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Pedagogical Practices in Enhancing English Skills in Non-Formal Education: A Case Study of LKP Uswahedu Global Linguists

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ABSTRAK

Studi ini meneliti praktik pengajaran bahasa Inggris dalam lingkungan pendidikan non-formal melalui studi kasus kualitatif di LKP Uswahedu di Wonokoyo. Fokusnya diletakkan pada tiga aspek yang saling terkait: strategi pengajaran, peran tutor, dan pengalaman siswa dalam belajar bahasa Inggris. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas, wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan tutor dan siswa, serta dokumen institusional yang relevan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa pengajaran bahasa Inggris di LKP Uswahedu umumnya melibatkan aktivitas komunikatif dan interaktif, penggunaan materi pengajaran yang fleksibel, dan perhatian pada penggunaan bahasa praktis dalam konteks sehari-hari. Tutor ditemukan mengambil peran yang melampaui instruksi, seringkali bertindak sebagai fasilitator dan sumber dorongan di kelas. Siswa menggambarkan pengalaman belajar mereka sebagai lebih nyaman dan menarik, khususnya mencatat berkurangnya kecemasan dan kemauan yang lebih besar untuk menggunakan bahasa Inggris dalam komunikasi sehari-hari. Alih-alih berfokus pada hasil pembelajaran yang terukur, studi ini menyoroti bagaimana pengajaran dan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris dilakukan dan dialami dalam konteks pendidikan non-formal. Temuan ini menawarkan perspektif yang peka terhadap konteks tentang pendidikan bahasa Inggris di lingkungan non-formal dan mungkin relevan bagi pendidik dan praktisi yang bekerja di lingkungan serupa.

Kata kunci: pendidikan non-formal, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, praktik pedagogis, peran tutor, pengalaman peserta didik

ABSTRACT

This study examines English teaching practices in a non-formal education setting through a qualitative case study at LKP Uswahedu in Wonokoyo. The focus is placed on three interconnected aspects: teaching strategies, tutors' roles, and learners' experiences of learning English. Data were gathered through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with tutors and learners, and relevant institutional documents. The findings show that English teaching at LKP Uswahedu commonly involves communicative and interactive activities, the flexible use of teaching materials, and attention to practical language use in everyday contexts. Tutors are found to take on roles that extend beyond instruction, often acting as facilitators and sources of encouragement in the classroom. Learners describe their learning experiences as more comfortable and engaging, particularly noting reduced anxiety and a greater willingness to use English in daily communication. Rather than focusing on measurable learning outcomes, this study sheds light on how English teaching and learning are carried out and experienced in a non-formal educational context. These findings offer a context-sensitive perspective on English education in non-formal settings and may be relevant for educators and practitioners working in similar environments.

Keywords: *non-formal education, English learning, pedagogical practices, tutor roles, learner experiences*

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Introduction

In recent years, non-formal institutions in Indonesia, commonly known as Lembaga Kursus dan Pelatihan (LKP) and now termed Lembaga Kursus (LK), have become an important space for connecting national curriculum expectations with the everyday communicative needs of local communities. In applied linguistics, non-formal education is often understood as a flexible learning space where instructional practices are shaped by local needs, learner backgrounds, and institutional resources rather

than standardized curricula. This situates non-formal English education as a meaningful site for examining how language teaching and learning are enacted in context, especially in communities where access to formal English education may be limited or uneven.

Situated in Wonokoyo, an area that reflects both rural and urban characteristics, LK USWAHEDU GLOBAL LINGUISTS represents a meaningful site for this study. As a non-formal institution rooted in the local community, its teaching practices are closely connected to learners' lived experiences. While English instruction at this LK is designed to be accessible, learners bring diverse motivations and cultural perspectives shaped by their surrounding environment. Examining this single site allows for a closer understanding of how English learning is shaped by local contexts and everyday interactions. As a locally rooted institution, LK USWAHEDU provides a relevant case for exploring how English teaching strategies, tutor roles, and learner experiences intersect in a non-formal educational setting

Initial observations at LK USWAHEDU highlight the interconnected nature of teaching practices, tutor roles, and learner experiences. Tutors do not function predominantly as language instructors but also take on supportive roles that extend beyond the classroom. Instructional activities range from structured practice to more open ended interaction, reflecting the tutors' attempts to accommodate diverse learner needs. Learners engage with these activities in different ways, shaped by their individual motivations and life contexts. Taken together, these observations suggest that English learning in this setting is closely connected to social relationships and everyday experiences.

Recent study in applied linguistics has been increasingly examined to non-formal and alternative education contexts. Several studies have discussed the move toward learner-centered pedagogy in non-formal settings, suggesting that flexible learning environments may allow learners greater room to exercise autonomy than is often possible in formal schools (Benson, 2021). Other research has drawn attention to the role of tutors, noting that teaching in non-formal contexts often requires tutors to adapt continuously to the diverse backgrounds and learning needs of adult and adolescent learners (Richards, 2022). In Indonesia, scholars have examined English learning in community-based programs and have pointed to the influence of socio-cultural factors, including learners' sense of local identity, on their engagement with the language (Suryani & Kurniawan, 2023). More recent studies focusing on English for specific purposes in LK *Lembaga Kursus* settings have also highlighted the need for instructional materials that reflect local vocational and employment-related contexts (Pratama et al., 2024).

