

ENHANCING BASIC ENGLISH AND LEARNING MOTIVATION OF YOUNG LEARNERS THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE IN BONE REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

English provides access to education, information, technology, and wider opportunities. Yet, many young learners in rural Indonesia meet the language only in formal lessons and rarely use it for real communication, which limits their proficiency and motivation. This community service program, conducted by lecturers and students of the English Education Department at Institut Agama Islam Negeri Bone, aimed to strengthen the basic English competence and learning motivation of young learners in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi. Grounded in asset-based community development and service learning, it was delivered through four weekly sessions of about ninety minutes and a closing English Day, using enjoyable and communicative methods that included Total Physical Response, songs, games, picture cards, and simple pair and group tasks. Thirty young learners took part with three lecturers and eight student tutors. The program was evaluated through a vocabulary and expression test administered before and after the program, structured observation across the sessions, and a participant response questionnaire, all analyzed descriptively. The findings show clear gains in basic vocabulary and in willingness to use simple English, accompanied by rising participation, enthusiasm, and confidence, and the program also gave preservice teachers authentic, reflective teaching experience. Short, community-based English programs that build on local strengths can make a meaningful contribution to rural young learners while supporting the professional development of student teachers.

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INTRODUCTION

English has come to occupy a central position in international communication, and competence in the language provides access to education, scholarship, technology, trade, and a wide range of professional opportunities. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language and is widely regarded by families and educators as an important asset for academic progress and future employment (Nunan, 2015; Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Yet the conditions under which children learn English vary enormously across the country. In large cities, learners often encounter the language through media, private courses, and contact with proficient speakers. In contrast, in many rural areas English remains confined to the classroom and is seldom used outside it. This uneven exposure means that the goal of communicative competence is far harder to reach for children in villages than for their urban peers (Brown, 2007).

For young learners in particular, the early years of language study are formative. Positive and meaningful first encounters with a foreign language can build the curiosity, confidence, and motivation that sustain learning over the long term, while discouraging or overly abstract instruction can produce anxiety and disengagement that are difficult to reverse (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990; Pinter, 2017). Research on teaching English to children consistently shows that young learners acquire language most effectively through concrete, active, and enjoyable activities tied to their immediate experience and embedded in a secure, supportive classroom atmosphere (Cameron, 2001; Halliwell, 1992; Moon, 2000). At this age, learning through play, movement, song, and story is not a distraction from serious study but the very means by which language is internalized.

Broader theories of learning and language development support this view. Sociocultural accounts emphasize that children learn within their zone of proximal development, with the support of more capable peers and adults who scaffold tasks that learners could not yet manage alone (Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1983). Interaction is therefore central: when children use language for genuine purposes with responsive partners, they receive the input and feedback that drive acquisition. Comprehensible and meaningful input, delivered in a low-anxiety setting, allows learners to make sense of new language without the pressure of immediate, accurate production (Krashen, 1982). Methods that combine rich

input with structured, enjoyable interaction are thus especially well matched to the needs of young learners.

Several well-established approaches translate these principles into practice. Total Physical Response links new language to physical action, allowing children to demonstrate understanding through movement before they are asked to speak, which both lowers anxiety and strengthens memory (Asher, 1969; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Communicative language teaching and task-based learning give learners real reasons to use language, organizing lessons around meaningful exchange rather than the manipulation of isolated forms (Richards, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996). Songs, chants, games, and picture-supported activities sustain attention and make repetition enjoyable, which is essential when vocabulary and patterns must be encountered many times to be retained (Harmer, 2015; Ur, 2012). Underlying all of these is the affective dimension of learning: motivation, attitude, and a sense of success strongly shape how willingly learners engage and persist (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Dörnyei, 2001).

Against this background, rural areas in Indonesia frequently lack the conditions that such approaches assume. Many village schools operate with limited teaching materials, large or multigrade classes, and a shortage of teachers who specialize in English, so instruction can default to repetitive, textbook-bound routines focused on memorization and translation (Laila et al., 2023). Children in these settings hear little spoken English, have few opportunities to use it for authentic communication, and rarely experience the games, songs, and interactive tasks that make early language learning effective. The result is a cycle in which limited exposure produces limited proficiency and motivation, which in turn reduces the impetus for further learning. Enrichment activities that bring engaging, communicative English experiences directly to rural learners can help to interrupt this cycle and complement the work of local schools.

