

Optimizing English Language Training Through British Council Learn English Kids in Ban Thama Prao School Thailand

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Abstract

This community service aimed to improve the English skills of students at Ban thama prao School in Thailand. They used the British Council's Learn English Kids website. Students at Banthamaprao School in Thailand face challenges in developing their English reading skills due to limited access to interactive learning resources and student motivation. Teachers at the school also experienced difficulties in integrating technology into their teaching practices due to a lack of training and infrastructure. These issues result in low student motivation and suboptimal English learning outcomes. The program lasted four weeks and used technology-based learning for teachers and students. Starting with an introduction to the web, the activities continued with classroom learning implementation, evaluation, and reflection. The results of the program showed that students significantly improved their reading skills and increased their motivation to learn. In addition, teachers became better at using technology as a learning tool, despite barriers to internet access and technological devices. Recommendations include improving the technology infrastructure and ongoing training for teachers to ensure the sustainability of the program.

Abstrak

Pengabdian masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa Inggris siswa di Sekolah Banthamaprao di Thailand dengan menggunakan situs web Learn English Kids dari British Council. Siswa di Sekolah Banthamaprao di Thailand menghadapi tantangan dalam mengembangkan kemampuan membaca bahasa Inggris mereka karena terbatasnya akses ke sumber belajar interaktif dan motivasi siswa. Para guru di sekolah tersebut juga mengalami kesulitan dalam mengintegrasikan teknologi ke dalam praktik mengajar mereka karena kurangnya pelatihan dan infrastruktur. Masalah-masalah ini mengakibatkan rendahnya motivasi siswa dan hasil belajar bahasa Inggris yang kurang optimal. Program ini berlangsung selama empat minggu dan menggunakan pembelajaran berbasis teknologi untuk para guru dan siswa. Dimulai dengan pengenalan web, kegiatan dilanjutkan dengan implementasi pembelajaran di kelas, evaluasi, dan refleksi. Hasil dari program ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa secara signifikan meningkatkan kemampuan membaca mereka dan meningkatkan motivasi mereka untuk belajar. Selain itu, para guru menjadi lebih baik dalam menggunakan teknologi sebagai alat pembelajaran, meskipun ada hambatan dalam akses internet dan perangkat teknologi. Rekomendasi yang diberikan adalah peningkatan infrastruktur teknologi dan pelatihan berkelanjutan bagi para guru untuk memastikan keberlanjutan program.

Keywords: Web-based learning, British Council Learn English Kids, English, educational technology, community service.

1. Introduction

Community Service is an activity of the academic community that utilizes Science and Technology to advance the welfare of society and educate the nation's life (Ekonomi et al., 2024). One example is community service that is carried out systematically and directly in the community which is needed to build and develop human resources in the community. (Ali, 2021). The field that will be strengthened in this community service is English at banthamaprao school as a cooperation between Indonesia and Thailand.

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English, today, is believed to be the most famous language in the world. English is studied worldwide as an important foreign language, and people increasingly need it to communicate in various fields, such as technology, business, and international communication as a unifying language of the world. A foreign language means that people rarely use it either orally or in writing (Febriyanti & Sundari, 2020). Although some students do not think about this because they consider it a useless tool in their own communities where English is not their mother tongue (Hasan & Seileek, 2023). Therefore, teaching English at the primary school level is necessary to build students' language skills from an early age. (Loewen & Sato, 2019).

Banthamaprao School is located at Moo 9 Ban Tha Maprao sub district, Klong Phon Klong Thom District, Krabi Province. Students at Banthamaprao School in Thailand face challenges in developing their English reading skills due to limited access to interactive learning resources and student motivation. Teachers at the school also experienced difficulties in integrating technology into their teaching practices due to a lack of training and infrastructure. These issues result in low student motivation and suboptimal English learning outcomes. However, teaching English in remote locations such as Banthamaprao School, Thailand, often encounters various obstacles. The main challenge faced is limited resources, both in terms of learning materials and the availability of teachers with adequate English language competence. In addition, limited access to quality English learning materials means that the learning process tends to be defined by classroom exchanges that are insufficient to improve students' language skills. (Cahyani & Cahyono, 2023). Especially primary school teachers who work in environments and conditions that require the use of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) in learning, need activities and resources that enable teachers to improve their abilities. Teachers are highly motivated to improve the quality of learning, despite the limitations of funds, time, and the desire to improve the quality of learning (Rahmawati et al., 2023).

