



Improving Students' English Language Skills through Motivation and Vocabulary Strengthening Strategies

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ABSTRACT

This community service activity was conducted to motivate students to improve their English language skills. This activity was held for one day at State Junior High School 3 Pematang Siantar, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra and was attended by 36 students in grades VIII-I. The content of the activity included motivating students to stimulate interest in learning English and practicing English vocabulary. This was done so that students understand how to communicate well, confidently, and correctly and increase their English vocabulary. In brief, this activity gave students the opportunity to improve their English through conversations combined with constantly upgraded vocabulary mastery.

INTRODUCTION

As the world has grown more globalized, English language fluency has become an essential ability in a variety of professional and academic settings. English, an international language, is widely used in commerce, technology, and education. Therefore, the ability to utilize English communicatively and contextually is critical. The significance of motivating students for academic performance and providing effective English language instruction cannot be overemphasized, particularly in secondary schools (Steinmayr et al. 2019). Furthermore, in this age of globalization, the ability to communicate fluently in English has become an essential skill for personal growth and future professional opportunities (Rao, 2019). This service targeted grade VIII-1 students at State Junior High School 3 Pematang Siantar, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra, and offered encouragement and assistance for their English study. Student motivation influences student involvement, effort, and overall academic success (Quynh et al., 2021). Motivation can be intrinsic, originating inside the learner, or extrinsic, resulting from external incentives or demands. Understanding students' sources of motivation is critical for building successful learning techniques and good attitudes about English learning (Soriano et al., 2021).

Initial observations and interactions with numerous English teachers in Pematang Siantar revealed that students are really enthusiastic about learning English. However, they continue to confront significant challenges, particularly in speaking abilities. The challenge in speaking is that kids often lack confidence, thus they are passive in oral communication. To address this difficulty, community service activities were carried out with an emphasis on developing fundamental English abilities, namely speaking, by increasing English vocabulary. This exercise was carried out by 36 students from class VIII-1, State Junior High School 3 Pematang Siantar, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra. The goal was to provide students with realistic skills for effectively comprehending discussions in English.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This community service activity involved 36 students from State Junior High School 3 Pematang Siantar, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra as the main target. The activity was carried out in a classroom of State Junior High School 3 Pematang Siantar, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra for a day and was based on the availability of adequate facilities for presentations, discussions, and test simulations. The implementation method included interactive socialization using Power Point to explain English language skills, namely speaking through strengthening vocabulary in English to measure students' understanding of English.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The community service activity took place at State Junior High School 3 Pematang Siantar, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra and involved 36 students. The implementation stages included interactive socializing, which involved imparting content on communication skills in English via Power Point medium. This was followed by a presentation highlighting key features of oral communication in English, effective practices by which they can improve their spoken English, and strategies the “No Day Without New Vocabulary” method. This presentation attempted to motivate students to persevere in their efforts to communicate effectively in spoken English. After the presentation, a vocabulary simulation was used in which participants worked on simulated questions to assess student comprehension. After that, an evaluation and discussion were carried out by assessing the simulation outcomes and discussing frequent mistakes made by participants.



Figure 1. Delivery of material by the speaker

During the socialization, the students showed high enthusiasm, especially when given several examples of vocabulary words. The vocabulary simulation went smoothly with a 100% participation rate.



Figure 2. Simulation Preparation

The program is implemented by encouraging students to grasp the content more effectively, boost their self-esteem, alleviate self-doubt, and equip themselves for academic or professional aspirations that necessitate English proficiency, as vocabulary serves as the essential basis for mastering a language. Furthermore, the team observes student advancements through vocabulary assessments to evaluate their success. Educators also keep a close eye on the program to gauge students' engagement, participation, and enthusiasm.



Figure 3. Speakers and Teachers

Overall, this exercise effectively enhanced the English vocabulary of the students involved in the training. This improvement was noticeable in the assessments conducted, which indicated a marked rise in the students' grasp and comprehension of the vocabulary covered in the program. These outcomes are consistent with the research conducted by Chaengjaroen (2024), which demonstrated that organized activities like vocabulary drills greatly enhance the participants' performance. It was also clear when the teaching staff requested learners to say and use the vocabulary in basic phrases and sentences. Most of the students taking part in the training demonstrated an ability to pronounce the taught vocabulary correctly and grasp its meanings in English. Thus, it can be inferred that this motivational initiative and the training aimed at enhancing English vocabulary were successful and met their objectives seamlessly.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The community service initiatives at State Junior High School 3 Pematang Siantar, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra have effectively tackled the primary difficulties students face in learning the English language, especially in the areas of listening, speaking, and reading skills. By using a combined method that includes social activities and vocabulary exercises, students showed notable progress in their understanding of vocabulary and grew more confident in their speaking skills.

These results suggest that using motivational techniques and reinforcing vocabulary in English, such as daily practice and consistently introducing new words, is effective in creating a solid base for future language learning and promoting a positive outlook on learning foreign languages, especially English. In its execution, this program effectively generated excitement and motivation among students involved in learning English vocabulary, thus enhancing their comprehension and command of English words.

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