Although research on non-formal English education has continued to expand, important gaps remain. Many existing studies address particular aspects of teaching and learning in isolation, such as focusing primarily on tutor motivation or examining learner outcomes without close attention to everyday instructional practices. There are still relatively few in-depth qualitative case studies that bring together teaching strategies, tutors' evolving roles, and learners' lived experiences within a single, locally

situated non-formal institution in Pasuruan. In addition, the perspective of an insider-researcher who is both involved in managing the institution and engaged in critical reflection on its practices has received limited attention. As a result, our understanding of how these elements come together in the daily pedagogical life of community-based English learning centers remains partial.

This study aims to respond to these gaps by offering a qualitative exploration of English teaching and learning at LK USWAHEDU. Taking a reflexive insider position, the study focuses on how teaching strategies are enacted in everyday practice, how tutors understand and carry out their roles, and how learners experience English learning in this non-formal setting. Through a qualitative case study approach, the research seeks to develop a context-sensitive understanding of the interactions and practices that shape English education at LK USWAHEDU, contributing to discussions on community-based language education in Indonesia.

Research Methodology

This study used a qualitative research design using a case study approach. A case study was chosen to allow an in-depth exploration of English pedagogical practices within a real-life context. This design appropriated the researcher to examine teaching strategies, tutors' roles, and learners' experiences in a non-formal education setting in a holistic manner. The study was conducted at LK USWAHEDU, a non-formal education institution located in Wonokoyo that offers English courses for learners from diverse backgrounds.

The institution provides flexible learning programs designed to support learners' communicative English skills. LK USWAHEDU was selected as the research site because it represents a typical non-formal English learning context at the local level.

The participants consisted of English tutors and learners at LK USWAHEDU. Tutors were selected based on their active involvement in English instruction, while learners were selected using purposive sampling to represent varied levels of English proficiency. Participation in the study was voluntary, and all participants were informed about the purpose of the research. The researcher is also the owner and manager of LK USWAHEDU, positioning the researcher as an insider in the research context. To minimize potential bias, a reflexive stance was adopted throughout the research process.

The data were collected through multiple sources such as *semi structured interviews*, *classroom observations*, and *document analysis*. in order to capture the complexity of the learning context. It spent an extended period engaging in participant observation, taking part in classroom activities while paying close attention to everyday interactions between tutors and learners. These observations were complemented by semi-structured interviews with both tutors and students, who were selected purposively to reflect diverse backgrounds and levels of experience. The interviews were conducted in an open and flexible

manner, giving participants space to describe their experiences of learning and teaching English in their own words.

The analysis was conducted by using an inductive thematic approach that allowed patterns to develop from the data rather than being imposed in advance. It began by reading the interview transcripts and field notes several times to become closely familiar with the data. This was followed by an open coding process, during which initial ideas and recurring issues were noted. These codes were then grouped into broader themes related to teaching strategies, tutor roles, and learners' experiences. To support the trustworthiness of the analysis, It engaged in member checking by sharing my interpretations with participants and inviting their feedback, helping to ensure that the accounts presented reflect their experiences within the institution. To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, several strategies were employed, including data *triangulation, member checking*, and *thick description*. These strategies were used to enhance the credibility and dependability of the findings.

Finding

English Teaching Strategies in a Non-Formal Learning Environment

English teaching at LK USWAHEDU commonly involves activities that emphasize communication and interaction. Tutors often use pair work, short conversations, role play, and group discussion to encourage learners to speak and listen to one another in English. These activities form an important part of everyday classroom practice rather than serving as additional exercises. Through interaction, learners have opportunities to share ideas and relate English use to familiar situations.

Observations show that learners respond more positively when lessons involve interaction. They appear more willing to speak and less hesitant when working with peers. As one learner explained, "When we practice speaking in pairs, I feel more confident because I'm not alone." This suggests that interactive activities also provide emotional support that encourages participation in the non formal learning environment.

Flexible Adaptation of Teaching Materials

A defining characteristic of the pedagogy at LKP Uswahedu was the tutors' rejection of a "one-size-fits-all" curriculum. Rather than treating the syllabus as a rigid script, tutors viewed it as a flexible framework that required constant calibration. This was not merely a matter of changing page numbers; it was a strategic response to the immediate "energy" and proficiency levels of the learners in the room. When a topic felt too abstract or a module too dense, tutors instinctively pivoted—simplifying complex structures or substituting foreign examples with local, relatable content to ensure that no student was left behind by a textbook that didn't "speak" to them.

