

PREPARING TEACHERS AND STUDENTS OF SMART EKSELENSIA INDONESIA FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION THROUGH ENGLISH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM³

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Abstract

SMART Ekselensia Indonesia is an accelerated non-profit boarding school which is presented to improve the marginalized dignity and prestige of Indonesian students from marginalized families. The vision of this school in 2014 is to go international and to apply international education. This school has "A" accreditation and received ISO certification. The teachers and students are from all around Indonesia and have passed some selection processes. Though, it has very reputable name, it still has some problems with English.

The purpose of this paper is to share ideas concerning on the English Development Program in Smart Ekselensia and the impact of this program to the teachers and students. The first term of this program started from February to April 2013 which still be continued and evaluated. The participants of this program were 35 non English teachers and 175 students. This program consisted of English course for teachers, English day, English morning march and English literacy program.

The evaluation results of this first term program shows that 90% of the teachers and the students are very motivated to practice their English as often as they want. In conclusion, this program could be applied in Smart Ekselensia Indonesia but it should be evaluated every three months. This program can also be applied in other schools to compare the results and further impacts.

Keywords: teachers, students, international education, english development.

Introduction

A. SMART Ekselensia Indonesia

SMART Ekselensia Indonesia is an accelerated non-profit boarding school (Junior and Senior high school should be finished in 5 years). SMART Ekselensia Indonesia is especially presented to improve the marginalized dignity and prestige of Indonesian students from marginalized families. The funding of this school is from philanthropy. Smart Ekselensia Indonesia was established in 2004. It accepted ninth batch in 2012. Every year it admits 35 new students selected from throughout Indonesia.

This school applies 5 values as the main characters of the students. They are care, discipline, honest, polite and serious. The vision of this school in 2014 is to go international and implement international education. It has accredited as "A" and received ISO certificate. The teachers and students are from all around Indonesia and have passed the selection process. Nevertheless, the teachers and students still have to improve their English ability in order to implement international education.

B. International Education

International education is education for international understanding. This understanding must impregnate all of its educational system, sanctions and materials. It is not a separate course. Instead, it must be presented in all courses. Martinez (2004:5). International Education is education that can broaden students' thoughts from a local perspective to global perspective and create solutions to problems that will benefit all members of society. International education also connects people from different societies to different beliefs into one global village, giving students an understanding of cultural differences and letting them embrace their differences. In primary and secondary schools, every effort should be made, both in teaching and in framing programmes of study, to avoid inculcating by word or implication they belief that, lands, people and customs other than one's own are necessarily inferior, or are otherwise unworthy of understanding and sympathy. Martinez (2004:5).

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The world's largest provider of international education programmers and qualifications for 5–19 years old is The International General Certificate of Secondary Education (abbreviated as IGCSE) Cambridge. IGCSE is an academically rigorous, internationally used, specialized, English language curriculum. The IGCSE was developed by University of Cambridge International Examinations in 1985. More than 9000 schools in over 160 countries are part of the Cambridge learning community. (Retrieved from <http://www.cie.org.uk/>).

The IGCSE is an international alternative to many popular national curricula. However, unlike many school-leaving qualifications in many countries, the IGCSE is not a group award or "certificate of education". It is a qualification based on individual subjects of study, which means that one receives an "IGCSE" qualification for each subject one takes. The IGCSE is predominantly exam-based, meaning they are not actual certified "courses", but rather exams that test knowledge in individual subjects in the same way as Advanced Placement exams and SAT Subject Tests.

Cambridge IGCSE provides a broad and flexible study program and covers subjects from a variety of areas: Languages, Humanities, Social Sciences, Mathematics, Creative, Technical and Vocational. The materials of this curriculum could be accessed freely through its website meaning to give opportunity to all schools around the world to apply this curriculum. In 2013, Indonesian government has decided not to continue international classes with IGCSE Cambridge curriculum in some of public schools. Indonesian government has stated that public schools which applied international Cambridge curriculum have highly cost which can make wider gap among rich students and poor students. However, there are still some great substances which can be gained from the international education. Moreover, the international education in public schools which was failed to be applied was not because of the material inside the IGCSE curriculum. Further, the main cause of the failure of the program is mismanagement of the systems and lack of preparation before conducting the international program.

