



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN PROMOTING ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE: A PARENTAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN THAI SCHOOLS

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ABSTRAK

Abstrak: Program pengabdian masyarakat ini dilaksanakan dengan tujuan meningkatkan kesadaran orang tua dalam mendukung pembelajaran bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa internasional melalui keterlibatan aktif siswa dalam kegiatan kampanye edukatif. Kegiatan ini merupakan bagian dari program pertukaran pelajar yang dilakukan oleh mahasiswa Indonesia di Lukmanulhakeem School, Yaha, Provinsi Yala, Thailand Selatan. Pelaksanaan program berlangsung selama dua bulan, terhitung sejak 12 November 2024 hingga 7 Januari 2025, melalui empat tahapan strategis, yaitu: koordinasi awal dengan tenaga pendidik, penggalangan dukungan dari orang tua, pelaksanaan pembelajaran intensif di lingkungan sekolah, dan penguatan keterlibatan keluarga dalam proses pembelajaran. Hasil pelaksanaan program menunjukkan bahwa kolaborasi antara pihak sekolah, keluarga, dan siswa memberikan kontribusi signifikan terhadap peningkatan kompetensi berbahasa Inggris siswa. Meskipun sebagian orang tua memiliki keterbatasan dalam penguasaan bahasa Inggris, partisipasi mereka dalam kegiatan kampanye seperti *Family English Challenge* dan *English for Life Simulation* memberikan dampak positif terhadap motivasi dan kepercayaan diri siswa dalam berkomunikasi. Dengan demikian, pendekatan pembelajaran berbasis sosial-edukatif terbukti efektif dalam membentuk kompetensi abad ke-21, khususnya keterampilan komunikasi lintas budaya di wilayah yang memiliki keterbatasan akses terhadap pendidikan bahasa asing.

Kata Kunci: *partisipasi siswa; keterlibatan siswa; pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris.*

Abstract: *This community service initiative was carried out with the aim of raising parental awareness in supporting English language learning as an international language through the active involvement of students in educational campaign activities. The programme formed part of a student exchange initiative undertaken by Indonesian university students at Lukmanulhakeem School, Yaha, Yala Province, Southern Thailand. The service project was conducted over a two-month period, from 12 November 2024 to 7 January 2025, and was implemented through four strategic stages: initial coordination with teaching staff, mobilising parental support, conducting intensive language learning activities within the school environment, and reinforcing family engagement in the learning process. The outcomes of the programme revealed that collaboration among schools, families, and students played a significant role in enhancing pupils' English language proficiency. Although some parents had limited proficiency in English, their participation in campaign activities such as the Family English Challenge and English for Life Simulation positively contributed to students' motivation and confidence in communication. Thus, a socially and educationally driven approach to language learning proved effective in fostering 21st-century competencies, particularly cross-cultural communication skills, in areas with limited access to foreign language education.*

Keywords: *student participation, student engagement, english language learning*

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A. INTRODUCTION

English has gained widespread recognition as an international language, playing a dominant role across various domains of life such as education, technology, business, and diplomatic relations (Tambunsaribu & Galingging, 2021). In Southeast Asia, particularly in Thailand, improving English language proficiency has become a key focus in the reform of the national education system, aiming to enhance the country's global competitiveness (Harlina & Yusuf, 2020). Nevertheless, Thai students' proficiency in English remains relatively low when compared to neighbouring countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines. This situation poses a significant challenge in the context of globalisation and regional economic integration within ASEAN, where proficiency in English is increasingly essential as a tool for cross-national communication (Arrahma et al., 2022).

One of the crucial aspects in the success of English language learning is the active involvement of students in the learning process and the internalisation of the language, both within and beyond the school environment (Indah & Afifi, 2025). Such engagement encompasses not only cognitive and affective dimensions of learning, but also positions students as agents of change who can contribute to promoting English as a global language within their communities (Siregar, 2023). In this context, the implementation of awareness campaigns initiated by students and targeted at parents within the school community serves as a strategic approach to strengthening family support for English language education.

Parental contribution is essential in creating a supportive learning environment at home, including fostering the habitual use of English in daily interactions (Rose et al., 2022). However, parental participation in many schools across Thailand remains relatively low, due to various factors such as limited knowledge, lack of motivation, and minimal English language proficiency (Tauhid & 2023). Consequently, student involvement in designing and implementing awareness campaigns directed at parents represents an innovative effort that not only has the potential to raise family awareness of the importance of English language proficiency, but also supports the development of students' character particularly in terms of responsibility, communication skills, and leadership.