This flexibility was often born out of a deep empathy for the learners' diverse, and often challenging, backgrounds. During a post-class discussion, one tutor captured this necessity perfectly:

"If I see their faces go blank because the textbook example is about an airport in London, I stop. I have to. I'll switch it to a scenario at the local market or a conversation they might actually have in Wonokoyo. If the material stays too difficult or feels 'alien,' they lose heart, and in non-formal education, once a student loses heart, they stop coming." (Tutor A, Interview)

The findings suggest that this adaptive approach is what keeps the learning environment at LKP Uswahedu "breathing." By constantly balancing institutional goals with the lived capacities of their students, the tutors practiced a form of responsive teaching that prioritized the learner's psychological comfort and immediate understanding over the mechanical completion of a syllabus. It reveals a teaching culture where the "human element" of the student is valued more than the technical demands of the curriculum.

Emphasis on Practical Language Use

The findings also indicate a strong emphasis on practical language use in English instruction at LKP Uswahedu. Tutors prioritized language functions that learners could apply in daily communication, such as introducing oneself, asking for information, and responding to common situations. Grammar instruction was integrated into practice rather than taught in isolation, allowing learners to see its relevance in real-life contexts.

Learners expressed appreciation for lessons that focused on practical usage. One learner commented, *"I can use what I learn here when I meet new people or talk at work."* This focus on practical language use reflects the goal-oriented nature of non-formal education, where learners often seek immediate applicability of skills. The findings suggest that prioritizing practical communication supports learners' motivation and helps bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world language use.

Tutors' Roles in Supporting English Learning

The study found that tutors at LKP Uswahedu enacted multiple roles beyond traditional instruction. Tutors positioned themselves as **facilitators, motivators, and learning partners**, creating a supportive learning atmosphere. Rather than dominating classroom interaction, tutors encouraged learners to participate actively and express themselves in English without fear of making mistakes.

One tutor described their role as follows:

"I see myself more as a friend who helps them practice English. If they make mistakes, I correct them gently so they don't feel embarrassed." (Tutor 3)

Learners also perceived tutors as approachable and supportive. A learner shared:

"The tutor is very patient. When I don't understand, I can ask many times, and it's okay." (Learner 4)

These findings indicate that tutors' interpersonal roles play a crucial part in shaping learners' engagement and confidence in learning English in a non-formal context.

Learners' Experiences of Learning English in a Non-Formal Setting

Learners' experiences at LKP Uswahedu were characterized by increased confidence, reduced anxiety, and positive attitudes toward English learning. Many learners reported feeling more comfortable learning English in a non-formal setting compared to formal school environments.

One learner reflected:

"At school, I was afraid to speak English because I was scared of making mistakes. Here, I feel more confident." (Learner 2)

Another learner emphasized the relevance of the learning experience:

"The lessons are related to daily life, so I can practice English outside the class." (Learner 6)

These experiences suggest that the non-formal learning environment supports learners' emotional and practical engagement with English, contributing to a more meaningful learning process.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the distinctive characteristics of English learning in a non-formal education context. The use of communicative and flexible teaching strategies aligns with principles of communicative language teaching, which emphasize meaningful interaction and learner participation (Richards, 2006). Unlike formal classrooms that often prioritize syllabus completion, tutors at LKP Uswahedu adapted instructional practices to learners' immediate needs, reflecting the flexible nature of non-formal education (Rogers, 2004).

The tutors' roles as facilitators and motivators resonate with Brown's (2007) view of teachers as guides who support learners' language development through encouragement and interaction. The supportive tutor–learner relationship observed in this study also supports Dewey's (1938) notion that learning is shaped by experience and social interaction. By creating a safe learning environment, tutors enabled learners to participate more actively and take risks in using English.

Furthermore, learners' positive experiences and increased confidence can be understood through Norton's (2013) perspective on language learning and identity. When learners feel respected and supported, they are more likely to invest in language learning and view English as a meaningful part of their lives. The non-formal setting at LKP Uswahedu appears to provide such a space, where learners can negotiate their identities as English users without the pressure commonly associated with formal education.

Overall, this study extends previous research on non-formal English education by integrating teaching strategies, tutor roles, and learner experiences within a single case study. Rather than focusing on learning outcomes, this research offers a contextualized understanding of how English pedagogical practices are enacted and experienced in a local non-formal education institution.

Conclusion and Implications

Conclusion

This study explored English pedagogical practices in a non-formal education context through a case study of LKP Uswahedu, Wonokoyo. The findings reveal that English learning in this setting is shaped by flexible and communicative teaching strategies, supportive tutor roles, and positive learner experiences. Tutors play a significant role in facilitating learning and building learners' confidence, while learners benefit from a relaxed and relevant learning environment that encourages active participation.

Implications

The findings of this study have several implications. For practitioners, the study highlights the importance of adopting flexible teaching strategies and fostering supportive tutor–learner relationships in non-formal English education. For educators and program designers, the study suggests that learner-centered and experience-based approaches can enhance engagement in English learning. For future research, further studies involving multiple non-formal education institutions may provide comparative insights and broaden understanding of English learning practices in diverse non-formal contexts.

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