

**ENHANCING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY THROUGH IMMERSIVE  
LEARNING: THE IMPACT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY  
SERVICE PROGRAM AT DARUL FURQON SCHOOL, THAILAND**

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Corresponding Author : 202006038@unars.ac.id

**Qurrotul Aini<sup>1</sup>**  
202006038@unars.ac.id  
Universitas Abdurahcman  
Saleh Situbondo,  
Indonesia

**Nassuha Asan<sup>2</sup>**  
Suha19asan@gmail.com  
Darul Furqon School,  
Thailand

**Abstract**

The International Community Service Program (KKN) at Darul Furqon School in Narathiwat, Thailand, aimed to enhance the English language skills of senior high school students through two main activities: teaching English at school and conducting an "English Day" program at the student dormitory. Observations revealed significant challenges in student English proficiency, including limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and low grammar skills, compounded by a lack of motivation and teachers' reliance on Thai in the classroom. The KKN program utilized a communication-focused approach, emphasizing vocabulary building, pronunciation practice, and grammar through interactive and immersive activities. The results showed measurable improvements in student confidence and English language use, with students demonstrating better vocabulary implementation, increased speaking confidence, and enhanced understanding of grammar. The program also fostered a collaborative learning environment, benefiting both students and teachers, and offered an innovative model that could be adopted in similar educational settings to improve English language proficiency.

**Keywords:** english language skills, immersive learning, international community service

**INTRODUCTION**

Darul Furqon School is a private Islamic educational institution located in M.5 T.Muno A. Sungai Kolok, Kampong Dato Munok, Narathiwat, Thailand. With thousands of students, this school can be categorized as one of the largest schools in the region. The school offers a complete range of education, from Kindergarten to Senior High School. The educational units at this school include Darul Furqon Kindergarten, Darul Furqon Elementary School, Darul Furqon Junior High School, and Darul Furqon Senior High School.

As an Islamic educational institution, Darul Furqon School has a vision and mission to cultivate a generation that is not only intellectually smart but also strong

in morals and faith. However, with the large number of students and their diverse backgrounds, there is a significant challenge in ensuring equal quality of education across all levels. One of the important aspects is the development of English language skills, which is becoming an increasingly important global competency in both education and the workforce (Nurmasitah, Astuti, and Setyowati 2024; Rao 2019).

The International Community Service Program (KKN) is one of the programs carried out to send students to schools in Thailand. In this case, the team consisting of International KKN participants is tasked with making positive contributions to partner schools, including Darul Furqon School. This program aims to introduce students' culture, experiences, and expertise in certain fields that can help advance education at the partner schools. In this context, one of the main focuses of the KKN program is English language teaching, with the goal of improving the students' English language skills.

However, based on initial observations, there are several challenges faced by this school in developing students' English language skills. One of the main challenges is the limited teaching resources, both in terms of teaching methods and the teachers' command of the subject matter. Most of the teachers at this school are still accustomed to using their native language, Thai, to explain the lesson material. This can be a barrier for students to get used to hearing and using English directly in a classroom context. Furthermore, students' interest in learning English is also an issue, as they lack an understanding of the importance of mastering English in the era of globalization.

The International Community Service Program (KKN) implemented at Darul Furqon School is expected to provide a solution to these issues. Through an approach focused on English communication, the KKN participants are expected to set a good example in the daily use of English, as well as assist students in improving their speaking and listening skills in English. Additionally, this program also gives students the opportunity to experience learning from international students, which can motivate them to be more active in learning English and broaden their perspectives on the outside world.

These efforts align with findings from previous studies, which emphasize the importance of immersive and interactive language learning environments in enhancing students' English proficiency, particularly in non-native English-speaking contexts (Firmansyah et al. 2021; Muchtar et al. 2021; Sumarni et al. 2022).