A number of previous studies have highlighted the importance of student engagement in promoting English as an international language, particularly through awareness-raising campaigns targeting parents within the school environment. These studies have found that parental participation has a significant impact on students' English learning outcomes, with higher levels of parental involvement generally correlating with improved academic

achievement. Furthermore, the pedagogical approach of Global Englishes (GE), as outlined by Miao & Ambele, (2023) emphasises the need to recognise English as a multi-contextual language that is used in diverse ways within multicultural settings. This understanding can be strengthened through the support of parents who possess awareness and insight into linguistic diversity. Similarly, research conducted by Sampelan & Sengkey, (2022) suggests that the GE approach can be further reinforced through family involvement in supporting English language use beyond conventional normative contexts. In addition, findings by (Kanoksilapatham, 2016) underscore that initiatives aimed at enhancing parental awareness of the importance of multicultural education and the multifaceted functions of English can contribute to the creation of a more conducive learning environment. Accordingly, the integration of parental awareness campaigns into educational strategies represents a relevant and timely step in fostering active student engagement and improving their achievement in learning English as an international language.

English has become an important part of Thailand's education reform agenda, but the reality is that students' English proficiency is still low compared to neighbouring countries such as Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines. One of the main contributing factors is the low involvement of parents in supporting the English learning process at home, which is influenced by their limited knowledge, language skills and motivation. Meanwhile, students' potential as agents of social change has not been optimally utilised, even though they have the ability to become a bridge of communication between schools and families. The active involvement of students in community awareness campaigns has strategic value in encouraging parental participation and shaping the positive character of the students themselves such as leadership, responsibility, and communication skills. Therefore, this service activity aims to initiate a student-led awareness campaign programme to increase parental participation in supporting English learning in the home environment. This programme is designed to provide direct education to parents through a communicative and collaborative approach, so that they are more motivated and confident in accompanying their children to learn English.

B. METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

One of the community service programmes initiated by English Education students from Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang as part of the Indonesian student exchange initiative to Thailand involved a campaign highlighting the importance of English. This was carried out through parental mentoring and intensive classroom instruction (Lutfiah et al., 2025). The campaign took place over a two-month period, from 12 November 2024 to

7 January 2025, at Lukmanulhakeem School, Yaha, Yala, Southern Thailand. The mentoring and outreach activities targeted both the school and local community, with a specific focus on engaging students in parental awareness campaigns to enhance family participation in supporting English language learning as an international language.

The implementation of the community service program in the form of a language awareness campaign was carried out through four stages of engagement: initial coordination with teachers and obtaining parental support, intensive school-based learning, and increased family participation in students' learning processes (Warmadewi et al., 2021). The first stage, obtaining parental support, was conducted through a socialization initiative aimed at fostering shared understanding regarding the urgency of family involvement in English language learning. The second stage involved parental mentoring, which was implemented through counseling sessions and discussion forums designed to enhance parents' capacity and readiness to support their children's learning at home. The third stage, intensive learning at school, focused on strengthening students' English skills through various communicative and collaborative activities that encouraged their active participation as campaign agents for language awareness. The fourth stage, increasing family participation, sought to foster sustained parental engagement by promoting the use of English in daily interactions and providing both emotional and instrumental support. This stage aimed to create a constructive synergy between the school environment and the family in enhancing students' English language competence.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Sub Judul School Support in English Language Learning

The students conducted an in-depth observation to evaluate the essential role of the school in shaping a more effective English language learning ecosystem. This was examined through the implementation of institutional policies, provision of learning facilities, and the continuous delivery of pedagogical support. The community service activity, conducted by the student team at Lukmanulhakeem School, Yaha, Yala, Southern Thailand, reflects concrete institutional support through several key efforts. These include the implementation of an intensive English language learning program, opportunities for students to participate in language awareness campaign activities, and the active involvement of teachers in mentoring throughout the process. Such initiatives demonstrate the school's strong commitment to developing a collaborative approach that actively engages students, teachers, and parents in fostering continuous and comprehensive English language skill development. The initial coordination phase with teachers, as

illustrated in Figure 1, was a vital step in laying the foundation for this collaborative engagement.



Figure 1. Initial Coordination Stage

Figure 1 illustrates the involvement of Indonesian university students in providing education and mentorship as part of efforts to deliver training and capacity-building support for educators. The goal is to enable teachers to implement communicative and contextually relevant teaching methods. This initiative aligns with the *Global Englishes* approach, which acknowledges and values the diverse practices of English usage within multicultural communities. The school further supports this initiative by facilitating open spaces for discussion, implementing creativity-based projects, and engaging students as agents of change. These efforts collectively reflect the institution's active involvement in fostering an inclusive, transformative English language learning culture. Thus, the support extended by the school is not limited to administrative aspects alone, but also encompasses strategic development aligned with the dynamics and demands of foreign language education in the global era.

