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## Basic English Teaching for Fostered Children of Youth Organization in Cimanggis Subdistrict, Depok City

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### ABSTRACT

Basic English teaching activities were conducted on December 20, 2020 at RT 04, Cimanggis Subdistrict, Depok City, West Java through the cooperation of the local youth organization, and were attended by 20 children as the participants. This community services activity was conducted with aim to improve the children' pronunciation quality of English words and increase their vocabulary mastery. To find out the participants' English skills, firstly the community services team (teachers) conducted a pre-test. After that, the learning was implemented using direct learning methods, card games, guessing words, and guessing sentences. The result showed that among 20 participants, 15 children were able to correctly pronounce the 5 words they chose. In the meaning understanding test, among 20 learning participants, as many as 7 children (35%) were able to name 10 pictures they took in English, 4 children (20%) were only able to name 9 pictures, 6 children (30%) were able name 8 pictures correctly, and 3 children (15%) were able to name 7 pictures correctly. In conclusion, the implementation of this basic English teaching program was declared successful according to the achievement target. This can be seen from the increase in knowledge among the participants, namely the increase in vocabulary mastery and knowledge of the correct pronunciation of the words introduced in the teaching.

## 1. Introduction

Language is the main tool for a person to communicate in his/her life, both for the individual benefit and to facilitate interaction in a social environment. Language is also a tool or medium for expressing certain thoughts and meanings, as well as a means of creating interpersonal relationships and social interactions between individuals with one another. According to [Noermanzah \(2019\)](#), language is a message conveyed in the form of expression as a means of communication in certain situations in various activities. Meanwhile, foreign languages are languages that come from other countries, which sometimes become very important to master due to certain circumstances. One of which is English, which is widely known as an international language.

Nowadays, the role of English should not be underestimated. In the era of globalization and information, English plays an important role in increasing the competitiveness of human resources. Therefore, English is very important to be studied and taught from an early age. This is what prompted the government to issue a policy through the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Depdikbud RI) No. 0487/1992, Chapter VIII, on allowing the addition of English subjects in the elementary school curriculum. This policy is what ultimately underlies the inclusion of English as part of local content in elementary schools ([Nisa, 2020](#)).

Teaching English to elementary school children is not easy. Apart from time constraints, obstacles also arise from differences in the students' absorption of teaching materials. Not to mention that the way English is pronounced is sometimes different or not consistent with the writing, making students often face difficulty. This condition is often viewed as an opportunity by certain parties to help children improving their English language skills. There are course institutions that offer paid packages, but there are also institutions, organizations, or communities that voluntarily provide English teaching for free. This was conducted by youth organization at RT 04 in Cimanggis Subdistrict, Depok City, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As we know, the COVID pandemic has "confined" people at home. School activities that were carried out online at home for almost two years caused children to feel bored and became uncontrolled in using gadgets. In this condition, there needs to be an effort to help students survive in limited conditions and restriction of outdoor activities. [Ningrum & Priyanti \(2022\)](#) suggested that parental assistance is very important in building children's resilience when learning at home. According to them, resilience is needed by children to be able to thrive in situations that "confine" them and hopefully they can face all learning challenges during the pandemic.

However, building resilience when studying during a pandemic should not only become the responsibility of parents or family members, but various parties should also help and contribute, one of which is conducted by youth organization at RT 04 Cimanggis Subdistrict, Depok City, West Java. This youth organization tried to provide solutions for children in dealing with boredom and stagnation of learning at home during the pandemic. Youth organization created a limited face-to-face teaching program for children by implementing strict health protocols. The goal is that children still have useful activities and are able to increase their knowledge during a pandemic. This was discovered when the community services team conducted a site survey with the aim of identifying problems that arise among children.

According to Fahrul Tahir, the head of youth organization at RT 04 Cimanggis Subdistrict, during the pandemic, children in his neighborhood seemed less serious about participating in online learning. For example, when there was an assignment from the teacher, several children did not understand it and had prefer to rely on the help from their older siblings or parents. Many of them found it difficult to understand the materials, because their teachers rarely explained it directly through video conferences. This condition made children to be easily bored. This is also reinforced by study results from [Fatimah & Puspaningtyas \(2021\)](#), which stated that students experience boredom in online learning during the

COVID-19 pandemic. Online learning causes several side-effects on students, namely emotional fatigue, physical fatigue, cognitive fatigue, and loss of motivation.

Furthermore, Tahir said that children preferred to play a lot, even with the limited space. During the pandemic, parents have been busy helping their children to understand the subjects. However, many parents are not familiar with English subject, so they also faced difficulty to guide their children in English subject. This became the consideration of the youth organization's managers to create an English learning program.

