

**EMPOWERING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
LEARNING THROUGH INTERACTIVE STRATEGIES AND  
GRAMMAR MINI BOOKS: A SCHOOL-BASED SERVICE PROGRAM**

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**Abstract**

This community service program was conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Situbondo to enhance student engagement in English language learning through the application of interactive strategies and the development of a grammar mini book. The initiative addressed key challenges such as passive student behavior, lack of confidence, and teacher-centered instruction. Using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach and qualitative descriptive analysis, the program involved a four-week cycle of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. A variety of engaging activities—including digital quizzes, group discussions, educational games, and conversation simulations—were employed to foster a dynamic and participatory classroom atmosphere. Additionally, a grammar mini book titled “No More ‘Hah?’ Moments: Verbs and Modals Without Tears” was developed as a practical tool to support grammar comprehension. The results showed increased student motivation, active participation, and improved understanding of English grammar and usage. This program demonstrates that interactive teaching methods, digital media integration, and contextual learning resources can significantly improve student learning outcomes, especially in resource-limited school settings.

**Keywords:** digital media, english language learning, grammar mini book

**INTRODUCTION**

Mastery of the English language is an essential skill that cannot be overlooked in the era of globalization. English functions not only as an international means of communication but also as a gateway to global information access, higher education opportunities, and both national and international job prospects (Sari et al., 2024). In the field of education, English language proficiency equips students with a strong foundation to face the increasingly competitive demands of the times, where digital

literacy and cross-cultural communication have become primary needs (Horia & Siregar, 2022). Therefore, English instruction at the senior high school level plays a crucial role in shaping a high-quality, competitive human resource base that is ready to contribute to national development on a global stage (Khosiyono, 2018).

However, the implementation of English language learning in many schools, including SMA Negeri 2 Situbondo, continues to face various challenges that result in low student engagement during lessons. Observations indicate that most students tend to be passive during English classes, lack confidence in speaking the language, and are reluctant to participate in discussions or question-and-answer sessions. This low level of engagement directly affects their comprehension of the subject matter, particularly in productive skills such as speaking and writing.

One of the main causes of this issue is the persistent use of conventional, teacher-centered teaching methods that position students as passive recipients of information, offering little room for exploration or active participation. This finding aligns with research by Widyanto & Vienlentina (2022), which revealed that teacher-centered approaches limit student involvement and negatively impact learning outcomes. Moreover, the lack of interactive learning media and limited opportunities for students to use English in real-life contexts further exacerbate the problem. Without hands-on practice and relevance to everyday life, students struggle to apply the knowledge acquired in class. As Daud (2024) points out, students are more likely to understand and retain subject matter when they can connect it to real-world experiences, making learning more meaningful and easier to apply.

Recognizing the urgency of this issue, we initiated a community service program themed “Optimizing Student Engagement in English Classroom Learning.” This program was designed as an educational intervention to improve students’ active participation by implementing more creative, communicative, and practice-oriented teaching strategies. The goal is to foster a more enjoyable learning environment while simultaneously strengthening students’ English proficiency in a more contextual and meaningful way.

The main objective of the program is to build a more interactive and collaborative classroom atmosphere, where students are actively involved in various learning activities that emphasize real-life application of the English language. Through methods such as educational games, conversation simulations, digital quizzes, and group discussions, the program aims to encourage students to speak up and express themselves confidently in English. Digital tools such as interactive PowerPoint presentations, Google Classroom, and online quiz platforms were also integrated into the program to cater to the learning preferences of today’s digitally native students.

In addition, to address common difficulties in grammar comprehension, often perceived as a major challenge for learners, the program developed a

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communicative and practical grammar mini book. This resource was designed to present concise grammar explanations accompanied by contextual sentence examples, illustrations, and exercises suitable for both individual and group work. The content focuses on frequently used grammar topics such as tenses and modals, enabling students to not only understand sentence structures but also apply them in appropriate contexts.

Thus, this community service activity was not only aimed at improving the quality of English language instruction for students but also served as a contextual learning opportunity for university students involved in the program. It is expected that the results of this initiative will produce sustainable positive impacts for both parties and serve as an inspirational model of collaboration between higher education institutions and secondary schools in enhancing the quality of English education at the regional level.

Previous studies have likewise emphasized the importance of implementing interactive and adaptive teaching approaches in English language education. Shavkatovna, (2025) highlights that interactive teaching strategies, such as technology integration, gamification, and cooperative learning, play a significant role in increasing classroom engagement. These approaches create a more dynamic and student-centered learning environment, which promotes active participation and enhances learning motivation.

