

**IMPROVING STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS THROUGH THE ENGLISH MATRICULATION PROGRAM AT THE UPT LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT CENTER UIN RADEN INTAN BANDAR LAMPUNG**

***MENINGKATKAN KEMAMPUAN BERBAHASA INGGRIS MAHASISWA MELALUI PROGRAM MATRIKULASI BAHASA INGGRIS DI UPT PUSAT PENGEMBANGAN BAHASA UIN RADEN INTAN BANDAR LAMPUNG***

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**ABSTRACT**

English language skills are an urgent need for students in the era of globalization to support academic and career success. However, the limited English language skills of new students at UIN Raden Intan Bandar Lampung are a challenge that requires a strategic solution. The English matriculation program implemented at the UPT Language Development Center aims to improve students' English language competence through an active learning approach. This activity involves a pre-test, practice-based learning, and a post-test to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. The results of the activity showed a significant increase in students' English language skills, with an average increase in post-test scores of 20–30 points. These findings emphasize the importance of the matriculation program as a systematic effort to support students' academic and professional preparation and recommend the development of similar programs to be implemented in other universities.

**Keywords:** English Matriculation, Active Learning, English Language Ability, Higher Education, Community Service

**ABSTRAK**

*Kemampuan bahasa Inggris menjadi kebutuhan mendesak bagi mahasiswa di era globalisasi untuk mendukung keberhasilan akademik dan karir. Namun, keterbatasan kemampuan bahasa Inggris mahasiswa baru di UIN Raden Intan Bandar Lampung menjadi tantangan yang memerlukan solusi strategis. Program matrikulasi bahasa Inggris yang dilaksanakan di UPT Pusat Pengembangan Bahasa bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kompetensi berbahasa Inggris mahasiswa melalui pendekatan pembelajaran aktif. Kegiatan ini melibatkan pre-test, pembelajaran berbasis praktik, dan post-test untuk mengevaluasi efektivitas program. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan pada kemampuan bahasa Inggris mahasiswa, dengan rata-rata peningkatan skor post-test sebesar 20–30 poin. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya program matrikulasi sebagai upaya sistematis untuk mendukung persiapan akademik dan profesional mahasiswa serta merekomendasikan pengembangan program serupa untuk diterapkan di perguruan tinggi lain.*

**Kata Kunci:** Matrikulasi Bahasa Inggris, Pembelajaran Aktif, Kemampuan Bahasa Inggris, Pendidikan Tinggi, Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The importance of English language skills for students in the era of globalization is well-established (Budiman, 2023; , "Issues in English Language Teaching (ELT; in Tanzania: Evidences from Literature", 2023), Haryadi, 2023). English has become a lingua franca used in various fields such as academics, business, and technology (Budiman, 2023; , "Issues in English Language Teaching (ELT; in Tanzania: Evidences from Literature", 2023), Haryadi, 2023). Students with good English language skills have a greater opportunity to compete at national and international levels, both in further studies and professional careers (Abbas et al., 2021; ,

Giampapa & Canagarajah, 2017; , Ahmad & Khan, 2023). The English matriculation program plays a strategic role in preparing students to meet the required English language proficiency standards (Budiman, 2023). This program aims to improve basic skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking, as well as build students' confidence in using English actively and applicatively (Budiman, 2023; , Leong & Masoumeh, 2017). Researchers have identified various strategies and ways that can help students improve and develop their English language skills, including the use of songs, movements, and videos for vocabulary learning (Harahap, 2023), digital game-based mobile applications for oral production (Wang & Han, 2021), and the integration of 21st-century skills in language learning (Özçelik & UKA, 2023).

The importance of English language proficiency is further emphasized by its relationship with the job market and employability (Abbas et al., 2021; , Giampapa & Canagarajah, 2017; , Doan & Hamid, 2019). Studies have shown that English proficiency is considered an essential skill in the global job market, as it facilitates global trade, negotiations, and collaboration between companies and individuals from different countries (Abbas et al., 2021; , Giampapa & Canagarajah, 2017; , Doan & Hamid, 2019). Proficiency in English enhances employability and career opportunities, particularly in multinational corporations and industries with international reach (Abbas et al., 2021; , Giampapa & Canagarajah, 2017; , Doan & Hamid, 2019). However, the educational systems in some countries, such as Pakistan and China, have faced challenges in effectively teaching English language skills (Yang et al., 2016). For example, the lack of explicit instruction in phonics and grapheme-phoneme conversion rules, as well as the use of a look-and-say method for whole word recognition, have been identified as barriers to successful letter-sound integration for native Chinese readers learning English (Yang et al., 2016). Similarly, the English language teaching in Tanzania has faced various issues, including the lack of qualified teachers, limited resources, and the dominance of Swahili as the national language ("Issues in English Language Teaching (ELT) in Tanzania: Evidences from Literature", 2023).