The interactive web is generally perceived as fun and motivating. Several studies have shown that, compared to conventional learning approaches, game approaches that involve learners' participation in digital technologies show greater willingness to continue the learning process. (Andari, 2020). Internet-enhanced web is a way to improve the quality of learning in the classroom. The function of the internet is to facilitate communication and enrichment between students, teachers, fellow students, groups, or other sources (Taufik et al., 2018). Ketsman also added that technology-based learning creates a more immersive learning experience as students interact directly with the material through various media, such as video, audio, and interactive games. (Ketsman, 2019)

There are many websites, apps, and online games for mobile phones that help teachers and students learn English in the classroom, such as Duolingo, Kahoot, Hello English, and the British Council, among others (Syafutra et al., 2023). The use of the Web (E-Learning) helps schools or educational institutions obtain information and knowledge resources needed for education (Palupi et al., 2023). British Council was chosen because of its easy access for primary school and kindergarten levels. The British Council is renowned worldwide for its English as a foreign language teaching and teacher training programs (Amico, 2020). Through the use of digital resources and collaboration with educational institutions, the British Council plays an important role in improving English language skills in many countries. (Ahmad et al., 2019).

2. Method

This activity lasted for four weeks, from 24 July – 21 August 2024. It was attended by 6 participants from the University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang, but for the banthamaprao school, 1 student was represented to make a social contribution there. The service in improving English language skills to students is carried out from kindergarten to primary 5 in this learning involved some teacher and several students participated in this program, focusing on improving reading skills using the British Council's Learn English Kids website. The Community

Service activity lasted for four weeks and consisted of several main stages, such as evaluation, reflection, and implementation of learning in the classroom.

Table 1 Schedule Activities

Activities	Stages	Duration
Web Introduction	Teacher Training, Introduction To Students	1 Week
Implementation	Technology-Based Interactive Learning	1 Week
Monitoring And Assessment	Student Reading Test, Teacher Survey	1 Week
Evaluation And Reflection	Discussion Of Results, Follow-Up Planning	5 Days

The following are the details of the implementation procedure:

1. **Planning**
The first stage was to prepare everything needed, including teaching materials and media. This also applies to assisting the English teachers involved.
2. **Implementation of Classroom Learning in Week Two**
At this time, the Learn English Kids website started to be used in school lessons. This activity helps teachers access the site and teaches them to use the various interactive features. The focus of this week's lesson is to improve English language skills using videos and illustrations.
 - a. **Initial Skills Assessment:**
Based on the intended grade level, the teacher and researcher conduct an initial assessment to find out how proficient the students are in English. The results of this review will be used as a basis for understanding the extent of student progress at the end of the program.
3. **Monitoring and Assessment (Week 3)**
In the third week, an evaluation is conducted to ensure that the program is running smoothly and to find areas that need improvement. The process is as follows:
 - a. **Interim Evaluation:**
Teachers are asked to evaluate students' progress and situations encountered while using the website. The results of this evaluation will be used to make changes and progress in the learning process.
 - b. **Follow-up Services:**
Teachers and students receive additional help if there are technical problems or lack of understanding of the content. Researchers also evaluate the success of web-based learning.
4. **Final Assessment and Consideration (Week 4)**
In the final step, a final assessment is completed and an evaluation of the success of the program is conducted. Activities include:
 - a. **Final Assessment of Student Skills:**
Based on the impact of the initial review, students' English skills are considered. Reading skills are the focus of the evaluation.
 - b. **Reflection Discussion with Teachers:**
The researcher conducted a reflection discussion with teachers to discuss the program results, challenges, and how teachers can further use the website in the future. Teachers obtained feedback on how to improve teaching with technology.

Each step is done every week to make it easier for students to develop reading in English. It also allows teachers to control and pay attention to students in developing their English.

3. Result and Discussion

Research conducted on the use of the British Council Learn English Kids website showed significant results in the context of English language learning at Banthamaprao school. While the program had positive impacts, there were also some challenges that had to be overcome during its implementation.

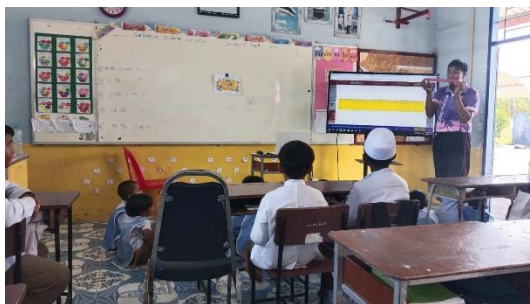


Figure 1. Teacher explains the material



Figure 2. students are trained in reading through quizzes in groups



Figure 3. questions given to students in reading and vocabulary



Figure 4. recognition of animal names and colors through picture media

Based on two main aspects, namely student motivation and engagement and implementation challenges, it can be concluded that the use of technology in language education has great potential but needs a strategic approach for optimal impact. Aspects, the increase in learning motivation seen is in line with the research.

