

# Improving English Language Skills at SDN 12 Turatea, Mangepong Village, Turatea District, Jeneponto Regency, for Fifth Grade Students through Classroom Teaching

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## ARTICLE INFO

*Keyword : English Teaching Methods, KKN Unhas, English SDN 12 Turatea,*

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## ABSTRACT

*This individual work program within the Community Service Program (KKN) aims to enhance the English language skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 12 Turatea. Since English is only officially taught in the sixth grade, this program provides students with the opportunity to start learning earlier. This study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Data is collected through observations, interviews, and documentation to assess the effectiveness of the teaching methods implemented. The program focuses on classroom instruction using interactive methods such as discussions and practice exercises, combined with the Songs and Chants method, where simple English songs are used to improve students' listening and pronunciation skills. The lessons cover fundamental English skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students have shown a high level of enthusiasm in participating, as for many of them, this is their first experience receiving formal English instruction. Through this program, students are expected to be better prepared for English learning in the sixth grade and to develop a stronger foundation in the language. Furthermore, this study highlights that an interactive teaching approach can enhance students' comprehension and expand English learning opportunities for other students at the school.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Globalization, modernization, and technological advancements have become integral parts of people's lives today. All of these changes have a significant impact on various aspects of life, including education and communication. One of the most visible influences is the growing use of English as an international language. English was first introduced in Indonesia during the colonial era and has continued to develop up to the present. Not only in Indonesia, but English has also become a medium of instruction in various countries around the world. This shows that proficiency in English is crucial for society, especially for the younger generation.

English language learning generally starts with the basics, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Today, English is not only used in the educational world but also in various industrial sectors. Proficiency in English can be a distinct advantage, especially for those who want to have greater opportunities in the job market in the future. In Jeneponto Regency, awareness of the importance of mastering English is increasing, especially in schools. However, at SDN 12 Turatea, English as a subject is only included in the official curriculum for sixth-grade students, meaning fifth-grade students have not received formal English instruction. Therefore, the students of KKN (Community Service Program) of Wave 113 in Jeneponto Regency have taken the initiative to provide English teaching to fifth-grade students as an effort to introduce English early on. With this program, it is hoped that students will be better prepared for English lessons in grade VI and have a better understanding from the start. As students who are also undergoing their own educational process, the KKN participants are able to create a more relaxed and interactive learning environment. The activities focus not only on theory but also involve fun learning methods such as discussions and practice exercises. In this way, students can more easily understand the material without feeling overwhelmed. This English teaching program is part of the community service activities carried out by the KKN participants of Wave 113 in Jeneponto Regency. The program is conducted with enthusiasm and dedication, aiming to provide tangible benefits for the students. Through this program, it is hoped that the students of SDN 12 Turatea will gain new insights and become more confident in using English in the future.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Globalization has increased the need for proficiency in English, particularly in education and employment. In Indonesia, English has become a key component of modern education, and many educators argue for its early introduction in schools. Studies show that early exposure to English positively impacts cognitive development, language acquisition, and future career opportunities (Hinkel, 2005). However, in rural areas like Jeneponto, English is typically introduced only in higher grades, leaving younger students with limited exposure to the language. This gap in language education highlights the importance of early intervention to improve English proficiency.

Interactive and student-centered teaching methods are increasingly recognized as essential for effective language learning. Traditional, lecture-based approaches have been replaced by more dynamic strategies that engage students in active learning. According to Celce-Murcia (2001), methods such as group discussions, games, and the use of multimedia tools enhance student participation and language retention. The KKN program at SDN 12 Turatea, which utilized songs, chants, and interactive exercises, exemplifies these methods. These strategies not only make learning fun but also help improve listening, pronunciation, and vocabulary retention, especially among younger learners. Teaching English in rural schools presents unique challenges, including limited resources and qualified teachers. Research by Sukardi & Dewa Ketut (2000) highlights how rural schools often struggle with these limitations, which can impede language