To address these challenges, researchers have emphasized the importance of incorporating critical global literacies and multicultural perspectives in English language teaching (Yol & Yoon, 2019). This approach can help promote students' understanding of the interconnectedness of the world and the role of English as a global language (Yol & Yoon, 2019). Additionally, the integration of 21st-century skills, such as communication, collaboration, and critical thinking, in language learning can better prepare students for the demands of the global job market (Özçelik & UKA, 2023). In conclusion, the references highlight the essential role of English language skills in the era of globalization, both for academic and professional success. The English matriculation program and various teaching strategies can play a crucial role in developing students' English language proficiency. However, educational systems in some countries face challenges in effectively teaching English, which calls for the incorporation of innovative approaches and the integration of critical global literacies and 21st-century skills in language learning.

Second language acquisition (SLA) theories emphasize the importance of comprehensible input and active learning strategies for successful language learning (Hopman & MacDonald, 2018; , Feng et al., 2022; , Ding, 2021). Krashen's theory highlights the role of comprehensible input, where learners acquire language by understanding messages, rather than through explicit grammar instruction (Hopman & MacDonald, 2018; , Abukhattala, 2012). This suggests that designing language learning programs with appropriate materials for the students' level can facilitate successful SLA (Hopman & MacDonald, 2018). In addition to comprehensible input, active learning approaches such as group discussions, simulations, and speaking practice are crucial for developing language competencies (Feng et al., 2022; , Maulana et al., 2020). These strategies allow students to be directly involved in the learning process, increasing their motivation and learning outcomes (Feng et al., 2022; , Maulana et al., 2020). Research has shown that production practice, where learners generate meaningful

language, can be more beneficial for language comprehension than repetition of teacher input or grammar drills (Hopman & MacDonald, 2018).

Factors such as anxiety and self-efficacy also play a significant role in SLA. High levels of speaking anxiety can have an inverse effect on learners' self-efficacy and willingness to learn a second language (Dong, 2023; , Hidayati et al., 2022; , Wang, 2023). Therefore, creating a safe and supportive learning environment is essential to alleviate anxiety and promote successful language acquisition (Su, 2022). Furthermore, the influence of the learner's native language (L1) on the acquisition of the second language (L2) has been widely studied. Research suggests that while bilingual language learners approach the task of learning two languages in ways similar to those learning only one, certain language-specific features and contexts of use can affect the acquisition process (Marchman et al., 2004; , Ionin & Montrul, 2010). Understanding these L1-L2 interactions can inform more effective language teaching strategies. Finally, the use of technology, such as AI-powered educational robots and video response apps, can complement traditional classroom activities and provide additional opportunities for students to practice speaking and receive feedback, thereby enhancing their language learning experience (Feng et al., 2022; , McLain, 2018). In conclusion, the reviewed references highlight the importance of comprehensible input, active learning strategies, addressing affective factors, and considering the influence of the learner's native language in the design and implementation of successful second language acquisition programs.

Preliminary data shows that there are limited English language skills among new students at UIN Raden Intan Bandar Lampung. Most students have not reached a standard of English language skills sufficient to support their academic activities, such as reading English literature or writing academic essays. In addition, mastery of English in higher education often faces various challenges, including lack of access to quality learning materials, low intensity of English language practice, and limited time to develop English language skills optimally. This shows the urgent need to provide structured and effective learning programs. English matriculation activities are a strategic effort to answer students' needs in improving their mastery of English. Good English language skills are not only important for successful academic studies, but are also a competency that supports graduates' competitiveness in the job market. It is hoped that the positive impact of this matriculation program will be felt by students, both in the form of significantly improving their English language skills and in their readiness to face academic and professional demands in the future. Therefore, this program has a high urgency to be implemented as part of efforts to improve the quality of education in higher education.

This activity aims to improve students' English language skills through implementing a comprehensively designed matriculation program. This program not only focuses on teaching English in theory, but also on hands-on practice that is relevant to students' academic and professional needs. In addition, it is hoped that this activity can contribute to the development of effective and innovative English language teaching models, so that they can be adopted by other educational institutions to improve the quality of English language learning more widely.

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1 Details of Implementation Time and Location

This community service activity was carried out on 26 October 2024 Of UPT Language Development Center UIN Raden Intan Bandar Lampung. This location was chosen because it is a language development service center that has supporting facilities for the effective implementation of the English language matriculation program.

### 2.2 Field Situation Analysis

Initial observations show that the English language skills of new students at UIN Raden Intan Bandar Lampung are still at the basic to intermediate level. Based on preliminary data, many students face difficulties in understanding English academic material, such as reading

scientific texts and writing academic essays. This obstacle is exacerbated by the limited intensity of English language practice in the academic environment. UPT Language Development Center UIN Raden Intan has adequate facilities to support the implementation of this program, including classrooms equipped with audio-visual technology, interactive learning materials, and access to additional learning resources. Apart from that, administrative support from UPT makes it easy to organize schedules and carry out activities.

### **2.3 Introduction of PkM Activities**

The English language matriculation program is designed to improve students' English language skills through a structured and practice-based approach. Learning material covers four main aspects: reading, writing, listening and speaking. The teaching methods used include active learning, communication simulations, and group discussions, which are designed to increase student involvement. This program is scheduled to take place in an intensive duration of one full day, including theory and practical sessions. Supervising lecturers and instructors act as the main facilitators in this activity. They are responsible for providing material, guiding discussions, and evaluating the development of student abilities during the program.