## **PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS**

Based on the observations conducted over the course of one week, from July 11, 2023, to July 14, 2023, we identified several issues faced by students in learning English at the senior school level, which was the focus of our teaching. One of the

main findings was that many students have very limited basic knowledge of English, both in writing and speaking. This condition indicates that their understanding of English is still minimal, which poses a significant barrier in the learning process. Moreover, Thai students face difficulties in learning English due to several linguistic factors, such as English sub-skills including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. These challenges hinder their ability to effectively learn the English language (Aniuranti and Tsani 2024; Chema et al. 2023; Tahe 2021).

Furthermore, one of the primary causes is the lack of student awareness about the importance of learning English. Many students are not motivated to study English because they do not see its relevance or benefits in their daily lives. This is reflected in their lack of interest in learning English, which becomes a challenge in efforts to improve their language skills.

Another deeper issue is the habit of English teachers who often use their native language, Thai, to explain lesson material. The use of Thai in English classes hinders students from getting used to hearing and using English in a real-life context. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for students to speak and practice using English, so students' speaking skills remain limited.

To address these issues, we implemented a teaching method that focuses on communication in English. The primary goal of this approach is to provide good examples and guide students in speaking English. By giving students, the opportunity to practice speaking and listening to English vocabulary directly in the classroom, we hope that students will become more accustomed to and increasingly motivated to learn and use English in their daily lives. This is in line with studies from Mega and Sugiarto, (2020) and Wahid et al., (2021), which prove that English-speaking habituation is effective in improving students' English-speaking skills.

## METHOD

The methodology used in the implementation of the International Community Service Program (KKN) aims to enhance the English language skills of students at Darul Furqon Junior High School (SMP) and Senior High School (SMA) in Narathiwat, Thailand. The program was carried out through two main activities: teaching English at school and teaching English at the dormitory (English Day).

### 1. Teaching English at School

The teaching program at the school began on July 17, 2023, and ran until September 30, 2023, with a total of 27 sessions. This activity was designed for 2nd-year senior high school students, consisting of two classes, with the subject "Communication in English." The teaching program was structured around learning topics aligned with the textbook used by the school's teachers.

## 2. Teaching English at the Dormitory (English Day)

This program was held at the student dormitory, specifically for the students in Dormitory II, and took place every two weeks on Saturdays. The program began in the second week of August and ran for two months, with a total of two sessions. The main focus of this program was to improve students' speaking skills in a relaxed and enjoyable manner.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the solution activities are carried out, the implementation team must measure the indicators of the solution's success. The success of the teaching program at school is measured based on the improvement of students' competencies in three main aspects: vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Meanwhile, the success of the teaching program in dormitories is measured based on the students' ability to implement vocabulary, increase confidence in speaking, and mastery of correct grammar.

Here is the workflow for this activity.

### a) Program Activities

#### 1. Teaching English at School

The teaching program started on July 17, 2023, and ended on September 30, 2023, with a total of 27 sessions. The program targeted Grade 2 senior high school students, consisting of two classes, and focused on the subject *Communication in English*. The topics taught were based on the teacher's textbook:

Table 1. Learning Topics

No	Learning Topics	Duration
1	Booking a Guided Tour	2 x 40 minutes
2	Writing a Story	2 x 40 minutes
3	Safari Scare Text	2 x 40 minutes
4	Polite Request	2 x 40 minutes
5	Time	2 x 40 minutes

In class, students were only allowed to speak English to enhance their vocabulary and build their confidence. Initially, students were passive due to a lack of English vocabulary and their adaptation to a new teacher. Over time, however, they became accustomed to the system and were able to speak several English sentences with accurate pronunciation and grammar.

For *Grammar* classes, teachers explained the material first, then assigned tasks to students, which were collected and corrected by the PPL-KKN students.

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Alternatively, students would organize games related to the material taught by the teacher. The Grammar class assistance targeted all high school classes, with a total of 12 sessions.

PPL-KKN students were also assigned to substitute for absent teachers in *Communication in English* and *Grammar* classes. In total, they substituted for 25 sessions. From the data above, it can be concluded that the PPL-KKN students taught in Darul Furqon schools for a total of 64 sessions over three months.