However, the problem is the lack of qualified human resources who can teach English to children in a qualified manner so that the program becomes stagnant, even though the children's interest on it is very high. Based on that problem, we tried to offer cooperation to provide solutions in the form of basic English teaching to children aged 6–10 years. The youth organization agreed and finally the activity was conducted with the theme "Basic English Teaching", with the aim help children improving the quality of pronunciation of English words and increasing the vocabulary mastery.

## 2. Methods

This community services activity in the form of English language teaching was held on December 20, 2020 at the house of one of the residents in RT 04 Cimanggis Subdistrict, Depok City, West Java and was designated specifically for children aged 6–10 years as many as 20 children. The method of implementing this English language activity began with conducting a location survey to meet and discuss with the youth organization's managers of RT 04 Cimanggis Subdistrict to identify various problems and solutions to address the problems. The activity was approved to be taken place in face-to-face manner while still implementing strict health protocols. In order to comply with the regulations for offline activities during the pandemic, the community services team also implemented the following rules:

- 1) Conducting learning activities with a maximum of 15 children per session
- 2) Washing hands before entering the room
- 3) Using hand sanitizer
- 4) Maintain sitting distance between participants
- 5) Wearing face mask

The series of activity stages from preparation to implementation were conducted using the following method:

**Tabel 1.** Community services implementation methods.

Stages	Objectives	Methods
First	Identify problems and approval of teaching activities	Observation/location survey and discussion with youth organization's managers
Second	Prepare the community services team	Training of the teachers
Third	Implement the basic English teaching for fostered children of youth organization	Direct delivery of material that provides room for questions for participants (direct instruction), card games
Fourth	Evaluate the achievement of community services goals	English pronunciation and vocabulary mastery test

The method of presenting the teaching materials to children was conducted in two ways, namely

- 1) Direct instruction (direct delivery of material)
- 2) Games using cards

According to [Budiyanto \(2016\)](#), in the direct instruction method, the teacher (instructor) began the lesson by explaining the learning objectives and background, and preparing the participants to receive the materials. The preparation and motivation phase were then followed by the presentation of material that teaches or demonstrates certain skills to the participants. This teaching also included providing opportunities for participants to practice and providing feedback regarding their success level.

Group discussion is a learning technique that is specifically designed with the aim to facilitate group members to get the opportunity to solve problems together. Study by [Manullang et al. \(2021\)](#) stated that the discussion method can improve children's learning outcomes. Group discussion was applied by the community services team to create two-way communication, namely between the participants and the community services team who acted directly as material providers (basic English teachers). Another useful technique is to use games in the form of educational games. Study results by [Widoretno et al. \(2021\)](#) concluded that the game method in the form of children's educational games bring significant and positive effect on children's ability to understand learning materials. In the English teaching program to the participants, the community services team used card games.

Of course, the selection of this method was adjusted to the purpose of the activity, which was only to provide basic English teaching, considering that the participants' English skills were still very much below the average, namely at elementary level. Therefore, the method used emphasizes more on games than direct instruction. This was of course different from teaching English for advanced level or age groups, as has been conducted by [Muchtar et al. \(2021\)](#), which focused more on discussion, simulation, and pair or group work.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

Teaching basic English to children in RT 04 Cimanggis Subdistrict, Depok City was a form of community services implementation by the team. The activity, which lasted for 3 hours, was expected to be a complementary part of the teaching program for children launched by the youth organization at RT 04 during the pandemic. The activity was conducted in several sessions, which are described as follows.

The first session was an assessment of the participants' basic English knowledge. The community services team tried to identify the children's ability to read several English words and vocabulary. There were 20 words that were displayed, and among the 20 participants, only 9 children correctly pronounced them. Then there were 20 pictures of objects, animals, and fruits displayed, and 12 children were able to correctly name them in English. Then when a sentence was presented, only 6 children were able to correctly read and pronounce it.

The second session was intended to identify the participants' reading ability and vocabulary mastery. As cited by [Ikhwati & Megawati \(2018\)](#), vocabulary is a number of words in a language used to express certain thoughts or ideas. Vocabulary is one of the essential elements of language that must be mastered in order to develop mastery and fluency in the language.

To help improve vocabulary pronunciation, the community services team validated how to read words that were previously pronounced incorrectly by participants. Then, they told them the correct names of objects, animals, and fruits that were not able to be answered. In addition, the team added more name of animals. In the first session, the children's responses were very diverse. At first, they were shy to speak, but over time, they dared to come forward to answer the questions given by the team. All participants became responsive when asked again the names of animals in English. On the sidelines of providing material, the team also held a game, namely guessing the picture using cards. The next game was deciphering the short sentences.

