ENHANCING STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS THROUGH INTERACTIVE AND COMMUNICATIVE LEARNING ACTIVITIES: AN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM AT ASRAMA KASIH YBK, MALAYSIA

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Abstract
This community service program aimed to provide English language learning opportunities for students at Asrama Kasih YBK, Malaysia, through interactive and communicative activities. The program involved 25 students aged 13–17 years and was conducted over one month. The activities were designed in response to students' observed difficulties in using English vocabulary and their limited confidence in speaking. The program included English language games, everyday conversation practice, vocabulary-building exercises, reading, and writing. A descriptive approach was used to document the implementation of the activities through direct observation, written field notes, photographs, learning materials, and program reports. The activities gave students opportunities to engage with spoken and written English in different learning situations. The program also provided practical experience for the community service team in organizing English learning activities according to students' needs. However, because the program did not use standardized pre-tests, post-tests, or other quantitative assessments, measurable improvements in students' English proficiency could not be established. The experience highlights the importance of providing meaningful opportunities for students to practise English in a supportive learning environment. Future programs should incorporate clearer learning objectives and simple assessment tools to document students' progress more systematically.
Keywords: asrama kasih ybk, English language learning, interactive activities, communicative learning, community service

Abstrak
Kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan memberikan kesempatan kepada siswa di Asrama Kasih YBK, Malaysia, untuk belajar bahasa Inggris melalui kegiatan yang interaktif dan komunikatif. Program ini dilaksanakan selama satu bulan dengan melibatkan 25 siswa berusia 13–17 tahun. Kegiatan dirancang berdasarkan hasil pengamatan terhadap kesulitan siswa dalam menggunakan kosakata bahasa Inggris dan keterbatasan kepercayaan diri saat berbicara. Aktivitas yang dilakukan meliputi permainan bahasa Inggris, latihan percakapan sehari-hari, pengembangan kosakata, membaca, dan menulis. Pelaksanaan program menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif dengan pengumpulan data melalui observasi langsung, catatan lapangan, foto kegiatan, bahan pembelajaran, dan laporan program. Berbagai kegiatan tersebut memberikan kesempatan kepada siswa untuk berlatih menggunakan bahasa Inggris secara lisan maupun tertulis dalam situasi pembelajaran yang beragam. Program ini juga memberikan pengalaman praktis bagi tim pengabdian dalam menyusun dan melaksanakan kegiatan pembelajaran sesuai dengan kebutuhan siswa. Namun, karena tidak menggunakan tes awal, tes akhir, atau instrumen penilaian kuantitatif terstandar, peningkatan kemampuan bahasa Inggris siswa belum dapat dipastikan secara terukur. Pengalaman ini menunjukkan pentingnya

menyediakan ruang belajar yang mendukung agar siswa memiliki kesempatan untuk berlatih bahasa Inggris secara bermakna. Program selanjutnya perlu dilengkapi dengan tujuan pembelajaran yang lebih terarah dan instrumen evaluasi sederhana untuk mendokumentasikan perkembangan siswa secara sistematis.
Kata kunci: Asrama YBK Love, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, kegiatan interaktif, pembelajaran komunikatif, pengabdian masyarakat

INTRODUCTION

English language skills are important for young people because they provide access to educational resources, information, and opportunities to communicate with people from different backgrounds. However, learning English is not simply a matter of memorizing vocabulary or understanding grammatical rules. Students also need opportunities to use the language in meaningful situations, express their ideas, and interact with others. For this reason, English language learning should provide a balance between developing language knowledge and practising communication. In particular, students aged 13–17 need learning activities that allow them to participate actively, practise familiar expressions, and gradually become more comfortable using English in everyday situations.

In practice, some students experience difficulties when they are expected to communicate in English. Limited vocabulary may make it difficult for them to find appropriate words, while a lack of confidence may discourage them from expressing their ideas orally. These challenges were observed during the international community service program at Asrama Kasih YBK, Malaysia. The students involved in the program, who were aged 13–17, showed two learning needs that were particularly relevant to the activities: greater confidence in speaking English and stronger vocabulary knowledge. These observations provided a practical starting point for organizing learning activities that encouraged students to engage with English in a supportive environment. Research on second-language speaking has also examined the relationship between learners' emotional experiences, classroom conditions, and their willingness to communicate (Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2024; Hejazi et al., 2023). Such findings suggest that speaking practice should consider not only what learners know but also the conditions in which they feel able to use the language.

