

## ***Fun with English Activity for Elementary School Age Children At Naungan Kasih-Ende Orphanage***

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### **ABSTRACT**

*English language skills are one of the gateways to knowing the world globally. This indicates that learning English should be studied massively by various groups. However, not everyone has the same access to this experience. One of them is the children of the Naungan Kasih-Ende Orphanage. This community service activity aims to provide access to Basic English knowledge and skills to orphanage children who are beginner English language learners. This mentoring activity begins with teaching basic English (English for beginners). This activity was carried out for 2 months with an accompanying team consisting of 3 lecturers and 1 student. The partners in this activity were 11 elementary school age children at the Naungan Kasih Orphanage. The learning methods used in this activity vary, including games and songs, role play, drilling, total physical response with the aid of the learning media. The result of this activity is enthusiasm for learning English in a learning atmosphere without boring feeling. This pleasant learning atmosphere has a positive impact on improving participants' Basic English skills as measured by the test scores obtained at the end of the activity.*

**Keywords:** *Fun with English Activity, Elementary School Age Children*

### **ABSTRAK**

Keterampilan berbahasa Inggris merupakan salah satu pintu gerbang untuk mengenal dunia secara global. Hal ini mengisyaratkan bahwa pembelajaran bahasa Inggris hendaknya dipelajari secara masif oleh berbagai kalangan. Namun, tidak semua orang memiliki akses yang sama terhadap pengalaman ini. Salah satunya adalah anak-anak Panti Asuhan Naungan Kasih-Ende. Kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk memberikan akses pengetahuan dan keterampilan dasar bahasa Inggris kepada anak-anak panti asuhan yang merupakan pembelajar bahasa Inggris pemula. Kegiatan ini dilaksanakan selama 2 bulan oleh tim pendamping yang terdiri dari 3 orang dosen dan 1 orang mahasiswa. Mitra dalam kegiatan ini adalah 11 anak usia SD di Panti Asuhan Naungan Kasih. Dalam membelajarkan bahasa Inggris, metode pembelajaran yang digunakan bermacam-macam antara lain *games and singing, role playing, drilling*, dan *total physical response (TPR)* dengan bantuan media-media pembelajaran. Hasil dari kegiatan ini adalah adanya semangat belajar bahasa Inggris dalam suasana belajar yang tidak membosankan. Suasana belajar yang menyenangkan ini memberikan dampak positif terhadap peningkatan kemampuan dasar bahasa Inggris peserta yang diukur dari nilai tes yang diperoleh di akhir kegiatan.

**Kata Kunci:** *Aktifitas Fun with English, Anak Usia Sekolah Dasar*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Introducing English globally is the responsibility of today's educators. This responsibility is an obligation that must be carried out to help students understand English from the early age. Understanding English Skills must be had from an early age because this is one of the entrances to knowing the world globally, (Crystal, 2003), (Seidlhofer, 2005). The same thing was also emphasized

again by (Nishanthi, 2018) who stated that "In today's global world, English is the greatest common language spoken universally".

This statement really shows that the existence of English in this era is the main barometer for people who have a future orientation; people who are born and have a competitive spirit. For this reason, it is not an exaggeration that the Indonesian government has announced English

language learning at all levels of education in this country, (Pali et al., 2021).

But not all children have the same learning luck. There are some children who still have limited English until this time. They are elementary school age children who are residents of the Naungan Kasih-Ende orphanage. As an observer of English, it is natural to carry out English language assistance activities for children in this orphanage. Mentoring activities can be carried out with an introduction to Basic English which is packaged in the form of Fun with English. This step was taken as an effort to answer the urgent problems experienced by children in this orphanage. These children have high enthusiasm for learning English, but the obstacles are the lack of teachers/instructors, the high cost of courses or private English lessons. Therefore, this activity really needs to be held as a first step in providing knowledge of English to children in orphanages as well as preparation for entering secondary school and as a long-term investment in participating in building the nation and state. Learning the Basic English is the main pillar for learners (new beginners of English) before entering the advanced level and beyond. This introduction to Basic English includes the main skills consisting of listening, reading, speaking and writing (Pali & Sadipun, 2020), with the basic material for beginners is the simple English vocabulary. Teaching English vocabulary to young students is very important because knowing and understanding the vocabulary will really help them to have other language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) (Alqahtani, 2015). In teaching English to young learners, things that need to be considered are learning methods and media that are fun (Nurhadi, 2012), (Widyawulandari et al., 2019) and appropriate. In accordance with the age of those who generally receive learning while playing, the learning methods and media prepared must always be designed based on the age and learning interests of these children. This will greatly influence young learners' acceptance of English as a new language for them. Therefore, Fun with English in this mentoring activity is one of the initial strategies to provide opportunities for novice learners to reconstruct their own learning experiences so that they can have the motivation and love to learn English.