2. Family Support in English Language Learning

The mentoring activities conducted at Lukmanulhakeem School, Yaha, Yala, Southern Thailand, revealed that family involvement plays a significant role in enhancing students' motivation and success in learning English as an international language. Through student-initiated language awareness campaigns directed at parents, there was a notable increase in parental understanding of the importance of English proficiency in facing global dynamics and regional ASEAN competition. This campaign employed a participatory approach, positioning students as facilitators who delivered educational messages in a communicative manner, thereby strengthening the educational relationship between students and their parents (Yuliana & Haryanti, 2024).

During the campaign, various forms of emerging family support were identified, including allocating specific time for at-home learning, participating in the supervision of English assignments, and encouraging the use of English in everyday communication, even in simple forms. Although most parents had limited English proficiency, there was a noticeable growth in awareness and willingness to be actively involved in their children's learning process. These findings indicate that student-led awareness campaigns can serve as a strategic alternative for fostering supportive learning environments beyond the classroom. Moreover, student engagement in the educational process also contributed to character development, particularly in terms of leadership, responsibility, and communication skills. Therefore, the integration of family roles through school-based awareness campaigns has proven to be an effective strategy in supporting English language education, especially in areas with limited access to foreign language instruction, such as Southern Thailand.

3. Character Development through Socio-Educational Activities

Strengthening students' character through socio-educational activities represents a multidimensional approach that integrates various learning strategies and practices. Overall, the synergy between schools and parents plays a crucial role in shaping individuals who are not only academically competent but also possess practical life skills, including language use as part of their daily habits. Socio-educational activities serve as an effective strategy for fostering and reinforcing student character through meaningful, hands-on experiences. In the context of the community service program at Lukmanulhakeem School, Yaha, Yala, Southern Thailand, students' involvement in conducting English awareness campaigns for parents aimed not only to improve linguistic competence but also to instill core character values such as responsibility.

One notable initiative to strengthen English language use was the creation of the "Family English Challenge" program. This initiative encouraged English interaction between students and their families through weekly challenges such as creating simple home conversation videos, compiling a "family dictionary," or reading English stories with parents. Additionally, the university students implemented an intensive, real-life-based learning approach called "*English for Life Simulation*." This method focused on simulating real-life scenarios using English, including role-playing as tourists, airport staff, cashiers, or solving situational puzzles. These activities emphasized the functional use of English in everyday contexts. The implementation of *English for Life Simulation* is illustrated in Figure 2, demonstrating

how experiential and contextual learning contributes to both language acquisition and character development among students.



Figure 2. English for Life Simulation Activity.

Figure 2 illustrates the implementation of the *English for Life Simulation* activity, which applies a contextual learning model designed to enhance students' English communication skills through real-life scenario simulations. This activity provides students with opportunities to analyze and reenact everyday situations such as shopping, asking for directions, or engaging in polite conversation with adults enabling them to apply English in a functional manner. In this simulation, university students acted as facilitators, guiding student interactions while encouraging the use of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures based on context. This approach not only reinforced students' practical language skills but also fostered self-confidence, creativity, and critical thinking in navigating global communication challenges.

The community service initiative further demonstrated that students were capable of taking active roles in educating their parents through collaboratively produced presentations as part of the awareness campaign. Parental responses were largely positive, as evidenced by their increased interest in participating in school activities and their efforts to support English vocabulary use at home. Moreover, student involvement in these activities contributed to the development of non-academic skills such as leadership, interpersonal communication, and teamwork. These findings highlight the dual impact of student-led educational campaigns: strengthening family awareness and fostering students' communicative courage and character development.

D. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results of the community service activities conducted by university students at Lukmanulhakeem School, Yaha, Yala, Southern

Thailand, it is evident that the success of English language learning is significantly influenced by the involvement of multiple stakeholders—particularly the school, families, and the students themselves. The school played a vital role in providing learning facilities and fostering a collaborative environment among teachers, university students, and learners. Although most families had limited English proficiency, their participation in student-led awareness campaigns positively contributed to the learning process. Contextual and practical learning activities, such as the *Family English Challenge* and *English for Life Simulation*, not only helped improve students' language competence but also had a meaningful impact on character development, particularly in building students' confidence to communicate. These findings indicate that a socio-educational learning approach can serve as an effective means of strengthening 21st-century skills, especially in regions with limited access to foreign language education.

In light of these outcomes, it is recommended that future student exchange programs in Thailand prioritize the enhancement of context-based English learning through the integration of digital technology, continuous professional development for local teachers, and active involvement of families and students in project-based activities such as *English for Life Simulation*. These efforts should also be supported by a structured evaluation system to assess program effectiveness and its potential for replication in other ASEAN regions with similar socio-cultural contexts.

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