C. English Development Program

English Development Program (EDP) is a program that should be prepared before applying international education. EDP should be held by the school to improve the quality of English language in school. The expected techniques of EDP begin with the initial use of gestures and pictures, limited vocabulary and tenses, and issues concentrating on practical, day-to-day safety and needs. As the student gains confidence in communication and transitions through the grades, he arrives at detecting nuances, functioning linguistically in various settings, and conversing on academic and social topics (Blugh, 2013).

In the challenge of developing English in Indonesia as a non speaking English country, education sector is an important part. Teachers and students have to be ready to use and master English. Relating to Indonesia's education vision in 2020 which is to graduate students who have knowledge and skills needed in globalization era, teachers and students must prepare themselves to accept and adapt themselves for the globalization and the adaptation should be started by using English as daily speaking habit. Being ready in using English as daily language and for special purpose will be a great point in preparing good education for Indonesian students. (Wati, 2011).

Methods

Based on the participants, English development program in SMART Ekselensia Indonesia was divided into two parts:

1. English program for teachers consists of (A) English course for teachers; (B) English environment development program in form of English day.
2. English program for students consists of (A) English environment development program in form English day, story sharing, and English morning march; (B) Literacy program in form of daily conversation literacy and English for Special Purpose literacy.

The following is the program description of each program and the evaluation done to obtain the research result:

1. English program for teachers:
 - a. English Course for Teachers Program, program Description :

English course for teachers program aims to improve the English language skills of teachers. English language proficiency of teachers is divided into 4 levels based on placement test results.

English language learning program is divided into four aspects of learning. They are speaking, reading, listening and writing. Learning for teachers on level 1 and 2 aims to make teachers understand the presented material and perform basic practice. Learning for teachers on level 3 and 4 aims to make teachers understand the presented material, perform basic and advanced practice and to develop the materials. English course for teachers in 1 year is divided into three quarterly (1 term lasts for 4 months). Explanation of program per quarter of the following:

- First quarter : habituation to simple commands in English in classroom for teachers in schools and in dormitory for dormitory for teachers.
- Second quarter : habituation to teach in English covers the basic learning content and TOEFL.

- Third quarter : strengthening teaching in English and increasing teacher TOEFL score.

Guide book for English learning program in the first quarter is English book "English for teacher" written by Gregory M. Syukur. Teacher's trainers are local teachers and native speakers who are invited twice per month. Program evaluations will be given in the progress report form per quarterly based on the trainers' assessment every meeting and questionnaires. Person in charge of this program is an English trainer and English coordinator.

b. English Day

The program is conducted as an effort use of language English as a habit every Wednesday. Program evaluation is done in each quarter. The program is collaboration between students' organization and English language teachers. This program was supported by a team which is called English Provocateur Team. English Provocateur Team (EPT) consists of English teachers. Person in charge of this program is English coordinator. Quarterly program evaluation is conducted by collecting data with questionnaire to evaluate the responses of the teachers.

2. English programs for students

A. English Environment Development Program, program Description :

English environment development program consists of three programs: (1) English day program conducted once a week on Wednesday; (2) Story sharing program conducted three times a week during morning mach; (3) English morning march program, conducted once a week every Wednesday. Details of these programs are as follows:

1. English Day Program

The program is conducted as an effort use of language English as routine every Wednesday. Program evaluation is done per quarterly. The program is collaboration between students' organization and English language teachers. English is used in morning march, conversation outside of class, in the classroom at the beginning and at the end of the lesson as well as the commands in the day-to- day classroom. English is also used for surrounding conversation in Mosque, school hall, canteen, and dormitory, once a week, every Wednesday.

This program is supported by a team called as English Provocateur Team consisting of students and teachers. English Provocateur Team (EPT) students consists of 2 students who have good English language skills of each class with 1 of EPT leader. In this program, the two best students are given rewards. English usage is expected to be used in each term are as follows:

- first term : 50 % ,
- second term : 75 % ,
- third term : 90%

Person in charge of this program is the English coordinator. Quarterly program evaluation is conducted by collecting data with questionnaire responses.