Interactive and communicative learning activities offer one practical way to provide such opportunities. Rather than concentrating exclusively on explanations and written exercises, these activities encourage students to use English to exchange information, respond to questions, and complete tasks with others. Peer interaction, for example, can create opportunities for learners to negotiate meaning and practise expressing themselves. Cai and Zhang (2023) examined mobile-supervised, question-driven collaborative dialogues and their relationship with communication strategy use and oral English performance. Similarly, Fernández Sesma et al. (2025) investigated EFL students' perceptions of collaborative learning in relation to speaking-skill development. These studies provide relevant perspectives for considering how interaction and collaboration can be incorporated into English language learning. Nevertheless, the suitability of particular activities depends on learners' needs, the learning context, and the way the activities are implemented.

Language games can also provide a practical context for using English. When games involve clear instructions, familiar vocabulary, and opportunities to interact, students can practise language while working toward a shared goal. Game-based

learning has been examined in relation to language development and student engagement, including in research on computer game-based interventions for English-speaking proficiency (Al-Jamili et al., 2024) and broader reviews of gamification in K–12 education (Dehghanzadeh et al., 2024). Aftinia et al. (2025) also examined game-based learning in an EFL English club, focusing on speaking skills and self-efficacy development. These studies provide a basis for considering games as one possible component of language-learning activities. In a community service setting, games can be adapted to the participants' ages, vocabulary levels, and opportunities for communication rather than being used merely for entertainment.

Vocabulary development is another important consideration because students need words and expressions to communicate their thoughts. Vocabulary practice becomes more meaningful when learners have opportunities to encounter and use words in context. For example, students may practise familiar expressions through short conversations, respond to questions using newly introduced vocabulary, or connect written texts with their own experiences. Research on peer-to-peer interaction in task-based learning has examined the development of productive vocabulary among young EFL learners (Iglesias-Diéguez et al., 2025). Meanwhile, Meniwati and Mutiaraningrum (2022) investigated the use of Busuu for learning English listening, and Syafrizal and Septiawati (2022) examined the use of the same application to support listening skills among Indonesian EFL learners. Although these studies focus on different learning activities and skills, they illustrate the range of approaches that have been explored to support English language development. In the present program, vocabulary-building activities were combined with speaking practice to provide opportunities for students to use English expressions in familiar communicative situations.

English language learning also involves reading and writing, which can complement oral communication. Reading gives students opportunities to encounter vocabulary and understand how language is used in written contexts, while writing allows them to organize and express ideas. Collaborative approaches have been investigated in relation to English writing development, including work on writing skills in collaborative settings by Jiang and Kalyuga (2022) and students' experiences of collaborative narrative writing reported by Al-Izhar and Rokhuma (2023). In addition, Zalukhu et al. (2026) examined mobile-assisted language learning through the CAKAP and Busuu applications and reported improvements in students' writing performance in their quasi-experimental study. Although the latter research focuses on technology-assisted writing rather than community-based speaking practice, it provides a relevant reference for understanding English language development as an area that includes multiple skills. Accordingly, reading and writing activities were also included in the program at Asrama Kasih YBK, alongside games, vocabulary practice, and everyday conversations.

The international community service program at Asrama Kasih YBK, Malaysia, was conducted over one month and involved 25 students aged 13–17. The activities were implemented collaboratively by the community service team and included English language games, everyday conversation practice, vocabulary-building activities, reading, and writing. The selection of these activities was informed by the learning needs observed during the program, particularly the students' limited confidence in speaking English and difficulties associated with vocabulary knowledge. The activities provided a structured opportunity to engage students in different forms of English language practice within the setting of an

international community service initiative. A related community service program reported by Fatkhiyati et al. (2025) used interactive conversation training, games, and role-play to address speaking confidence and vocabulary-related needs among children. Rohmad and Che Ismail (n.d.) also describe an interactive English camp based on team-building games as a community service approach to English communication. These examples illustrate the relevance of documenting practical language-learning initiatives in community settings, while differences in participants, activities, and evaluation methods mean that their outcomes should not automatically be assumed to apply to the present program.

An important consideration in reporting community service activities is the distinction between describing implementation and demonstrating measurable learning gains. The present program was documented through observations and activity documentation. These sources provide information about the activities conducted and the learning needs encountered during implementation. However, because standardized pre-tests, post-tests, and other quantitative measures of language proficiency were not identified among the available evidence, the program cannot be used to establish statistically significant improvements in students' English language skills. Instead, the documentation can support a descriptive account of how interactive and communicative activities were organized in response to the students' observed needs. This approach allows the article to present the practical experience accurately without making claims that exceed the available evidence.

