

IMPLEMENTING A DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY-INTEGRATED ENGLISH SYLLABUS FOR ADAPTIVE AND INTERACTIVE LEARNING IN COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

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ABSTRACT

This community service project focused on implementing a digital technology-integrated English syllabus to support adaptive and interactive learning in community learning centers run by ISCO (Indonesian Street Children Organization). The program developed ten lesson plans for Grade 7 learners, covering monthly topics from January to December. Each lesson was designed to be simple, engaging, and accessible, using a communicative and values-based approach with low-tech teaching materials that can be used in limited-resource settings although classroom implementation is planned for the next phase, the materials were reviewed by ISCO tutors who will teach them. Their feedback showed that the lesson plans are well-structured, easy to use, and suitable for community-based education. Tutors also recommended improvements—such as adding ice breakers to more sessions and expanding examples of factual statements—which were included in the final revision. This project shows that a digital-supported, value-based English syllabus can be effectively designed for low-resource, informal education settings. It supports both student learning and tutor confidence, and serves as a model for other non-formal learning environments. The approach aligns with current research on digital learning, inclusive teaching, and character education

Keywords: language teaching, digital learning, syllabus design

ABSTRAK

Proyek pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini berfokus pada penerapan silabus Bahasa Inggris yang terintegrasi dengan teknologi digital untuk mendukung pembelajaran adaptif dan interaktif di pusat-pusat belajar masyarakat yang dikelola oleh ISCO (Indonesian Street Children Organization). Program ini mengembangkan sepuluh rencana pembelajaran untuk siswa kelas 7, dengan topik bulanan dari Januari hingga Desember. Setiap rencana pembelajaran dirancang agar sederhana, menarik, dan mudah diakses, menggunakan pendekatan komunikatif dan berbasis nilai dengan bahan ajar berteknologi rendah yang dapat digunakan di lingkungan dengan sumber daya terbatas. Meskipun implementasi di kelas direncanakan pada tahap berikutnya, materi telah ditinjau oleh para tutor ISCO yang akan mengajarkannya. Umpan balik mereka menunjukkan bahwa rencana pembelajaran telah terstruktur dengan baik, mudah digunakan, dan sesuai untuk pendidikan berbasis masyarakat. Para tutor juga memberikan beberapa saran perbaikan—seperti menambahkan ice breaker di lebih banyak sesi dan memperluas contoh pernyataan faktual—yang telah dimasukkan dalam revisi akhir. Proyek ini menunjukkan bahwa silabus Bahasa Inggris berbasis nilai yang didukung teknologi digital dapat dirancang secara efektif untuk konteks pendidikan informal dengan sumber daya terbatas. Pendekatan ini tidak hanya mendukung proses belajar siswa dan meningkatkan kepercayaan diri tutor, tetapi juga dapat menjadi model bagi lingkungan belajar non-formal lainnya. Pendekatan ini sejalan dengan penelitian terkini mengenai pembelajaran digital, pengajaran inklusif, dan pendidikan karakter.

Kata kunci: pengajaran bahasa, pembelajaran digital, perancangan silabus

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INTRODUCTION

The integration of technology in education has significantly transformed the teaching and learning landscape, particularly in language education. As digital tools become more accessible and affordable, they provide opportunities to enhance learner engagement, interactivity, and autonomy.

Previous research indicates that educational technology can improve students' motivation, comprehension, and communication skills (Stockwell, 2020; Mohamed & El-Sayed, 2021). In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), the use of digital applications, online platforms, and AI-driven feedback tools allows learners to develop language skills in ways that are diverse, personalized, and interactive, offering richer learning experiences than traditional approaches.

Despite these advantages, the adoption of technology in education remains uneven, especially in non-formal learning settings such as community learning centers. Unlike formal institutions, which often have better infrastructure and trained educators, these centers typically operate with limited resources and depend heavily on volunteer tutors. Many of these volunteers lack formal teacher training or sufficient digital literacy, limiting their ability to integrate technology effectively into instruction.

The Indonesian Street Children Organization (ISCO) is one such non-profit initiative, managing learning centers in urban slum areas to support underprivileged children by providing supplementary education, including English instruction. However, several challenges hinder ISCO's instructional effectiveness. First, most volunteer tutors have minimal teaching experience and limited understanding of learner-centered pedagogy. Second, learning materials are often misaligned with students' proficiency levels; for instance, secondary-level learners may be given kindergarten-level worksheets due to restricted access to appropriate resources. Third, lesson delivery remains largely traditional, relying on rote memorization and textbook use, which does not adequately meet the needs of digitally native learners.