Congko Village, in Barebbo District, Bone Regency, South Sulawesi, reflects this wider situation. Most families in the village depend on farming and related livelihoods, and opportunities for English enrichment beyond regular school hours are scarce. Initial visits and informal conversations with school and village leaders indicated that the children were eager to learn but had a narrow vocabulary, low confidence in speaking, and almost no prior experience of learning English

through movement, games, or song. At the same time, the community possessed genuine strengths that are easy to overlook when attention is fixed only on deficits: motivated and curious learners, supportive teachers and parents, and village leadership that welcomed collaboration. Recognizing these assets pointed toward a participatory program that would build on what the community already had rather than treat it merely as a site of need (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

The asset-based perspective has important practical implications for community service in education. Programs designed around community deficits tend to position outside experts as providers and community members as passive recipients, an arrangement that rarely outlasts the intervention itself. By contrast, an asset-based approach treats local people as partners and active contributors, mobilizing existing relationships, skills, and motivation so that activities can be sustained after external facilitators withdraw (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). For a short English program, this means securing the genuine involvement of the school, parents, and village leadership, modeling methods that local teachers can adopt, and leaving behind simple materials that can continue to be used.

For the university, the program also responds to an institutional mandate. As a state Islamic higher education institution, IAIN Bone carries out the Tridharma of higher education through teaching, research, and community service. When community service is organized as service learning, it becomes more than charitable outreach: it is a structured pedagogy in which students apply academic knowledge to real community needs and reflect systematically on the experience, so that both the community and the students benefit (Furco, 1996; Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984). For students of the English Education Department, a program of this kind offers authentic teaching practice with young learners that complements campus coursework in methodology, and it cultivates the reflective habits that distinguish effective teachers (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Evidence from comparable university programs in Indonesia and elsewhere supports the value of this model. Short, well-designed English courses delivered through community service have been reported to raise learner motivation and strengthen foundational skills, while providing meaningful practical experience for the student teachers who deliver them (Alvanita & Sutrisno, 2023; Nurdiawati et al., 2024; Salmah et al., 2026). Such programs are most successful when they are

age-appropriate, communicative, and grounded in the realities of the community, and when they pay attention to continuity beyond the immediate activity. These findings informed the design of the present program.

In response to the opportunity in Congko Village, lecturers and students of the English Education Department at IAIN Bone designed and carried out a community service program with four main objectives: to build young learners' basic English vocabulary and simple communication skills; to increase their motivation and confidence in using English; to introduce engaging and contextual teaching methods that local teachers could continue to use; and to give English Education students meaningful, supervised teaching experience within a service learning framework. This article sets out the conceptual basis of the program, describes how it was designed and implemented, reports the outcomes observed through testing, observation, and a participant questionnaire, and discusses the implications for similar initiatives in rural settings.

Teaching English to Young Learners

Children differ from adolescents and adults as language learners in ways that shape effective pedagogy. They have shorter attention spans, learn holistically rather than analytically, and depend heavily on concrete experience, yet they are also imaginative, uninhibited, and quick to absorb language encountered in meaningful contexts (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990; Pinter, 2017). Instruction for this age group is therefore most effective when it is activity-based and varied, when it integrates listening and speaking before heavy demands are placed on reading and writing, and when it draws on play, movement, song, and story (Cameron, 2001; Halliwell, 1992; Moon, 2000). Classroom routine matters as well, because predictable structures help young learners feel secure enough to take part. These characteristics guided the design of every session in the present program.

Total Physical Response and Communicative Language Teaching

Two complementary traditions informed the program's methods. Total Physical Response, developed by Asher, builds on the observation that children acquire their first language largely by responding physically to the speech of others long before they themselves produce it. In the classroom, learners listen to commands and act them out, which connects language directly to meaning, allows a silent period before speech is required, and reduces the anxiety associated with

early production (Asher, 1969; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Communicative language teaching, in turn, holds that language is learned through using it for genuine communication. Lessons are organized around meaningful tasks and exchanges, accuracy develops alongside fluency, and the teacher functions as a facilitator of interaction rather than a transmitter of rules (Richards, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Task-based learning extends this logic by making the completion of a communicative task the organizing goal of a lesson (Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996). Together, these approaches provided a principled basis for combining movement, interaction, and enjoyable practice.

Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary is widely recognized as a foundation of communicative ability, since learners can convey and understand a great deal with a modest store of words even before their grammar is secure. Effective vocabulary learning depends on encountering words repeatedly in meaningful contexts, on linking form to meaning through images and actions, and on giving learners opportunities to use new words productively (Nation, 2013; Schmitt, 2000; Thornbury, 2002). For young learners, this is best achieved through flashcards, realia, songs, and games that recycle a manageable set of high-frequency words across several activities. In the present program, vocabulary was treated as a central building block: target words were introduced in coherent sets, supported by pictures and movement, and revisited in successive sessions so that learners met them in varied contexts.

Motivation and the Affective Dimension

Cognitive accounts of language learning are incomplete without attention to motivation and affect. Learners' attitudes toward the language and its speakers, their sense of purpose, and their emotional state in the classroom strongly influence how willingly they engage and how much they persist (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Dörnyei, 2001). A supportive, low-anxiety environment in which effort is recognized and small successes are celebrated encourages learners to take the risks that speaking a new language entails (Krashen, 1982). For children in particular, enjoyment and a feeling of competence are powerful motivators. The program accordingly sought not only to teach language but also to create positive experiences that would strengthen the learners' confidence and their desire to continue.

Asset-Based Community Development

Asset-based community development offers a framework for designing community service that is participatory and sustainable. Rather than beginning with an inventory of problems and needs, it begins by identifying and mobilizing the strengths already present in a community, including the skills and motivation of its members, the relationships that bind them, and the support of local institutions and leaders (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). This orientation reframes community members from clients into citizens and partners, which increases ownership and the likelihood that activities will continue once external facilitators leave. Applied to an English program, it meant engaging the school, parents, and village leadership as collaborators, building on the learners' evident enthusiasm, and embedding the activity within existing community structures.

Service Learning in Teacher Education

Service learning connects academic study with structured service to the community, framed by deliberate reflection. Rooted in experiential education, it holds that learning arises from a cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, and the refinement of understanding that is then applied to new situations (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984; Furco, 1996). In teacher education, service learning gives student teachers authentic contexts in which to apply pedagogical theory, adapt to the responses of real learners, and reflect on their developing practice, all of which support the growth of professional competence (Eyler & Giles, 1999). The present program was designed as service learning for the participating students: they planned and delivered lessons under supervision, responded to the learners' needs as they arose, and reflected on each session to improve the next.

METHOD

Setting and Participants

The program was conducted in Congko Village, Barebbo District, Bone Regency, South Sulawesi, an agricultural community in which English is rarely used outside formal schooling. The participants were about thirty young learners of upper primary age. They joined voluntarily, based on their own interest and their parents' consent, and the partner primary school helped identify and invite them. The program team comprised three lecturers from the English Education

Department, who designed the program, supervised its delivery, and facilitated coordination with the community, together with eight students of the department, who served as tutors. The students worked in small teams, each responsible for a group of learners, and planned and delivered lessons under the lecturers' guidance within a service learning framework. Permission for the activity was obtained from the village head and the school, and the purpose and scope of the program were explained to parents in advance.

Design and Approach

The program was designed as a participatory community service activity grounded in asset-based community development and delivered through service learning (Furco, 1996; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). Its instructional approach combined Total Physical Response, communicative language teaching, and task- and game-based activities appropriate to the learners' age and proficiency (Asher, 1969; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Ellis, 2003). The guiding principles were that learning should be concrete, active, and enjoyable; that listening and speaking should precede heavy demands on literacy; that vocabulary should be introduced in meaningful sets and recycled across activities; and that the classroom atmosphere should be supportive and low-anxiety to build confidence and motivation (Cameron, 2001; Pinter, 2017; Nation, 2013; Dörnyei, 2001).