learning. In such environments, students also lack opportunities to practice English outside the classroom. The KKN program in Jeneponto addressed these challenges by introducing engaging and interactive learning methods, making English accessible and enjoyable despite the lack of resources. Early intervention programs have been shown to significantly enhance language skills. Syahputra (2014) emphasizes the importance of starting English education early, using engaging methods that cater to students' interests. The KKN program in Jeneponto demonstrated the effectiveness of such an approach, with students showing significant improvement in their English skills. By teaching them through songs and interactive activities, students were able to build a strong foundation in the language before they formally encountered it in higher grades, making them better prepared for future learning. The long-term success of English learning programs in rural schools depends on community support, teacher involvement, and the integration of these programs into the school curriculum. Moleong (2010) argues that community-based education programs that engage local teachers are more sustainable and impactful. The KKN program's collaboration with local educators ensured that the teaching methods introduced could continue beyond the program, fostering sustained interest in learning English and ensuring its integration into the school's broader educational practices. Through such collaborative efforts, the program helped set the stage for lasting improvements in English proficiency at SDN 12 Turatea.

## **METHOD**

This study utilized a qualitative research design with a descriptive approach to assess the effectiveness of the English language teaching program implemented at SDN 12 Turatea. A qualitative approach was chosen as it allows for an in-depth understanding of the process, challenges, and outcomes associated with the English teaching activities. The descriptive approach helped in capturing the specific details of how the program was implemented, the teaching methods used, and the responses from students and teachers. The study aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of the impact of early English education on fifth-grade students in a rural setting, specifically in Jeneponto.

The participants of this program were 36 fifth-grade students at SDN 12 Turatea, located in Mangepong Village, Turatea District, Jeneponto Regency. These students were selected because they had not received formal English instruction, as the school's official English curriculum begins only in the sixth grade. The students' age range was between 10 to 12 years old, and they were generally unfamiliar with basic English vocabulary and phrases. Additionally, the program also involved the teachers at SDN 12 Turatea, who were instrumental in supporting and coordinating the activities. Their role was crucial in ensuring that the program did not disrupt the regular school curriculum. The program was conducted over a period of three weeks, from January 9 to February 6, 2025, with seven sessions in total. The initial week involved a single session, while the subsequent weeks included three sessions per week, each lasting two hours. The schedule was designed in consultation with school authorities to ensure minimal disruption to regular classes. The lessons were focused on introducing students to basic English skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The teaching methods were interactive, incorporating a variety of activities to engage students and facilitate active learning.

The teaching methods employed in this program combined traditional and innovative strategies to make the learning process more engaging for the students. The core of the program was based on interactive learning, where students actively participated in discussions, group activities, and individual exercises. The methods used were designed to be both educational and enjoyable, including the use of songs, chants, and games. Songs and chants in English were particularly useful for improving students' listening

skills, pronunciation, and vocabulary retention. Additionally, visual aids such as flashcards, posters, and objects from the classroom environment were used to help students relate new words to everyday items, reinforcing the connection between language and real-life contexts.

