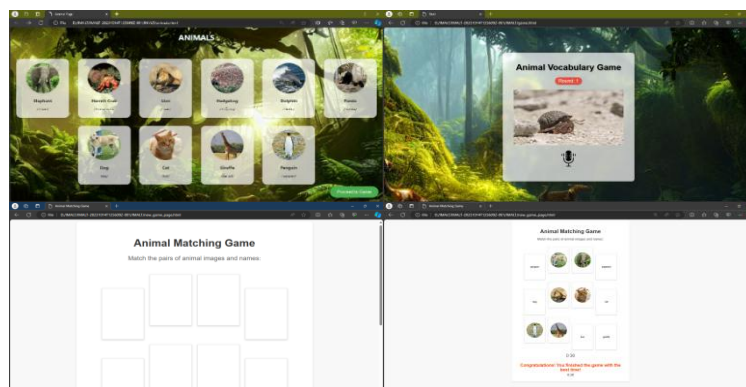


Figure 5. Web-based application centered on animals

During the program's execution, the researcher further designed a Web-based App focusing on a core learning topic: "Instructional Sentence." This application offers a basic vocabulary list of imperative sentences and incorporates a "Drag and Drop" game to enhance students' proficiency in constructing such sentences.

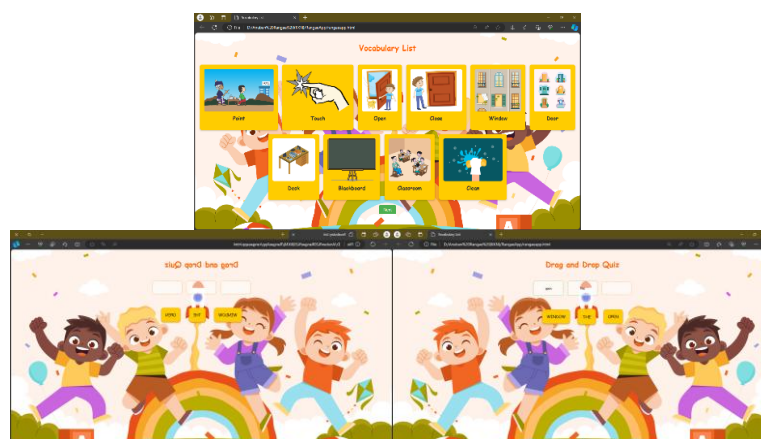


Figure 6. Web-based application centered on Instructional Sentence

(c) Incorporating play into learning to boost students' interest in English language acquisition.

The fusion of play and learning methods cultivates an engaging educational environment, resonating with the natural inclinations of children. It fosters enthusiasm and intrinsic motivation among students, facilitating the attainment of learning objectives seamlessly (Aminah et al., 2022).

One such interactive activity executed by the implementation team is the 'Word Chain' game. This game is designed to enrich students' English vocabulary while honing their listening and speaking proficiencies. 'Word Chain' prompts students to think swiftly and apply English vocabulary

creatively. Notably, participants not only retrieve learned vocabulary but also contextualize them accurately.

Game Guidelines:

1. Students assemble in a line facing the implementer.
2. The implementer, or a designated student, initiates the game by uttering an English word.
3. Subsequent participants must respond with a word commencing with the last letter of the preceding word.
4. The game progresses as each student contributes a word adhering to the stipulated rules.
5. Failure to give a word within the allotted time results in elimination from the game.
6. The game continues until a sole participant remains.

Feedback Mechanisms:

1. The implementation team acknowledges and commends students promptly and accurately articulating words.
2. Support and guidance are extended to students experiencing difficulty, including clarifications of word meanings or provision of relevant examples.
3. Upon conclusion of the game, the implementation team reinforces the acquired vocabulary by reviewing and discussing each word utilized during gameplay.



Figure 7. The implementation of one of the games (Word Chain).

CONCLUSIONS

The implementation team effectively elevated the standard of English language education at Anuban Rangae School through three key initiatives: the enhancement of reading, writing, and listening learning programs; the integration of interactive web-based media; and the introduction of playful learning methodologies. These endeavors not only heightened student involvement but also deepened their comprehension of the English language. Through innovative and engaging approaches, students exhibited heightened motivation and enthusiasm towards learning. Consequently, English language education at Anuban Rangae School witnessed a remarkable enhancement, fostering an encouraging learning milieu conducive to students' English language proficiency development.

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