1. Increased Motivation and Engagement

One of the main findings of this study is that there is an increase in motivation to learn English among students after being introduced to the British Council Learn English Kids website. This is in line with research conducted by (Dudeny & Hockly, 2016) This also confirms that the use of technology in language learning can create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment. One of the main findings of this study is that there is an increase in motivation to learn English among students after being introduced to the British Council Learn English Kids website. This is in line with research conducted by which states that the integration of technology in language learning can create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment. In this case, the interactive materials provided by the website play an important role. Materials such as educational games, animated videos and interactive stories spark students' curiosity and make them more engaged in the learning process.

After being introduced to the website, teachers reported that students were more enthusiastic about the lessons. They showed an increase in class participation, asked more questions and even tended to spend more time studying English materials outside of school hours. This suggests that an approach involving technology can stimulate students' intrinsic motivation, which in turn increases their engagement in the learning process.

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These results are also supported by the pre- and post-program ability assessments, where students showed improvement in reading ability. Before the program started, many students had difficulty in understanding basic vocabulary and simple sentences. However, after a few months of using British Council Learn English Kids, their skills improved significantly. The visual and audio materials available help students understand the language context more effectively, making the learning process more enjoyable and memorable.

2. Implementation Challenges

Despite the successes achieved, there were several obstacles faced during the implementation of this program. One of the main issues was the limited internet access at the school. As reported by Banthamaprao teachers and school staff, slow internet connections often hampered the smooth use of the site's features. Some interactive materials require a stable connection to function properly, so when the connection slows down, the learning process is disrupted. This affects the quality of students' learning experience and limits the effective use of technology in the classroom.

In addition to internet connection issues, the limited number of devices available at school is also a challenge. Many students have to share their devices with their friends, which makes the time to use the website limited. Teachers also face challenges in dividing time fairly among students, so not all students

get equal opportunities to interact with interactive materials. This underscores the importance of adequate infrastructure support for technology-based programs to be implemented effectively.

To overcome this challenge, schools need to find sustainable solutions. Some strategies that can be implemented include improving internet access in schools through collaboration with internet service providers, as well as procuring additional devices to support learning. In addition, schools can adopt a blended learning model where students are encouraged to access materials independently at home where possible. This can help reduce pressure on school facilities and provide wider opportunities for students to learn.

3. Long term Impact

The implementation of technology in English language learning at Ban Thama Prao school also brings positive long-term impacts. In addition to increased motivation and engagement, students begin to develop independent learning skills that are important for their future. When students feel comfortable using technology for learning, they tend to be more open to utilizing other digital resources outside of the classroom. This is an important step in shaping a generation that is tech-savvy and ready to face the challenges of the modern world.

However, it is important to remember that technology is just a tool in the learning process. The use of technology must be balanced with effective teaching strategies for the benefits to be fully realized. The role of the teacher remains crucial in directing students and ensuring that the use of technology is in line with learning objectives. Teachers also need to receive adequate training to be able to utilize technology optimally in their teaching.

From the learning outcomes, students showed increased motivation to learn English after being introduced to the British Council Learn English Kids website. Interactive materials make students more curious about learning, especially with fun games and videos. The skills assessment before and after the program showed an improvement in reading skills. Students were better able to understand basic vocabulary after being exposed to the interactive content on the site. However, on the other hand, the main obstacles faced during the implementation of this program were the limited internet access and the number of devices available at the school. Although the program generally ran smoothly, the issue of slow internet access hindered the full use of the website's features.

4. Conclusion

The implementation of the British Council Learn English Kids website at Ban Thama Prao school has had an overall positive impact on English language learning. The increase in students' learning motivation and their active engagement in the learning process proves that the use of interactive technology can create a more engaging and effective learning experience. The pre- and post-program assessment results showed a significant improvement in students' reading ability and vocabulary comprehension, in line with previous research showing that the integration of technology in education can improve learning outcomes. Students showed increased enthusiasm for learning, especially when playing interactive games and videos. of skills, comprehension and basic vocabulary reading ability have improved.

However, the two main barriers to running this program are limited internet access and the number of devices available in schools. It also shows that schools should support digital learning by improving technology infrastructure and internet connection. It is recommended that teachers create a hybrid learning system that combines online and offline activities. The system should also have backup resources that can be accessed without the internet. Program developers should also consider platform optimization so that its features can be accessed offline and use low bandwidth. It is recommended to conduct further research on the long-term effectiveness and develop a hybrid learning model that suits the school environment in Indonesia. Thus, for continued success, it is important for schools and relevant stakeholders to overcome such barriers and facilitate the wider use of technology in English language learning. and It is hoped that these recommendations can help optimize the use of technology in English language learning due to the limitations that exist in the field.

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