Stages of the Program

Preparation. The program began with a preparation stage in which the team coordinated with the village head and the partner primary school to obtain permission and to settle practical arrangements such as the venue, schedule, and grouping of learners. Field observation and informal discussion with teachers, parents, and children were used to gauge the learners' existing knowledge, interests, and needs, and to take stock of the resources and strengths available in the community. Based on this needs analysis, the team developed a short teaching module that sequenced the target language across the sessions, prepared low-cost learning materials such as flashcards, picture posters, and simple props, and assigned tutoring roles among the students. A briefing and rehearsal were held so that the tutors understood the methods, could anticipate difficulties, and would deliver the sessions consistently.

Implementation. The program was delivered through four weekly sessions of about ninety minutes each, followed by a closing English Day. Each session followed a predictable structure intended to balance security with variety. It opened with a warm-up and a brief review of language from the previous meeting, which settled the learners and recycled earlier vocabulary. New language was then introduced through demonstration and Total Physical Response, with the tutors modeling words and actions and the children responding physically before being asked to speak. This was followed by communicative practice in pairs and small groups, in which learners used the new language for simple, meaningful exchanges such as greeting one another, introducing themselves, and asking and answering basic questions. Each session closed with a game or song that reinforced the target language in an enjoyable form, and a short period of reflection in which learners recalled what they had learned. The themes and main activities of the sessions are summarized in Table 1.

Evaluation. The program was evaluated using three instruments that together captured both learning outcomes and the learners' experience. A simple test of vocabulary and basic expressions was administered before the first session and again after the program to measure changes in knowledge. Structured observation checklists were completed by the tutors during each session to record participation and the use of English, providing a picture of engagement over time. A short questionnaire, using simple statements and a child-friendly response format, was administered at the end of the program to gather the learners' views on their enjoyment, confidence, and interest in continuing. Because the program was a small community service activity rather than a controlled study, the data were analyzed descriptively, and the findings are reported as indicative rather than conclusive.

Table 1. Session themes and main activities

Session	Theme	Main activities
1	Greetings and self-introduction	Greetings, names, and a basic self-introduction through Total Physical Response and pair practice
2	Numbers, colors, and classroom objects	Counting games, color flashcards, naming objects, and songs
3	Family and animals	Picture cards, simple descriptions, guessing games, and chants
4	Daily activities and simple questions	Action verbs through Total Physical Response, then asking and answering simple questions in pairs
English Day	Review and performance	Group dialogues, songs, and games performed for teachers and parents

Instruments

The vocabulary and expression test consisted of items covering the target words and simple expressions taught during the program, including naming familiar objects, colors, numbers, family members, and animals, and producing basic social expressions such as greetings and a short self-introduction. The observation checklist listed indicators of participation and English use, such as responding to commands, volunteering answers, using English in pair work, and remaining on task, which the tutors rated for their groups during each session. The questionnaire comprised a small number of positively worded statements about enjoyment, confidence, and interest in further learning, to which learners responded using a simple agreement scale represented with familiar symbols so that even the youngest could answer reliably.

Data Analysis

Test results were summarized using averages and the proportion of learners able to perform key tasks, and pretest and posttest figures were compared to describe the gains observed. Observation data were collated across sessions to identify trends in participation and English use. Questionnaire responses were summarized as the proportion of learners agreeing with each statement. The qualitative impressions recorded by the tutors during the sessions and the closing English Day were used to interpret and illustrate the numerical results. All figures

reported in this article are illustrative and should be replaced with the program's actual records.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Implementation of the Sessions

The program was carried out as planned over four weekly sessions and a closing English Day, and the young learners showed enthusiasm for the activities from the very first meeting. In the opening session, which focused on greetings and a basic self-introduction, the children responded readily to Total Physical Response, acting out commands such as "stand up," "sit down," and "raise your hand" with evident enjoyment. Connecting words to actions allowed them to show understanding without translation and quickly created an energetic, participatory atmosphere. By the end of the session, most learners could exchange simple greetings and say their names in English.

The second and third sessions extended the learners' vocabulary to numbers, colors, classroom objects, family members, and animals, introduced through colorful flashcards, pictures, and realia and reinforced through songs, chants, and guessing games. The repetition built into these activities, spread across enjoyable formats, helped the children to retain new words, while the visual and physical support made meaning clear. The tutors noticed that learners who had been hesitant at first began to volunteer answers and to use English words spontaneously during games.