## METHOD

This mentoring activity is carried out by a team of 3 accompanying lecturers. The partners accompanied were selected children from the orphanage, namely 11 (eleven) children from the orphanage who were still of elementary school age. Mentoring these children is carried out in several stages of activities for 2 months. The stages of these activities can be explained as follow:

### a. Preparation Stages

In this stage, the accompanying team carries out several activities. Among them are: a) Social approach to the head of the orphanage, b) Interviewing the participants. Interviews were conducted to find out things related to understanding English, b) determining the location of activities, c) preparing materials/mentoring materials, d) preparing practice questions.

### b. Implementation Stages

There are several techniques used in implementing mentoring activities. Among them are a) interactive lecture techniques; The interactive lecture is intended for participants to gain knowledge related to English skills, b) Total physical response (TPR) techniques, c) role playing, d) drilling, e) songs and games.

### c. Final Stage

The final stage of this activity is providing practice questions related to the accompanying material to the participants. Meanwhile, for the lecturer team, the mentoring activities ended with making a report and publishing the results of the activities.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The fun with English activity with the children of the Naungan Kasih Orphanage began with a social approach to the nurse head of the orphanage. This orphanage houses dozens of children with various different backgrounds. These children were cared for by nuns from the *Congregation Imitations Jesu (CIJ)* order. This Congregation was founded by Mgr. Henricus Leven, SVD. This orphanage, which was founded in 1979, was founded out of the nuns' concern for children who had been abandoned by their parents and there were also children who had economically disadvantaged family backgrounds. In today, the number of children being cared for is 58 people with varying ages, starting from 0 months to adulthood, 11 of whom are elementary school aged children. These 11 children are the main partners in this mentoring activity. Regarding

the children in this orphanage, it can be seen in the following picture:



Figure 1. Photo with the orphanage children

After taking approach, the activity was followed by interviews with the participants. The intended interview is an activity to explore participants' knowledge of English. The results of the interviews showed that the majority of elementary school age children in this orphanage had very minimal English language skills. This is also proven through oral tests related to Basic English. Children only know three (3) vocabulary words in English, namely: one, two and three. These 3 words can only be pronounced (pronunciation) but they are still written incorrectly (writing skills).

The results of the interview and the simple test above provide a reflection that this phenomenon must be responded to with mentoring activities. Thus, the mentoring team began preparing learning materials according to the needs and ability levels of the mentoring participants. The material prepared is material about Basic English which includes *Alphabet/Letter, Number, Animals, Colors, Part of the Body*. After preparing the learning materials, the next activity is the presentation of the first material, namely the Alphabet. In presenting this material, the use of flash card media is used in the presentation. This media is used as a fun learning tool, which helps children learn the alphabet quickly. Meanwhile, to help pronounce the alphabet correctly, the technique used is singing the alphabet song. Apart from training pronunciation, this technique can also train listening skills. After the presentation of the material, the activity continued with practicing questions related to the alphabet. Participants were asked to write their own full name and

the full name of one of their friends and spell each one in the English alphabet. The results of this exercise obtained a score of 93%. This alphabet learning activity can be seen in the following picture:



Figure 2. The alphabet learning activities

After studying the alphabet, the activity continues with studying Numbers learning material. In studying numbers, the technique used is *games* with the help of *image media*. In teaching Numbers using this picture medium, students are asked to count the number of objects in the picture, then write the numbers and pronounce them with the correct pronunciation. Apart from that, activity participants were also asked to play guessing the numbers directly. In this game, participants who can answer or pronounce numbers correctly are given the rewards. With this reward, participants feel increasingly challenged and motivated to compete in providing answers. The learning atmosphere is increasingly enjoyable, and student enthusiasm is very visible in this part. This is as stated by (Pali et al., 2021), (Mustopa et al., 2019), (Fisher et al., 2015) that games in learning English for children are part of joyful learning which has an impact on improving children's motivation and learning activities. Games can also create a creative and innovative learning atmosphere. Learning in this part is presented in the picture below:



Figure 3. The Number Learning Activity

After completing the Alphabet and Numbers material, the next material is an introduction to the names of animals. This material is one of the Basic English materials for beginner learners. The aim of providing this material is students are able to recognize vocabulary relating to animal names and students can write vocabulary relating to animal names and can pronounce them correctly in English pronunciation. Image media is used to help participants understand the content of the material. Pictures are used as a medium for learning English for children because pictures can make abstract things become concrete and can also save the learning time, (Mustopa et al., 2019), (Santoso et al., 2019). Apart from that, the use of drawing media can also increase learning activities and outcomes. This can be seen in the results of a simple test given after participants carry out Basic English learning activities. The overall test results obtained an average score of 89.3%.

The next material is getting to know colors names in English. Learning about colors takes place with the help of colors card media. In studying colors, the things that are emphasized are listening to vocabulary about colors, reading, and speaking/pronunciation about colors. Besides that, the last thing to do is compose simple question and answer sentences using vocabulary related to color. In this activity, the learning technique used is role playing using color cards. For example: A: "What color is it?" B: "This is red color.", A: "What is your favorite color?", B; "My favorite color is blue", and so on until all participants have a role in asking questions and providing answers. The use of media in introducing

English colors really stimulates the participants' learning motivation, so that learning is more fun and not boring. The application of role playing techniques in this learning can provide full opportunities for participants to be actively involved. This is also believed by (Lu & Chang, 2016), who stated that students' activities in learning English vocabulary will be further enriched by the application of role playing techniques. Learning in this part is presented in the picture below:



Figure 4. Vocabulary learning activities about colors in English

The next lesson is about getting to know vocabulary about body parts in English. Parts of the body are one of the Basic English materials that must be studied by beginner learners. The aim of studying this material is to increase student's ability about vocabulary related to body parts and can use it in simple English, both spoken and written. The learning model used to study body parts is the total physical response (TPR). Learning activities using this learning model are really fun, children are fully involved in learning vocabulary, saying it in English pronunciation and writing again the vocabulary in simple sentences. Examples: *this is my body, this is my eyes, this is my nose, this is my shoulders, this is my stomach, this is my mouth, this is my neck, this is my hand, this is my leg* and the parts of other body. Learning about body parts ends with singing songs about body parts. The learning atmosphere becomes more enjoyable when this song is sung because singing can help students remember and understand the vocabulary they have learned, (Pali et al., 2021).

Fun with English activity with the children of the Naungan Kasih orphanage ended with general practice on all the material that had been studied. The practice questions cover four English skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). The assessment results of all these skills can be seen in the following table:

No	Aspects of Skill	Total Score
1	<i>Reading</i>	90.4%
2	<i>Writing</i>	85.3%
3	<i>Listening</i>	87.5%

4	Speaking	89.8%
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Table 1. The final result test of English skills

The table above shows that participants' achievement scores are above the average standard. This is very different from the initial test carried out before this mentoring activity was carried out. Thus, it can be said that this mentoring activity can produce meaningful English learning results for beginner learners at the Naungan Kasih orphanage.

## CONCLUSION & SUGGESSTION

The Fun with English activity with children from the orphanage was carried out to answer the problem experienced by partners, namely literacy in English. This mentoring activity begins with teaching basic English (English for beginners). The material studied is the alphabet, numbers, animals, colors, parts of the body and family. In teaching this material, the methods used vary. Among them are games and singing, role playing, and also drilling. To simplify the material being taught, the team of community service also uses image media, flash cards, and color cards as tools. The result of this mentoring activity is increased motivation and enthusiasm for learning English and obtaining excellent test scores. Hence, it is recommended that the accompanying team and other parties in the circle of English language educators take the time to carry out similar mentoring activities, with different English language learning materials.

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