These conditions highlight the need for targeted interventions that address both pedagogical and resource-related limitations. Designing a technology-integrated English syllabus aligned with learners' proficiency levels and incorporating values-based education principles, alongside training programs to enhance tutors' teaching strategies and digital competencies, offers a practical and context-sensitive solution. Such an approach has the potential to strengthen instructional quality, increase learner engagement, and provide a replicable model for technology-supported language education in non-formal, low-resource environments.

b. Problem Identification

Based on observations and discussions with ISCO tutors, three key challenges were identified. First, limited pedagogical foundation, many volunteer tutors have minimal teaching experience and lack formal training in learner-centered approaches. This results in limited lesson planning, insufficient scaffolding, and reduced use of formative assessment, which in turn affects student engagement and learning progress. Second, misalignment of learning materials which teaching resources are often inappropriate for students' proficiency levels; for instance, secondary-level learners may receive kindergarten-level worksheets. This mismatch stems from limited access to suitable materials and insufficient skills in adapting content, leading to boredom or frustration among learners. Third, reliance on traditional instructional methods which lessons often focus on rote memorization and textbook-based activities, with few opportunities for interactive, communicative, or task-based learning. Such methods are inadequate for addressing the needs of digitally native learners and hinder the development of practical language skills. Addressing these challenges requires an integrated approach that strengthens tutor capacity, ensures access to level-appropriate materials, and promotes interactive, technology-supported pedagogy.

c. Research Objectives and Benefits

This study aims to design a technology-integrated English syllabus that is aligned with learners' proficiency levels and incorporates values-based education principles, as well as to conduct training programs that enhance tutors' teaching strategies and digital competencies. By implementing

these initiatives, the study is expected to provide several benefits. For learners, the program will offer engaging, level-appropriate, and interactive lessons that encourage active participation. For tutors, it will improve instructional skills and digital literacy, thereby fostering greater confidence in teaching. For ISCO as an organization, the outcomes will include the development of a replicable model of technology-supported English instruction that can be applied in various non-formal education contexts.

Mitra PKM

ISCO Foundation, or Yayasan ISCO, is a non-governmental organization dedicated to improving the lives of impoverished children in Indonesia. Recognizing the significant challenges faced by millions of children due to poverty, political instability, and regional disparities, ISCO focuses on providing educational opportunities and essential support services. The organization primarily serves children aged 5 to 17 who reside in urban slums.

ISCO's core programs are designed to:

1. Prevent Child Labor and Street Children
By providing essential support, ISCO aims to keep vulnerable children out of harmful situations, such as child labor and street life.
2. Enhance Educational Opportunities
ISCO offers educational support, including tutoring, learning materials, and access to quality education, to empower children and break the cycle of poverty.
3. Promote Holistic Development
Beyond education, ISCO focuses on the overall well-being of children by providing health, nutrition, and protection services.

Through these initiatives, ISCO strives to create a brighter future for Indonesia's most vulnerable children, enabling them to reach their full potential and contribute positively to society.

Murniati and Junita (2021) highlight the importance of targeted support and adaptive methods when teaching English to teachers who work with this demographic. They emphasize that specialized training can empower teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to address diverse learning needs effectively. For ISCO, this approach could be applied to the training workshops for volunteer tutors, encouraging the adoption of adaptive techniques and inclusive practices in their teaching. This insight also supports the mentorship program, where ongoing peer support and resource sharing can foster a collaborative learning environment, ultimately benefiting both tutors and students in the ISCO community.

The research requires detailed information regarding the current status and situation of the partners at the location. To achieve this, the researchers conducted a thorough investigation with some ISCO learning centers in Jakarta to gain a detailed understanding of the development of them.

1. Kosambi Shelter: Jl. Kyai Abdul Wahab RT 006/006, Duri Kosambi, Jakarta Barat



Picture 1 dan 2. Kosambi Branch

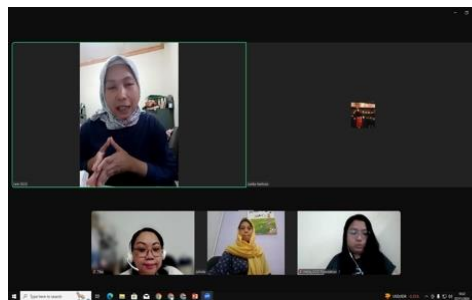
2. *Pademangan Shelter: Jl. Budi Mulia, Waspada IV Gg 27 RT 010/010-2, Kel. Pademangan Barat, Kec. Pademangan, Jakarta Utara*



Picture 3. Pademangan Branch

Problems

An investigation was conducted through interviews and/or Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with Ibu Leni and Ibu Heba as representatives from ISCO. From the results of the interview, several problems were found that hinder ISCO centers in this technologically advanced era. The picture of discussion shown below, following the result of discussion.



Picture 4. Initial Discussion with ISCO

Currently, many learning centers lack adequate technological resources such as computers, projectors, or digital learning applications. Consequently, English lessons primarily rely on traditional teaching methods using textbooks and manual note taking, limiting the potential for interactive and engaging learning experiences. This gap in resources is further compounded by the diverse educational backgrounds of the volunteer tutors, many of whom lack formal training in incorporating technology into their teaching practices. Despite their enthusiasm and commitment, these limitations hinder the delivery of lessons that align with the needs and expectations of today's digital-native students. Fortunately, most of the tutors have a mobile phone that can access to several learning resources yet they need further assistance.