2. Story Sharing Program

This program is conducted for one year and divided into two semesters. Students are required to share a story for 3 to 5 minutes in English about their personal experience or books that have been read. Text of the story is given at least one day before the story sharing performance and it could be discussed with the English teacher. Person in charge of this program are English teachers and other teachers appointed to make the program schedule.

3. English morning march

The program is conducted as an effort use of English as a routine every Wednesday. Program evaluation is done per quarterly. During the English morning march, all of the instructions are instructed in English including the story sharing, information or announcement from the teachers to the students.

B . Literacy program

1. Daily Conversation Literacy

The program aims to improve students' speaking ability in English especially on how to express daily conversation both in the school and in the dorm. There are some posters with simple English commands taped and updated once a week. Person in charge of this program is the English coordinator and the evaluation is done through questionnaires every quarterly.

2. English for Special Purpose Literacy

The programs aims to improve students' and teachers vocabulary mastery especially vocabulary which associated with the subject. A wall magazine is put on each class and it contains of several articles about:

- i. English vocabulary relating to learning materials (thirty vocabulary should be memorized by the students in 1 month). Students are required to memorize their vocabulary saving and give the report to their teacher at the end of the week each month.
- ii. Learning article or the facts relating to the subjects in English.
- iii. English Quiz, it will add the student's score. The quiz winner will be announced every month.
- iv. Sample questions and discussion of the subjects in English. The questions were taken from the subjects of international exams.

This program is evaluated by English coordinators and teachers. Update on the wall magazine should be done every 1 month. Evaluation is done through data collection and questionnaire quarterly.

Results and Discussions

1. English program for teachers

A. English Course for Teachers Program

In the challenge to apply international education in SMART Ekselensia Indonesia, teachers are important human resources who should be able to teach their subjects in English. Teachers are expected to master English as lingua franca for teaching their subjects.

According to a research in International Journal of instruction, English language program was highly effective in terms of overall effectiveness and improving teacher's confidence and motivations as English as Foreign Language Teachers in elementary school in Riau Province, Indonesia. English Foreign Language training program can change a school or company's culture for the better and it can show how the improvement after training is. (Wati, 2011). Further, Gee in Allen (2007) told that training is highly important in building the teachers' self confidence and in improving the employee's performance. Therefore English language course program as an English training for SMART Ekselensia Indonesia teachers are really needed.

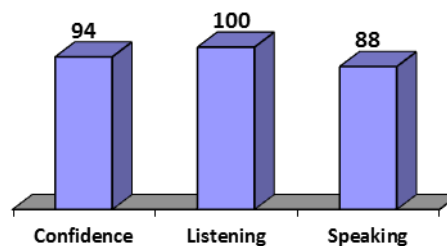


Graph 1. English Course for Teachers Program

Thus, Graph 1 shown that based on the questionnaire given, all of the teachers improve their confidence to speak English and they got positive impact on their speaking skill. However, 76% of the teachers have improved their writing and 94% teachers have broaden their vocabulary mastery. Meanwhile, 88% teachers have improved their reading skill and 82% of the teachers have improved their listening skills.

B. English Day for Teachers

English day program which is on Wednesday in SMART Ekselensia Indonesia has encouraged the teachers to practice their English when talking with their colleagues and students. Speaking is the matter of habit and experience. Marriam and Caffarella in Allen (2007) highlight a number of adult learning theories. One of the theories is constructivism which concerned with construction reality and how individual makes meaning from experience.



Graph 2. English Day (for teachers)

The result of English day for teacher's application for three months in SMART Ekselensia Indonesia has been shown on graph 2 above. There are 94% of teachers are able to increase their confidence to speak English. Although there are only 88% of teachers improve their speaking skill, the teachers convinced that they are able to reveal the meaning of the conversation. Some of the teachers mentioned that their problem in speaking caused by the vocabulary limitation. However, their lack of vocabulary has encouraged themselves to learn more. Further, their learning is also supported by the other program for teacher which is English course.