The fourth session concentrated on simple daily activities and basic questions, with action verbs taught through Total Physical Response and then practiced in pairs as learners asked and answered short questions. Working in pairs and small groups proved valuable throughout the program: it reduced the anxiety of speaking in front of the whole class, increased the time each child spent using English, and encouraged the learners to help one another. Across the four sessions, the tutors observed a steady increase in willingness to attempt English, in the frequency of volunteering, and in cooperative behavior during group work.

The Closing English Day

The program concluded with an English Day in which the groups performed what they had learned through short dialogues, songs, and games. Preparing and

presenting these performances gave the learners a purpose for using English and a chance to demonstrate their progress to an audience. Learners, teachers, and parents attended, and the event was marked by evident pride and a strong sense of shared accomplishment. For many of the children, performing in English before their families was a memorable experience that reinforced their sense of competence and their motivation to continue.

Gains in Vocabulary and Basic Expressions

The vocabulary and basic expressions test showed a clear improvement from the pretest to the posttest. On the illustrative figures recorded for this program, the average score rose from 42 to 79 out of 100, a gain of 37 points, and the proportion of learners able to introduce themselves in basic English increased from 20 percent to 83 percent. The proportion of learners observed to use English actively during tasks rose from 27 percent to 87 percent over the course of the program. These outcomes, summarized in Table 2 and illustrated in Figure 1, indicate substantial growth in both knowledge and the willingness to use it, and they are consistent with the trends recorded through observation.

Table 2. Summary of learning outcomes (illustrative)

Indicator	Before	After	Change
Average vocabulary and expression score	42	79	+37 points
Learners able to introduce themselves in basic English	20%	83%	+63 points
Learners actively using English during tasks	27%	87%	+60 points

The table above shows a significant improvement in students' English language proficiency after the implementation of the intervention. The average vocabulary and expression score increased from 42 to 79, reflecting a gain of 37 points. Similarly, the percentage of learners who were able to introduce themselves in basic English rose from 20% to 83%, representing an increase of 63 percentage points. In addition, the proportion of learners who actively used English during classroom tasks improved substantially from 27% to 87%, an increase of 60 percentage points. Overall, these findings indicate that the intervention was effective in enhancing students' vocabulary, basic communication skills, and active participation in English learning activities.

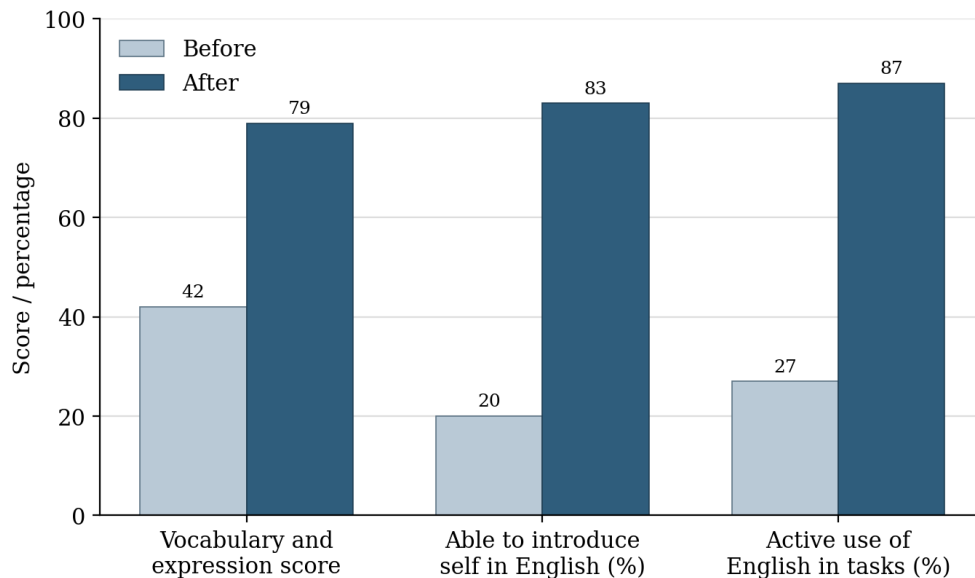


Figure 1. Learner outcomes before and after the program (illustrative).