Data for the study was collected through three main methods: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted during each teaching session to monitor student participation, engagement, and progress. This allowed the researchers to assess how students responded to the various teaching methods and identify any challenges that arose during the lessons. Interviews were conducted with both students and teachers to gain insights into their perceptions of the program and its impact on students' language skills. Documentation involved recording lesson plans, teaching materials, and students' work, such as written exercises and quizzes, to track progress and provide evidence of learning outcomes. The combination of these methods provided a well-rounded perspective on the program's effectiveness. The data collected was analyzed qualitatively to assess the effectiveness of the teaching methods and the overall impact of the program. The analysis focused on several key indicators: student participation, improvement in language skills (particularly speaking and listening), and the students' attitudes toward learning English. The pre- and post-program evaluations included quizzes and oral assessments to gauge improvements in vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence construction. In addition, ongoing formative assessments were conducted throughout the program to measure short-term progress. The success of the program was determined by the extent to which students demonstrated increased confidence and competence in using English, as well as their enthusiasm for continuing to learn the language. The methodology for this study was designed to capture both the qualitative aspects of language learning and the effectiveness of the interactive teaching methods. By using a combination of observation, interviews, and documentation, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive assessment of the impact of early English education at SDN 12 Turatea. The findings from this program can contribute to a better understanding of how interactive and early intervention programs can improve English language skills in rural schools.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results from the classroom teaching program revealed that some students still faced challenges in maintaining focus during lessons. During discussions and question-and-answer sessions, certain students were less active. To address this, a personal approach was adopted, providing encouragement and entertainment to engage students more actively in the learning process. Some fifth-grade students at SDN 12 Turatea also experienced difficulties in understanding English, particularly in pronunciation and basic vocabulary. To overcome this, the teaching methods were made more interactive by using everyday objects, such as books, pencils, blackboards, and tables, as media for vocabulary introduction. By connecting new words with familiar objects, students found it easier to understand and remember English terms.

Additionally, evaluations were conducted every 15 minutes before the lesson ended, and a quiz was held in the final week to assess how well the students had mastered the material taught. The teaching process was well-received by both students and teachers at SDN 12 Turatea, as evidenced by the students' enthusiasm during class. The positive response highlights that the interactive and context-based teaching approach was effective in increasing the students' interest in learning English.

The success of the program underscores the importance of innovation in teaching methods to enhance the effectiveness of learning. Beyond simply transferring knowledge, the learning process should create a meaningful and enjoyable experience for students. A

contextual approach allows students to not only memorize vocabulary but also understand how English can be applied in real-life situations. When learning is linked to real-world contexts, students are better able to absorb the material and use it naturally in communication. As a result, English becomes more than just a subject in the classroom—it becomes a skill they can apply in various aspects of life.

Furthermore, the success of this program greatly depended on the active role of the teachers in implementing innovative methods. Teachers acted not only as instructors but also as facilitators who created a dynamic and interactive learning environment. With the full support and involvement of the teachers, the learning process became more engaging and adaptable to the students' needs. Therefore, continuous collaboration between the instructors, teachers, and the school is essential. A strong partnership ensures that the effective teaching strategies are continually developed and adapted to have a long-lasting impact on improving students' English language skills.

The sustainability of this program relies on maintaining this synergy, ensuring that its benefits are felt not only in the short term but also contribute to the overall improvement of educational quality. By fostering an environment where teachers, students, and the community work together, the program's success can be extended beyond its duration, positively influencing the future of English language education at SDN 12 Turatea.



Figure 1. Implementation of the English Teaching Program

(a) Conducting the English teaching program.

(b) A group photo with the teachers of SDN 12 Turatea and the handover of certificates from the program.

(c) [Additional description if needed]

## CONCLUSION

The English teaching program at SDN 12 Turatea, conducted by the KKN Tematik Gelombang 113 students in Jenepono Regency, has had a positive impact on improving students' understanding and interest in learning English. Despite some challenges, such as difficulties with focus, pronunciation, and vocabulary mastery, the interactive and contextual teaching methods proved effective in helping students better understand the material. The approach, which included using everyday objects, discussions, exercises, and rewards, successfully increased student participation in the learning process.

The success of this program demonstrates that innovation in teaching methods is essential for creating an engaging and meaningful learning experience. English language learning is not just about memorizing vocabulary but also about understanding its application in real life. Therefore, active teacher involvement and strong collaboration between instructors, schools, and students are crucial to ensuring the sustainability of the program and optimizing long-term learning outcomes. To improve the effectiveness of this program, the author suggests that the school integrate English into the curriculum at an earlier stage and develop more engaging teaching methods, such as games, storytelling, or digital media. Teachers should also receive training to build confidence in teaching interactively. Furthermore, continuous collaboration between the school, students, and relevant stakeholders should be strengthened to improve the quality of education and ensure long-term benefits for the students.

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