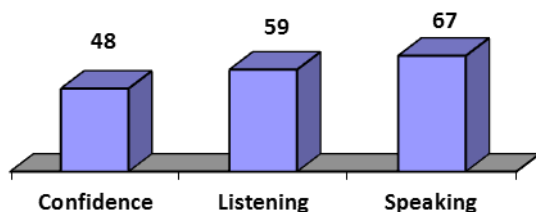
2. English programs for students

A. English Environment Development Program

1) English Day Program for students

Students are able to learn some good things from the good examples. Whenever the teachers try to speak English on English day, the students also try to speak because they have good model. In the beginning of the program, some students often listen in silence while others do the talking. Some students don't have any courage to speak so they only listen the others who have courage to speak. In the middle of the first term, the English Provocateur Team (EPT) found some difficulties to encourage their friends to speak English. However, the teachers were also supported this program by encouraging the EPT and all of the students to speak English, giving example of expressions and encourage the students to check their dictionary whenever they need it.

Language learners who lack confidence in their ability to participate successfully in oral interaction often listen in silence while others do the talking. One way to encourage such learners to begin to participate is to help them build up a stock of minimal responses that they can use in different types of exchanges. Such responses can be especially useful for beginners. Minimal responses are predictable, often idiomatic phrases that conversation participants use to indicate understanding, agreement, doubt, and other responses to what another speaker is saying. Having a stock of such responses enables a learner to focus on what the other participant is saying, without having to simultaneously plan a response. (Basheer, 2011).



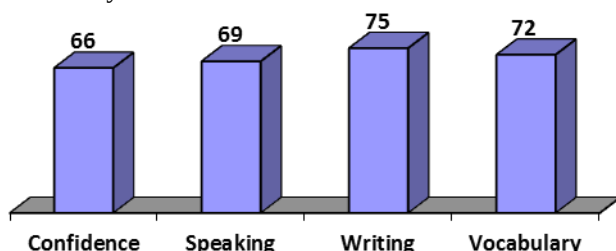
Graph 3. English Day (for students)

As can be seen from the graph 3 above, less than 50% students improve their confidence to speak English during English day. There are only 59% of the students improve their listening skill and 67% of the students improve their speaking skills. According interview with some students, they tend to be passive on English day since they are still lack of daily vocabulary. They often use their gesture to express some words that they do not know. The role of English Provocateur Team should be raised therefore, there should be special training for the member of English Provocateur Team.

2) Story Sharing Program

Sharing story is one way of communication which can be interesting for students. Story during morning march could facilitate the students to practice the speaking skill. As we know that speaking skill could be mastered whenever the students have opportunity to make use English as their speaking habit. By applying this program, the students will be able to prepare the story that they will share the day before. It means that sharing a story in English is not a burden anymore. Therefore, this preparation will reduce their shyness to talk in front of others.

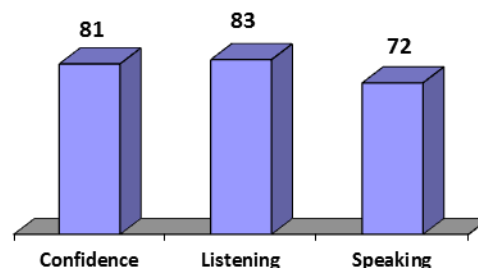
Moreover, Graph 4 shows that by applying story sharing activity, the students have improved their confidence to speak in front of a lot of people. They are able to write the story in English. There are 72% of the students have improved their vocabulary mastery because they learn much while they wrote the story.



Graph 4. Story Sharing Program

3) English morning march

Morning march is a short ceremony which is held every day in SMART Ekselensia Indonesia. It is intended to prepare the readiness of the students to study in the morning. The morning march is usually done with some instruction in Indonesian mother tongue except on Wednesday which is English day.



Graph 5. Morning March Program

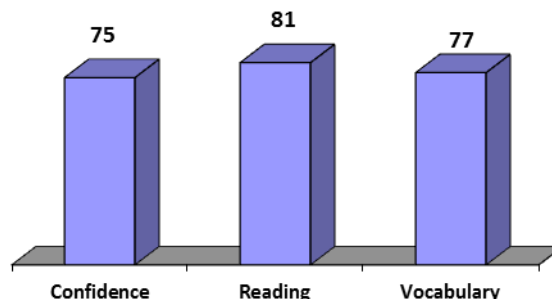
Based on the graph 5, there are 81% students have improved their confidence to give instructions in English. There are 83% of students are able to listen the instructions well and 72% of the students are able to speak English especially when they became the leader of the morning march or the other person on duty. Their English pronunciation and fluency become examples for other students therefore they always try to practice before the morning march.