Similarly, Djafar (2023) found that the use of digital media in English instruction significantly boosts student motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic, self-efficacy, and integrative motivation. Digital media fosters a more engaging and interactive learning atmosphere, encouraging students to take an active role in their learning process. By utilizing digital platforms, students can access materials flexibly and learn at their own pace, ultimately resulting in improved engagement and learning outcomes.

In the realm of grammar instruction, Sudharshana (2021) underlines the need for an approach that not only emphasizes grammatical structures but also focuses on meaning and practical use in communication. This approach helps learners better grasp grammar concepts while also reducing anxiety often associated with learning complex language

## **PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS**

Although the importance of English language mastery has been widely acknowledged, its implementation at the senior high school level continues to face various challenges, particularly in relation to the low level of student engagement during the teaching and learning process. Based on observations conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Situbondo, it was found that many students tend to be passive in English classes. They are reluctant to participate actively, rarely ask questions, and lack confidence in using English, both orally and in writing.

This low participation is influenced by several interrelated factors. First, the teaching methods applied are still predominantly conventional and teacher-centered, leaving students with limited opportunities to explore their abilities independently. Second, the lack of engaging and contextual learning media causes students to quickly lose interest and emotional involvement in the learning process. Third, the minimal use of English for communication both inside and outside the classroom hinders students from building confidence in speaking. To address these issues, a more creative, participatory, and contextual approach to English language learning is required.

Therefore, the solution offered through this community service initiative is the implementation of teaching strategies that prioritize active student engagement. This strategy is realized through several innovations, including the use of digital media such as interactive presentations and online learning platforms, student involvement in two-way discussions, practice-based quizzes and assignments, as well as educational games that support vocabulary acquisition and grammar mastery in an enjoyable way.

In addition, this activity also produced a grammar-themed mini book designed to be communicative and contextual. The book is intended to assist students in understanding complex topics such as tenses and modals through a visual and practical approach, making the content easier to grasp and apply. Through these strategies and solutions, this community service program is expected to provide students with a more dynamic, meaningful, and motivating learning experience that encourages them to use English actively both inside and beyond the classroom.

## **METHOD**

This study employed two main approaches, Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Kemmis et al., 2016) and qualitative descriptive analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), to frame the implementation and analysis of the community service activities conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Situbondo. The PAR approach was chosen because the activities were designed as a collaborative effort between university students, teachers, and students, involving a four-week cycle of planning–implementation–observation–reflection. The university students did not merely act as material presenters, but also as active facilitators who adapted their teaching strategies based on the actual classroom conditions and students' needs. The implementation of the program involved several stages:

### **1. Material Delivery and Interactive Discussion**

The materials focused on Procedure Text and Passive Voice, which are essential components of the English curriculum. These topics were presented visually using engaging slide presentations, accompanied by open discussions. This approach aimed to encourage students to speak in English, express their

opinions, and ask questions, thereby creating a more participatory classroom atmosphere.

2. Task-Based and Quiz-Based Assessment

To measure student understanding and progress, assessments were conducted periodically using various instruments. These included daily quizzes to monitor conceptual comprehension, interactive quizzes to test specific material, and assignments based on the learning content. All of these assessment tools were integrated with digital platforms such as Google Forms and Google Classroom, facilitating task distribution, submission, and feedback delivery.

3. Interactive Games

At the end of each learning session, simple games were inserted to review and reinforce vocabulary understanding. These games were specifically chosen for their fun and engaging nature, allowing students to review material in a relaxed and motivating atmosphere without pressure.

4. Contribution to School Activities

In addition to classroom teaching, the university students also actively participated in various extracurricular school activities. Their involvement included supporting the News Anchor competition, which provided students with opportunities to develop public speaking skills, as well as participating in the school's anniversary celebration, further strengthening the connection between the students and the school community.

5. Development of a Mini book Product

As supplementary learning material, a mini book titled "*No More 'Hah?' Moments: Verbs and Modals Without Tears*" was created. This mini book was designed as a communicative and practical self-learning aid, especially focused on verbs and modals. Its development emphasized simple language and relevant examples to ensure ease of understanding, making it a quick-reference guide for grammar learning.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The community service activities conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Situbondo yielded encouraging results in terms of increasing student engagement and active participation in English learning. Over the four-week program, students were not merely passive recipients of information; instead, they actively participated in discussions, asked and answered questions, and took part in task-based and educational game activities. The learning environment, which was previously monotonous, transformed into a more dynamic and enjoyable experience.

This improvement directly reflects the effectiveness of the interactive approach implemented. Learning materials such as *Procedure Text* and *Passive Voice* were delivered using engaging and interactive digital media, combined with two-way discussions. Vocabulary games were also adopted as a closing strategy in

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each session, not only reinforcing language understanding but also boosting students' enthusiasm for learning. These findings are consistent with Shavkatovna (2025) study, which revealed that integrating technology, gamification, and cooperative learning in English classrooms fosters a more participatory learning environment. Although this community service was conducted in a non-formal context, the application of similar strategies proved equally impactful in creating a student-centered classroom.