Based on this context, the present community service article aims to describe the implementation of interactive and communicative English language learning activities for 25 students aged 13–17 at Asrama Kasih YBK, Malaysia. Specifically, it documents the use of English language games, everyday conversation practice, vocabulary-building activities, reading, and writing during a one-month international community service program. By presenting the activities and the observations made during their implementation, the article seeks to offer practical insights for educators and community service teams planning similar English language learning initiatives. The experience may also inform the design of future programs that provide young learners with supportive opportunities to practise English and participate more actively in everyday communication.

METHOD

The international community service program was conducted at Asrama Kasih YBK, Malaysia, over a period of one month. The program involved 25 students aged 13–17 years and was implemented collaboratively by the international community service team. The activities focused on providing opportunities for students to engage in English language learning through interactive and communicative activities. The program was informed by learning-related challenges identified through direct observation, particularly students' limited confidence in speaking English and their difficulties with English vocabulary. These observations provided a practical basis for organizing learning activities that encouraged participation and offered opportunities to use English in meaningful contexts. The use of communicative activities is consistent with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching, which emphasize meaningful language use and the development of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

This program employed a descriptive approach to document the implementation of English language learning activities in a community service setting. The approach focused on

describing the activities conducted, the learning needs addressed, and the implementation process based on direct observation, written field notes, and activity documentation. The learning activities were organized around interactive and communicative principles. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), communicative language teaching emphasizes the use of language for meaningful communication rather than focusing exclusively on language forms. In addition, the British Council (1979) presents communication games as activities designed to encourage learners to use language communicatively and interact with others. These principles informed the selection of activities for the program, although the present community service activity was not designed as an experimental evaluation of a particular teaching method.

The community service program was organized into three stages: preparation and opening, implementation of learning activities, and closing. The opening stage introduced the learning activities and established the context for students' participation. The program was organized around the identified learning needs, particularly limited confidence in speaking English and difficulties with vocabulary. This stage provided the initial context for conducting the interactive and communicative learning activities. The implementation stage consisted of English language learning activities conducted several times per week throughout the one-month program. The activities included four main components.

First, English language games were used to create opportunities for students to engage with English in interactive learning situations. Communication games can encourage learner interaction and provide opportunities to use language to exchange information and accomplish communicative tasks (British Council, 1979). Second, everyday conversation practice provided opportunities for students to practise spoken English in familiar communication contexts. This activity was relevant to the observed challenge of limited speaking confidence because it provided opportunities for oral practice during the program. However, the extent to which students' confidence changed was not measured using a standardized instrument. Third, vocabulary-building activities were incorporated to support students' engagement with English words and expressions. Vocabulary knowledge is an important component of language learning because it contributes to learners' ability to understand and communicate meaning (Nation, 2001). Fourth, reading and writing activities were included to provide opportunities for students to engage with written English. These activities complemented the speaking and vocabulary components by incorporating reading comprehension and written expression into the learning program. The activities were conducted collaboratively by the community service team. Their implementation was documented through observation, written field notes, photographs, learning materials or worksheets, activity notes, and the final KKN report. The specific content and sequence of individual sessions are not detailed here because these aspects should be reported according to the available program records. The closing stage marked the completion of the community service activities. Information recorded during the program was reviewed descriptively to summarize the activities conducted and the learning-related challenges observed. The available documentation provided supporting evidence for describing the implementation of the program and preparing the community service report.

Data were collected through direct observation, written field notes, and documentation. These techniques were used to record the implementation of the program and preserve evidence of the

activities conducted. Direct observation and written field notes were used to document the learning activities and identify challenges observed during the program, particularly students' limited confidence in speaking English and difficulties with vocabulary. The observations were descriptive and focused on the learning context rather than on measuring changes in language proficiency. Documentation included photographs of activities, learning materials or student worksheets, activity notes, and the final KKN report. These materials were used to support descriptions of the program's implementation and provide a record of the activities conducted. Bowen (2009) explains that document analysis can serve as a systematic procedure for reviewing and interpreting documents to develop an understanding of a particular phenomenon. The available data sources were therefore used to describe the implementation of the community service program. No pre-test, post-test, standardized speaking assessment, or quantitative measurement of changes in English proficiency was reported among the available sources.