B . Literacy program

1) Daily Conversation and English for Special Purpose Literacy

In order to apply international education, reading and understanding text in English are something essential. Through the literacy program, the students in SMART Ekselensia are encouraged to enrich they English vocabulary by reading some daily conversation and some articles that related with some subjects such as science and social.

Literacy has an important role to enrich the students' vocabulary. Building vocabulary is a key component in learning language and comprehending a text while reading. Vocabulary needs to be defined and introduced to students: "Vocabulary knowledge is a key building block in children's early literacy development. It provides the foundation for learning to decode and comprehend text" (Cunningham and Stanovich, 1997; Senechal, LeFevre, Thomas, and Daley, 1998; Snow, Burns and Griffin, 1998, as cited in Silverman, 2007, p.365). Research on second language development has shown that literacy in a second language is supported by literacy in the native language. Language and literacy knowledge in one language can serve as the foundation for a new language (Cummins, 1991; Paez & Rinaldi, 2006; Proctor, August, Carlo & Snow, 2006).

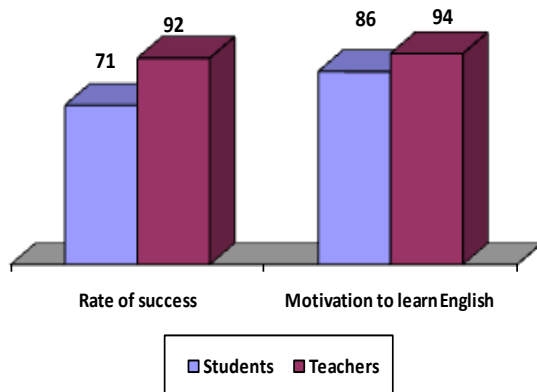


Graph 6. Daily Conversation and English for Special Purpose Literacy Program

From the graph 6, can be seen that 75% students have improved their confidence to speak English. Based on the interview, the students learn and practice the daily conversation after they read the daily conversation literacy. Further, there are 81% students has shown some reading development after they read English for Special Purpose literacy. There are 77% students obtain more vocabulary by reading the literacy on the wall magazine. Some of the students have raised their curiosity to read some science and social articles in English. However, some students still need bilingualism in order to understand the content of some social and science articles or questions from IGCSE Cambridge. Therefore, memorizing vocabulary is still something important in this literacy program.

3. Overall Program

Based on the programs above, the average rate of success of teachers' program is 92% while the rate of success of the students' program is only 71%. (Graph 7).



Graph 7. Overall Program

Further the teacher's motivation to learn English is also higher than the students' motivation. There are some factors that could influence this result such as age, maturity, kinds and content of the program from each participant. However, the result is good since the average overall rate of success of the program is 82% and the average overall motivation to learn English is 90%.

Conclusion

The evaluation results of this first term program shows that 90% of the teachers and the students are really motivated to practice their English more often. Basically, this program could be applied in Smart Ekselensia Indonesia but it should be evaluated every three months. This program could also be applied in other school to compare the results and further impact.

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Keterangan Penulis

Lisa Rosaline, S. Pt, lahir di Bogor, 11 April 1981. Lulusan Fakultas Peternakan, Program Studi Ilmu Nutrisi Ternak, Institut Pertanian Bogor. Beberapa prestasi lain pernah diraihinya sebagai pemakalah seminar dan workshop internasional, dan salah satunya adalah pada event *The 10th Asia TEFL International Conference on "Expanding Horizons of Language and Communication: ELT Issues, Challenges and Implications"* (India, Oktober 5th 2012). Dalam penulisan karya ilmiah kali ini, penulis dibantu oleh Lizamudin (Mahasiwa Sekolah Guru Indonesia) untuk menerjemahkan tulisan ke dalam bahasa Inggris. Saat ini penulis adalah pengajar Bahasa Inggris di SMP SMART Ekselensia Indonesia.