In terms of digital media, the use of Google Classroom and Google Forms for quizzes, daily assessments, and online assignments enabled students to access materials flexibly and learn independently at their own pace. This was especially crucial in the fourth week, when learning was conducted fully online. Observations showed that students remained enthusiastic and were able to complete their assignments on time. These findings reinforce the results of Djafar (2023) study, which demonstrated that digital media use in English learning significantly enhances student motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and integrative motivation. The study emphasized that digital tools can create a more engaging and interactive learning environment, thereby encouraging students to become more actively involved in the learning process.

Another key outcome was the development and distribution of a grammar mini book titled *"No More 'Hah?' Moments: Verbs and Modals Without Tears."* This supplementary material was designed to explain fundamental grammar concepts in a communicative and easy-to-understand way. Feedback from mentor teachers and students indicated that the mini book helped clarify the concepts of tenses and modals, which had previously been difficult to grasp through conventional lecture-based methods. The approach used in the mini book aligns with Sudharshana (2021) perspective, which highlights the importance of teaching grammar in meaningful contexts rather than through rote memorization. By emphasizing the functional use of grammar in realistic situations, students were better able to understand its usage in everyday communication rather than just memorizing structures.

Compared to previous studies, this community service project added a dimension of direct, real-world practice. Teaching strategies that had previously been examined theoretically or within formal classroom frameworks were adopted and implemented by university students in a school-based community setting. This demonstrates that interaction-based teaching strategies, digital media integration, and communicative material development are not only academically effective but also relevant and applicable in community-based educational outreach.

Thus, this initiative delivered positive outcomes for both the students as beneficiaries and the university students as implementers. The students experienced a more enjoyable, participatory, and meaningful learning process, while the

university students gained valuable opportunities to apply theory in real-world settings and enhance their pedagogical competencies.



Figure 1. Material delivery process.



Figure 2. Online Assessment of Quizzes and Daily Tests.



Figure 3. Vocabulary Games at the End of the Lesson.



Figure 4. Supervision and score recapitulation of the News Anchor competition participants.

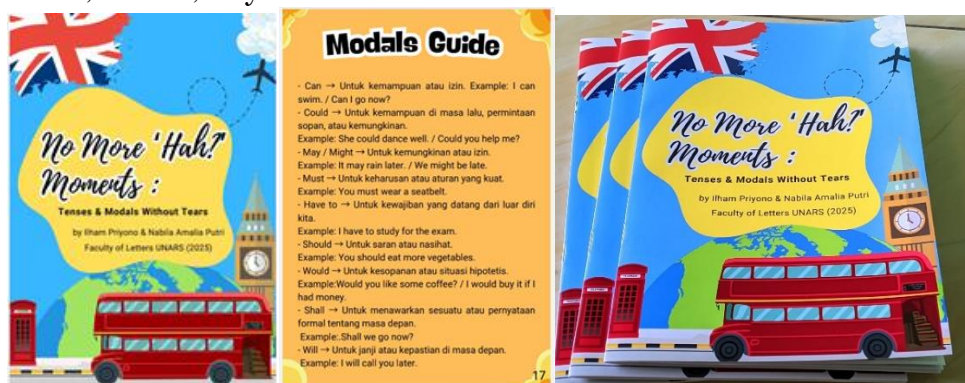


Figure 5. Printed form of the mini book "No More 'Hah?' Moments: Verbs and Modals Without Tears".

## CONCLUSSION

The community service activity carried out by students of the English Literature Study Program at SMA Negeri 2 Situbondo had a positive impact on increasing student engagement in English learning. Through the implementation of interactive teaching strategies, the use of digital media, and the development of context-based learning materials, students demonstrated higher enthusiasm, more active participation, and greater confidence in using English both orally and in writing.

One of the key outcomes of this program was the grammar mini book titled *"No More 'Hah?' Moments: Verbs and Modals Without Tears,"* which was developed using a communicative and easy-to-understand approach. This product received positive feedback from both teachers and students, as it effectively helped learners grasp grammar concepts in a practical and enjoyable way. Additionally, the involvement of university students in the learning process provided them with opportunities for self-actualization and real-world experience, thereby enhancing their pedagogical competencies.

Based on the results of this activity, it is recommended that interactive and participatory teaching approaches continue to be developed in schools, either through collaboration with external parties or through internal teacher-led innovations. Schools are also encouraged to support the use of digital media in the learning process and to create spaces that foster active, creative, and independent student learning. In doing so, English learning can become more effective, relevant, and enjoyable for students.

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