Participation and Use of English

The structured observations carried out during each session showed a steady increase in engagement as the program progressed. The proportion of learners responding confidently to Total Physical Response commands, volunteering answers, using English during pair work, and remaining on task all rose from the first session to the fourth, as shown in Table 3 and Figure 2. This pattern suggests that the combination of physical response, enjoyable practice, and small group interaction progressively reduced the learners' hesitation and built their confidence, so that participation became both broader and more sustained over time.

Table 3. Observed participation across sessions (illustrative)

Indicator	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
Responding confidently to Total Physical Response commands	55%	70%	82%	90%
Volunteering answers	30%	48%	65%	80%
Using English during pair work	25%	45%	68%	85%
Remaining on task during activities	70%	80%	88%	93%

The table above shows a steady improvement in students' participation across the four learning sessions. The percentage of learners who responded confidently to Total Physical Response (TPR) commands increased from 55% in Session 1 to 90% in Session 4. Similarly, the proportion of students volunteering answers rose consistently from 30% to 80%, while the use of English during pair work improved markedly from 25% to 85%. Students' ability to remain focused on learning activities also increased from 70% in the first session to 93% in the final session. Overall, these results demonstrate that students became progressively more engaged, confident, and active in participating throughout the instructional process.

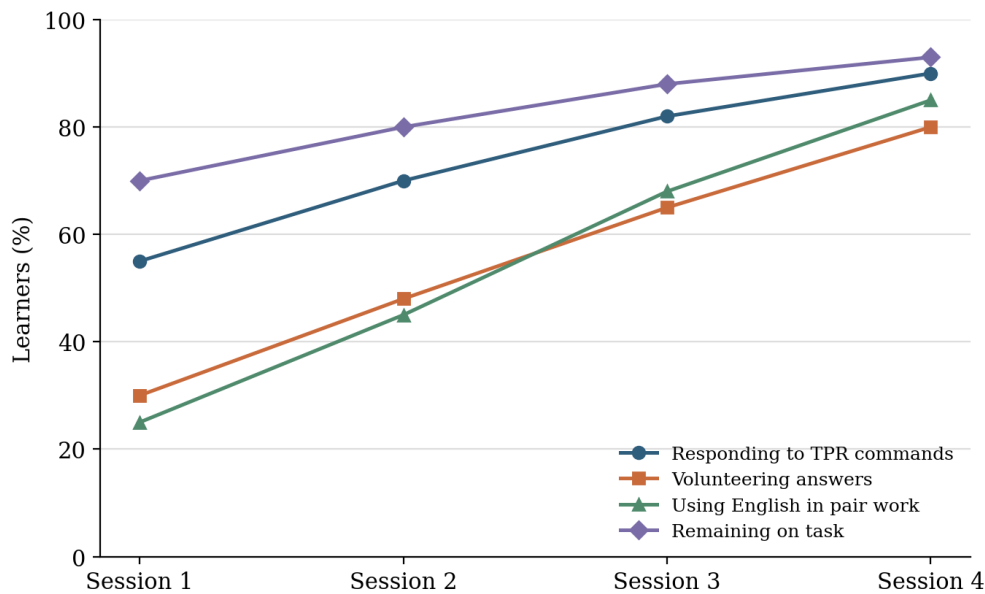


Figure 2. Observed participation across the four sessions (illustrative).

Learner Responses

The questionnaire administered at the end of the program indicated that the learners had a positive experience overall. As summarized in Table 4, large majorities reported that they enjoyed the sessions, found activities such as games and songs fun, felt more confident using English than before, and wished to continue learning English through similar activities. The responses of parents and teachers, gathered informally, echoed these views, and several expressed the hope that the program could be repeated or extended. Taken together, the questionnaire results suggest that the program achieved its affective aims of strengthening motivation and confidence alongside its linguistic aims.