The data were analyzed descriptively by examining the observation notes and available program documentation. The analysis focused on three aspects: the implementation of the learning activities, the relationship between the activities and the learning-related challenges identified during the program, and the practical considerations arising from the implementation process. The information was organized according to the four learning activity components: English language games, everyday conversation practice, vocabulary building, and reading and writing. Observational records were examined to describe the learning context and challenges encountered, while photographs, worksheets, activity notes, and the final KKN report were used to support descriptions of the activities conducted. The analysis was limited to descriptive interpretation of the available evidence. Because the program did not include reported pre-test and post-test measurements or another standardized assessment of English proficiency, the analysis did not establish statistically significant improvements in students' language skills. Instead, it documented how interactive and communicative activities were implemented in response to the learning needs observed during the international community service program.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The international community service program at Asrama Kasih YBK, Malaysia, was carried out over one month and involved 25 students aged 13–17. The program was implemented collaboratively by the KKN team, with English language learning as one of its main activities. The learning activities included English language games, everyday conversation practice, vocabulary-building exercises, reading, and writing. These activities provided different ways for students to engage with English during the program. The activities were planned around the learning needs observed during the implementation. In particular, some students appeared to lack confidence when speaking English and had difficulty using vocabulary to express their ideas.

These challenges were important considerations in selecting activities that gave students opportunities to practise the language in a more interactive setting. Instead of focusing only on written exercises, the program incorporated activities that encouraged students to use English through games, conversation, and other language tasks. The implementation of the program also provided an opportunity for the KKN team to work directly with students in a setting outside their usual learning environment. The team conducted the activities throughout the one-month period, while observations and photographs were used to document the

implementation. This documentation provides a record of the learning activities and the context in which they took place





Figure 1. international community service team at Asrama Kasih YBK, Malaysia

English language games were included in the program to provide students with opportunities to engage with English through structured and interactive activities. Games can create situations in which learners need to understand instructions, recognize words, respond to questions, or communicate with other participants. In this program, language games formed part of a broader effort to make English practice more accessible and engaging for students. Vocabulary development was another component of the activities. The observed difficulty in using English vocabulary was relevant because students need words and expressions to communicate their thoughts. When learners cannot easily recall appropriate words, expressing an idea or responding during a conversation may become difficult. Vocabulary-building activities therefore complemented the other learning activities by providing opportunities to work with English words and expressions.

The use of games and vocabulary practice is consistent with the view that language learning should provide opportunities for learners to encounter and use language in context. Dehghanzadeh et al. (2024), in their systematic review of gamification in K–12 education, examined how game-related approaches have been used in educational settings. However, the usefulness of a particular game depends on its learning objectives, instructions, and suitability for the learners. Games are not automatically effective simply because students find them enjoyable; they need to be connected to the language that students are expected to practise. In the context of Asrama Kasih YBK, games and vocabulary-building activities were used as components of the English learning program rather than as independent interventions with separately measured outcomes. The available observations and documentation can illustrate how these activities were implemented, but they do not establish how much vocabulary the students acquired. Future programs could strengthen this component by recording the target vocabulary for each activity and assessing students' ability to recognize and use the words before and after the learning sessions.



Figure 2. Students participating in English language games and vocabulary-building activities.

Everyday conversation practice was an important component of the program because limited confidence in speaking English was one of the challenges observed among the students. Speaking requires learners to retrieve vocabulary, organize their ideas, and respond to another person within a conversation. For students who are not yet comfortable using English, these demands may make oral communication challenging. Providing opportunities to practise familiar conversations can help make speaking activities more manageable. Conversations based on everyday situations allow learners to work with expressions that have a clear communicative purpose. Rather than concentrating exclusively on grammatical accuracy, students can practise how to communicate a message, respond appropriately, and maintain a simple exchange of information.

Research by Hejazi et al. (2023) examined the relationship between teacher support, second-language anxiety, and willingness to communicate. Their study provides a useful perspective for understanding why the learning environment matters when students are asked to speak a second language. Similarly, Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2024) investigated emotions and emotion regulation in second-language classroom speaking tasks. These studies highlight the relevance of considering learners' emotional experiences alongside their language-learning opportunities. In the present program, everyday conversation practice was included to give students opportunities to engage in oral English activities. Nevertheless, the available evidence does not establish that the students' speaking confidence increased over the one-month period. Without a systematic assessment of confidence or a documented comparison of students' speaking behaviour over time, such an improvement cannot be confirmed. The contribution of this activity can instead be described in terms of the opportunities it provided for speaking practice and its relevance to the challenges identified during implementation.



Figure 3. Students practising everyday English conversations with the KKN team.