Figure 1. Teaching English at School

## 2. Teaching English in Dormitories (English Day)

Unlike the school teaching program, this program was conducted in dormitories every two weeks on Saturdays and targeted students from Dormitory II. It ran from the second week of August, with a total of two sessions over two months. During the first session, students were provided with English vocabulary to memorize, as well as learning topics focused on speaking skills. The program was designed to be relaxed and engaging to prevent students from feeling bored during lessons.



Figure 2. Teaching  
Dormitories

In the  
program, the  
were observed from the 26 students:

English in

English Day  
following results

Table 2. Assessment Indicators

Number of Students	Assessment Indicators
18 students	Students could implement vocabulary in daily life.
21 students	Students became more confident speaking English.
24 students	Students understood the learning topics.
6 students	Students could share experiences in English.
2 students	Students could speak English using correct grammar.

The vocabulary provided included five verbs and two phrases, with the following learning topics:

- **First Day**

- Vocabulary:

- Borrow: Meminjam
    - Sweep: Menyapu
    - Mop: Mengepel
    - Clean: Membersihkan
    - Throw: Membuang

- Phrases:

- Please turn on the lamp: Tolong nyalakan lampunya
    - Where will you go?: Kamu mau pergi ke mana?

- Topic: Meetings and greetings

- **Second Day**

- Vocabulary:

- Take: Mengambil
    - Put: Meletakkan
    - Go: Pergi
    - Want: Ingin
    - Sell: Menjual

- Phrases:

- Hurry up!: Cepatlah!
    - Wait a minute: Tunggu sebentar

- Topic: Hello and goodbye

The programs mentioned above are part of the implementation of the PPL-KKN International program in Thailand, aimed at achieving its objectives.

## **b) Success Indicators**

### **Teaching at School**

- Vocabulary: 70%
- Pronunciation: 40%
- Grammar: 50%



### Teaching in Dormitories (English Day)

- Vocabulary: 30%
- Pronunciation: 20%
- Grammar: 15%

The International Community Service Program (KKN) at Darul Furqon School significantly improved students' English skills, benefiting students, teachers, and the school's educational system.

### Implications for Students

- **Improved Skills:** Students gained a stronger foundation in English communication, with notable progress in vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar.
- **Increased Confidence:** Students became more confident in speaking English, both in class and outside.
- **Motivation:** The engaging approach sparked greater motivation for independent learning of English.

### Implications for Teachers

- **Enhanced Teaching Methods:** Teachers learned interactive and communicative English teaching techniques.
- **Better Understanding of Student Needs:** Collaboration with KKN students helped teachers address challenges like limited vocabulary and the use of the mother tongue.

### Implications for the School

- **Improved Education Quality:** The program contributed to better English education, allowing the school to refine its curriculum.
- **Innovative Learning Model:** The English Day concept can be developed further as a routine program.
- **Awareness of English's Importance:** The program raised awareness about the global importance of English.

### Implications for Future Programs

- **Sustainable Model:** This program can serve as a model for similar initiatives in other schools, acting as an ambassador for innovative English learning.
- **Material Development:** Future programs could benefit from technology, such as English learning apps and video-based materials.
- **Wider Collaboration:** The program's success could encourage broader collaboration between universities, governments, and educational institutions.

In conclusion, the KKN program has long-term benefits for students, teachers, and the school, showing that innovative methods can make English learning more effective and enjoyable.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The International Community Service Program (KKN) at Darul Furqon School successfully improved students' English skills, particularly in vocabulary and speaking confidence. Despite challenges in pronunciation and grammar, the program laid a strong foundation for further growth. Communication-based methods, such as the English-only approach and English Day activities, proved effective in enhancing students' language skills and emphasizing the importance of English. The program also raised awareness among teachers and the school about the value of English as a global skill. Overall, KKN improved students' English proficiency, contributed to educational quality, and fostered international cooperation.

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