Table 4. Summary of learner questionnaire responses (illustrative)

Statement	Agreed or strongly agreed (%)
I enjoyed the English sessions.	95%
The games and songs made learning fun.	93%
I feel more confident using English now.	88%
I can introduce myself in English.	85%
I want to join similar activities again.	92%
I want to keep learning English.	90%

DISCUSSION

Why the Program Worked

These outcomes are consistent with established research on teaching English to young learners and on community-based language programs. The high level of engagement supports the view that children acquire language most effectively through concrete, active, and enjoyable activities undertaken with little anxiety (Cameron, 2001; Pinter, 2017; Halliwell, 1992). Using Total Physical Response to link language with movement allowed the learners to understand and demonstrate meaning before they were required to speak, which is particularly helpful for beginners (Asher, 1969; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Communicative and game-based tasks gave the children genuine reasons to use English and ample opportunities to practice, in line with communicative and task-based principles (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996). The deliberate introduction and recycling of vocabulary in meaningful contexts supported the measurable gains in word knowledge (Nation, 2013; Schmitt, 2000; Thornbury, 2002). Underlying these gains, the supportive atmosphere and the steady accumulation of small successes appear to have strengthened the learners' motivation and confidence, consistent with the affective accounts of learning (Krashen, 1982; Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

Benefits for the Preservice Teachers

The program also yielded clear benefits for the students of the English Education Department who served as tutors. Planning and delivering lessons for real young learners required them to translate the methodology they had studied on campus into concrete classroom practice, to adapt activities in response to the

children's reactions, and to manage groups and time under authentic conditions. Reflecting on each session in light of what had worked and what had not helped them to refine their teaching for the next meeting, enacting the cycle of experience and reflection that lies at the heart of service learning (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984; Eyler & Giles, 1999). In this way, the program functioned as a form of teacher preparation, developing the students' pedagogical skills, confidence, and professional commitment while they contributed to the community.

An Asset-Based, Sustainable Model

Beyond the immediate outcomes, the program illustrates the value of an asset-based approach to community service in education. By building on the children's enthusiasm and securing the genuine involvement of the school, parents, and village leadership, the team created a locally owned initiative rather than an external intervention imposed from outside (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). This foundation increases the likelihood that similar activities will continue, especially as the local teachers were able to observe the methods at first hand and keep the simple, low-cost materials that were left behind. Sustainability of this kind is often the weakest point of short community programs, and an asset-based design directly addresses it by strengthening local capacity rather than creating dependence.

Limitations

Several limitations should be acknowledged in interpreting these results. The program was short, comprising four sessions and a closing event, and the assessment instruments were deliberately simple and suited to young children rather than psychometrically rigorous. The evaluation was descriptive and lacked a comparison group, so the gains observed cannot be attributed to the program with certainty, and improvements measured immediately afterward may not persist without continued reinforcement. The figures reported here are illustrative and should be replaced with the program's actual records. The number of participants was modest and drawn from a single community, which limits the generalizability of the findings. These limitations are typical of small community service activities and do not diminish the program's practical value, but they indicate the need for caution in drawing broad conclusions.

Implications and Recommendations

The experience of this program suggests several recommendations for similar initiatives. First, programs for rural young learners should be communicative, active, and enjoyable, and should build confidence through achievable, well-supported tasks. Second, they should be designed around the strengths of the community, engaging local teachers, parents, and leaders as partners from the outset. Third, attention to continuity is essential: modeling methods for local teachers, providing simple materials, and planning for follow-up activities can help sustain gains after the facilitators leave. Fourth, future programs could be strengthened by extending their duration, deepening the involvement of local teachers, and incorporating simple follow-up assessments to track retention over time. For the university, embedding such programs within structured service learning ensures that they also contribute systematically to the preparation of future teachers.

CONCLUSION

This article has reported a community service program conducted by lecturers and students of the English Education Department at IAIN Bone to strengthen the basic English competence and learning motivation of young learners in Congko Village, Barebbo District, Bone Regency. Grounded in asset-based community development and delivered through service learning, the program used Total Physical Response, communicative and task-based activities, songs, and games across four weekly sessions and a closing English Day. The young learners made clear progress in basic vocabulary and simple communication, and they grew in participation, enjoyment, confidence, and motivation to use English. At the same time, the participating students gained authentic, reflective teaching experience that supported their development as future teachers.

The program demonstrates that short, enjoyable English programs can make a meaningful contribution to young learners in rural settings, particularly when they build on local strengths and attend to continuity beyond the immediate activity. By framing community service as service learning and adopting an asset-based approach, universities can deliver benefits both for the communities they serve and for the student teachers they prepare, advancing two pillars of the

Tridharma at once. Future programs that extend the duration of such activities, deepen the involvement of local teachers, and follow up on learners' progress over time would help consolidate these gains and clarify the longer-term contribution of community-based English education.

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