In addition to speaking practice and vocabulary development, the program included reading and writing activities. These components broadened the learning experience by giving students opportunities to work with written English as well as spoken language. Reading and writing serve different purposes, but they can complement one another when learners encounter vocabulary in written materials

and use language to express ideas. Reading activities can expose learners to words and expressions in context, while writing provides opportunities to organize information and communicate meaning in written form. Both skills can support broader language development, although their contribution depends on the materials, tasks, and level of support provided to learners. For students aged 13–17, the choice of reading passages and writing tasks should take account of their language proficiency and familiarity with the subject matter.

Zalukhu et al. (2026) examined mobile-assisted language learning through the CAKAP and Busuu applications, focusing on students' writing skills. Although their research involved a different learning context and instructional approach, it illustrates the importance of considering how learning activities can be designed to support particular language skills. The study does not directly establish the effectiveness of the reading and writing activities conducted at Asrama Kasih YBK, but it provides a relevant reference for discussing English language development beyond oral communication. In the present program, reading and writing were included alongside the other activities to provide opportunities for students to engage with written English. However, the available documentation does not provide sufficient information to determine changes in reading comprehension or writing proficiency. The activities can therefore be reported as components of the program, while claims about their learning outcomes should be reserved for situations in which relevant evidence is available.



Figure 4. Students participating in reading or writing activities during the community service program.

The one-month program at Asrama Kasih YBK provided an opportunity for the KKN team to conduct several forms of English language learning activities for 25 students. The combination of games, everyday conversation practice, vocabulary-building exercises, reading, and writing allowed the program to address more than one aspect of English learning. The activities were selected in response to the learning needs observed during implementation, particularly the students' limited confidence in speaking English and difficulties with vocabulary. One practical consideration arising from the program is the need to connect each activity to a clear learning objective. For example, a language game can focus on recognizing and using target vocabulary, while a conversation activity can focus on asking and answering questions in everyday situations. Reading and writing tasks can be designed to reinforce the same vocabulary or expressions introduced during oral practice. Such coordination would help make the relationship between the activities clearer and provide a more structured learning experience.

Another consideration concerns program evaluation. Observations and photographs are useful for documenting activities, participation, and the conditions in which a program is implemented. However, they are not sufficient on their own to determine whether students have improved their language proficiency. Future community service programs could

incorporate simple vocabulary assessments, speaking tasks, student reflections, or structured observation sheets. These tools would provide more detailed information about students' participation and learning progress while remaining practical for a community-based program. The program also demonstrates the importance of documenting community service activities beyond their completion. Photographs, activity records, teaching materials, and reflective notes can help the team explain what was conducted, why particular activities were selected, and what could be improved in subsequent programs. Such documentation can also support continuity when future teams conduct similar activities at the same institution.

Overall, the experience at Asrama Kasih YBK offers a practical account of implementing interactive and communicative English language learning activities within an international community service program. Its contribution lies in documenting the use of several learning activities in response to observed student needs. Although the available evidence does not establish measurable improvements in English proficiency, the experience provides a basis for refining future programs through clearer learning objectives, more systematic observation, and appropriate evaluation procedures.

CONCLUSION

The international community service program at Asrama Kasih YBK, Malaysia, provided an opportunity to engage 25 students aged 13–17 in English language learning activities over one month. Implemented collaboratively by the KKN team, the program included English language games, everyday conversation practice, vocabulary-building activities, reading, and writing. These activities were selected in response to the learning needs observed during the program, particularly students' limited confidence in speaking English and difficulties with vocabulary. The experience highlights the practical value of incorporating interactive and communicative activities into community-based English language learning. By including different types of activities, the program provided opportunities for students to engage with both spoken and written English. The combination of games, conversation practice, vocabulary exercises, reading, and writing also offered a practical framework for organizing English learning activities in an international community service setting.

However, the findings should be interpreted in light of the available evidence. Observations and photographs documented the implementation of the program, but no standardized pre-test or post-test data were available to establish measurable improvements in students' English language proficiency. Therefore, the program is best understood as a documented community service experience rather than a controlled evaluation of learning outcomes. Future community service programs could build on this experience by establishing clearer learning objectives for each activity and incorporating simple evaluation tools, such as vocabulary assessments, structured speaking tasks, and student feedback. These measures would help document students' progress more systematically and provide a stronger basis for evaluating the contribution of interactive and communicative learning activities. Overall, the experience at Asrama Kasih YBK offers practical insights for planning similar international community service initiatives that provide young learners with meaningful opportunities to practise English in supportive learning environments.

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