In the third session, the teaching method used was still the same, namely card games and direct instruction, but the material was different. The third session focused more on introducing the names of fruits and the names of appliances and furniture commonly found in the house. Given that the third

session took place during the afternoon, the children's enthusiasm began to decline. For example, they answered greetings and questions in a lower voice, but it was different during the games, where they were, once again, more excited and enthusiastic. The games actually served as a means of evaluating the students' cognitive knowledge to find out whether their vocabulary in English has increased or not.

In addition, their understanding was tested by playing guess the word, guess the picture, and guess the sentence games. In word guessing, they had to fill in the empty letters in a word to create a perfect word that has a certain meaning. In sentence guessing, they had to fill in the empty words to be assembled into a proper sentence. The sentences tested to children are of course very simple sentences. Then in picture guessing, they must choose a picture that matches the word spoken by the teachers. In maintaining the enthusiasm of the participants, the team interspersed teaching activities with singing.

### **3.1 Evaluation method**

In the last session, the team tried to conduct a test separately from the material delivery session. This test was a special session with aim to really ascertain how well the increasing knowledge of the participants. The participants were given several tests as follows:

#### **1. Oral test**

Participants were asked to say 5 words of their choice randomly (the team had already written 30 words on rolled-up papers). Among 20 participants, 15 children correctly pronounced the 5 words they chose. This means that when compared to the beginning of the lesson, there was an increase in the number of children who are able to pronounce English words correctly. From initially 9 people, it was increased to 15 people after the teaching. The remaining 5 children were only able to correctly pronounce 2–4 English words.

#### **2. Vocabulary test**

The game of matching cards with pictures of objects/animals/fruits with meanings was given during the teaching session, and it has increased the participants' vocabulary mastery. In the meaning comprehension test, each of them was asked to pick 10 picture cards randomly and name them in English. There were 30 picture cards provided. Among the 20 participants, 7 children (35%) were able to name the 10 pictures they picked up in English, 4 children (20%) were only able to name 9 pictures, 6 children (30%) were able to name exactly 8 pictures, and 3 children (15%) were able to name exactly 7 pictures. Although not all children (20) were able to correctly name all of 10 pictures they took in English, at least there was an increase in knowledge compared to the beginning of teaching, where the initial average was only able to name 6–7 pictures.

### **3.2 Indicators of success**

When looking at the final results of this basic English teaching activity, it can be concluded that there were achievements in accordance with the established target, namely the increase in the participants' ability to pronounce new words, also the increase of vocabulary mastery. This means that the efforts made by the community services team have been declared successful, although it was still far from perfect. The success of the target achievement cannot be separated from the internal and external factors of the learning process. According to [Gagne et al. \(1979\)](#) the learning process occurs due to internal and external learning conditions. Internal conditions are the ability and readiness of the child. External conditions are the arrangement of learning environment designed by the teacher. Therefore, the preparation of these external learning conditions must be designed and implemented properly by the teacher so as to successfully conduct learning activities.

After the teaching was over, the team asked how the children felt about this English learning activity. The participants answered that they felt happy, and even wanted this activity to be held regularly every week. At the end of the event, the community services team gave a little keepsake to youth organization at RT 04 Cimanggis Subdistrict in the form of basic English books for children equipped with pictures

and their meanings in Indonesian. The aim is that the books can be used as library materials that can be read continuously by the children after the teaching program is over.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The implementation of basic English teaching activities for fostered children of youth organization at RT 04 Cimanggis Subdistrict, Depok City, West Java has resulted in the following conclusions:

- a. Teachers (instructors) must equip themselves with mastery of the material and appropriate teaching methods. From the results of the activity, it is evident that the use of direct instruction method provides an opportunity for the teacher and the participants to interact directly. Teachers and participants can ask each other any questions they want. In the process of direct instruction, the teacher can even ascertain whether the participants can understand the material presented or not. In addition, the use of games is also very helpful in increasing the vocabulary mastery of new words.
- b. The teacher's emotional control plays an important role in maintaining the enthusiasm and mood of the participants. The team can apply this by teach slowly in a nurturing manner, so that all participants are willing to stay until the end.
- c. The target achievement of this basic English teaching program can be said to have been realized. This can be seen from the increase in knowledge among the participants, namely the increase in vocabulary mastery and knowledge of the correct pronunciation of the words introduced in the teaching.

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#### **6. Authors' Note**

The author hereby declares that this paper is the original work of the author based on real community services activity and does not contain either elements of plagiarism or conflict of interest.

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