### **2.4 Respondent's Object**

The respondents for this activity were new students at UIN Raden Intan Bandar Lampung who are taking part in the English language matriculation program. Respondent criteria include students who are enrolled in the matriculation program and have a diverse background of English language skills. The selection of respondents was based on their need to improve their English language competency as part of their academic preparation in college.

## **3. EVALUATION PLANS**

### **3.1 Activity Evaluation Process**

Activity evaluation was carried out to assess the effectiveness of the English language matriculation program in improving students' language skills. The evaluation process begins with an implementation pre-test to measure students' initial abilities before joining the program. After the program is complete, post-test conducted to determine the extent to which students' English language skills have improved. The pre-test and post-test results were compared to evaluate the impact of activities quantitatively. Apart from that, direct observation during the activity to identify the level of student participation, response to teaching methods, and learning dynamics in the class. These observations provide additional insight into aspects of the program that are successful and that require improvement.

### **3.2 Data Collection Methods**

Data collection was carried out through quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain comprehensive results.

1. Questionnaire: This instrument is given to students to measure their level of satisfaction with the program, covering aspects of material, teaching methods and supporting facilities.
2. Interview: Interviews were conducted with students and lecturers to obtain qualitative input regarding their experiences while participating in activities. This approach aims to identify program strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities for further development.

### **3.3 Evaluation Tools**

1. English Language Proficiency Assessment Rubric: Assessment uses international standards, such as TOEFL-like assessment, which covers four main aspects (reading,

writing, listening and speaking). This rubric is designed to provide an objective assessment of students' English language skills before and after the program.

2. Documentation of Activity Results: Documentation in the form of photos, videos and written reports is prepared to record the implementation of activities in detail. This documentation not only functions as proof of activities, but also as visual evaluation materials to analyze the effectiveness of the applied teaching methods.

#### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

##### **4.1 Activity Results**

The results of the activity showed a significant increase in students' English language skills after participating in the matriculation program. Based on the results of the pre-test and post-test, the average student score is increased by 20-30 points and in the TOEFL-like assessment. This improvement was seen in all aspects of English language skills, with the greatest improvements in listening and speaking skills. Apart from that, the level of student participation in each learning session is very high. Students show enthusiasm in participating in communication simulations, group discussions and other learning activities. Direct observations also noted that students were more confident in using English in academic and non-academic contexts.

##### **4.2 Analysis of Results**

Comparative analysis of pre-test and post-test scores shows the effectiveness of the learning methods implemented in the program. The use of active learning has been proven to support increasing student abilities, especially in aspects of productive skills such as speaking and writing. In addition, the relationship between practice-based teaching methods and improving students' English language skills is quite strong. Activities that involve simulating real situations, such as presentations in English and group discussions, help students apply Second Language Acquisition theory practically.

##### **4.3 Discussion**

The findings in this activity are in line with theory Second Language Acquisition, which emphasizes the importance of a learning environment that supports intensive language practice. The practice-based learning implemented in this program provides students the opportunity to practice English language skills in a real context, thereby speeding up the second language acquisition process. In terms of advantages, this program has succeeded in improving students' abilities in a relatively short time. However, challenges faced include the heterogeneity of students' initial abilities, which requires adjustments in teaching methods to be more inclusive. Potential future program development includes implementing this activity on a wider scale, such as integrating the matriculation program into the initial semester curriculum, or implementing a similar program for advanced students to support mastery of English in the context of research and scientific publications.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

##### **5.1 Summary of Key Findings**

The English matriculation program activities carried out at the UPT Language Development Center of UIN Raden Intan Bandar Lampung have succeeded in improving students' English language skills significantly. This is shown by an increase in the average score on the pre-test and post-test results, with the greatest contribution to listening and speaking skills. Students also show high enthusiasm in participating in the program, which is reflected in the optimal level of participation during learning sessions.

## 5.2 Activity Implications

These findings emphasize the importance of the English language matriculation program in supporting students' academic and professional preparation, especially in the era of globalization which requires English language skills as one of the main competencies.

Similar programs are recommended to be implemented in other universities, especially in the initial phase of study, to provide a strong foundation in mastering English. With appropriate adaptation, this program can also be designed to support students in advanced academic activities, such as writing final assignments or scientific publications.

## 5.3 Limitations and Recommendations

This activity has several limitations, including the relatively short implementation time and the number of respondents being limited to new students at one university. Apart from that, the level of heterogeneity in students' initial abilities is also a challenge in implementing the program.

For further research or PkM, it is recommended to:

1. Extend program duration to ensure more consistent results.
2. Increase the number of respondents and involve students from various backgrounds to obtain more diverse data.
3. Integrate learning technology, such as e-learning platforms, to increase program efficiency and flexibility.
4. Conduct long-term evaluations to measure the program's impact on students' future academic and career success.

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