The main issues identified in this context are twofold. First, there is a clear need for improved teaching methods that make use of modern technology. The current approach to teaching is mainly traditional, lacking the integration of digital tools that can create a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. As Alijani (2022) notes, one of the biggest challenges in education today is figuring out how technology can best improve learning. Technology has become a central tool for spreading knowledge and has reshaped societies and perspectives. Scientific and technological progress is vital for the stability of society, and a nation's level of technological development affects its future. Therefore, using technology such as language learning apps, AI-based tools, and multimedia resources can greatly increase student engagement and improve learning outcomes. These tools can offer more varied learning experiences, such as interactive videos, gamified exercises, and listening practices, which are more engaging and effective for students.

Second, there is an important need to improve the teaching skills of volunteer tutors. While many tutors are motivated, they have limited experience with modern, technology-based teaching methods. Without sufficient training in these methods, their ability to provide engaging and effective lessons is limited. Integrating technology into learning environments is essential due to its potential to enhance education and adapt to the needs of students, who are increasingly growing up in a digital world (Bransford et al., 2000; Prensky, 2001). As such, the tutors need focused professional development that helps them adopt innovative teaching strategies and use technology effectively in the classroom. Improving these skills will allow tutors to better meet the diverse learning needs of students, especially in an age where digital literacy and technological engagement are essential.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study applied a straightforward three-phase approach consisting of Design, Development, and Evaluation. In the Design phase, basic information about the learners was collected, including their English proficiency, age (Grade 7), socio-cultural backgrounds, and the learning environment at ISCO community centers. This helped to understand their specific needs and challenges. Relevant research on digital technology integration in language learning and values education was reviewed to guide the syllabus content and teaching strategies. Clear language learning objectives were established, focusing on vocabulary, grammar, and communication skills, while also embedding character values such as respect and responsibility to foster holistic learner development. The ESA (Engage-Study-Activate) model was then selected to create lessons that are structured, engaging, and interactive. Lesson topics were organized progressively, beginning with simple tasks like expressing opinions and advancing to more complex skills such as stating facts, ensuring a step-by-step skill-building process.

During the Development phase, the focus was on creating lesson materials including printed lesson plans, worksheets, flashcards, and visual aids, all aligned with the language and values objectives and designed to be easily understandable for learners at various proficiency levels. Recognizing technological limitations within community learning centers, simple, low-tech digital tools such as Google Translate and YouTube were incorporated as optional supports primarily for pronunciation practice, which did not rely on consistent internet access. Volunteer tutors were actively involved in reviewing draft materials to ensure cultural relevance and suitability to the teaching context. To support volunteers with different experience levels, lesson instructions included detailed guidance along with flexible activities to help them teach confidently. The materials were finalized with adaptability in mind, to suit diverse group sizes and varying resource availability in the non-formal education setting.

In the Evaluation phase, feedback was collected from volunteer tutors through informal discussions, focus groups, and written observations following their initial use of the materials. Tutors provided insights on lesson clarity, content relevance, engagement potential, the integration of digital supports, and the practical feasibility of implementation given the limited resources. This feedback was analyzed to highlight strengths, such as the effective use of the ESA framework and material adaptability, as well as challenges including differences in digital literacy and the need for more dynamic warm-up activities. Based on these insights, lesson content, teaching notes, and the application of digital tools were refined to better meet the needs of tutors and learners. Plans were also established for continuous tutor involvement to ensure ongoing syllabus relevance and effectiveness.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The ISCO lesson plans were designed around monthly thematic units, each covering basic English functions that are relevant to students' everyday lives. The curriculum spans from January to December, progressing from simple sentence structures (e.g., "I like...") to more complex language functions such as giving directions and making invitations. The thematic approach ensures gradual skill development, cultural relevance, and increased motivation through relatable content. The integration of moral values into each unit promotes character development alongside language learning (Bransford et al., 2000; Cakir & Eroglu, 2022)

Table 1. Lesson Plan Themes and Content (January to December)

Month	Lesson Focus	Lesson Activities	Target Language	Values Emphasized
Jan	Facts and Opinions	Flashcard games, sentence sorting, pairwork	"I like...", "I think...", "He is..."	Respect others' opinions
Feb	School and Home Vocabulary	Naming objects, matching pictures, "Guess the Object"	"This is...", "There is..."	Curiosity, honesty
March	Simple Future Tense	Interviews, planning tasks, presentations	"I will...", "I am going to..."	Planning, responsibility
Apr	Daily Routines (Simple Present)	Schedule building, routine sharing, clock-matching	"I wake up at...", "She goes to school at..."	Discipline, time management
May	Describing People (Adjectives)	Guess-who games, writing descriptions of people	"She has...", "He is..."	Acceptance, identity
Agt	Prepositions of Place	Object placement, treasure hunt	"in, on, under, next to"	Focus, attention to detail
Sept	Telling Time and Schedules	Clock-matching, schedule creation, peer interviews	"What time is it?", "at 3 o'clock"	Punctuality
Oct	Describing Places & Giving Directions	Map drawing, giving/receiving directions	"Go straight", "Turn left"	Clarity, helpfulness
Nov	Making Invitations and Offers	Dialogue performances, invitation cards	"Would you like to...?", "Sure!", "Sorry, I can't"	Friendliness, politeness
Dec	Review & Final Presentations	Team quizzes, group projects, student presentations	Reuse of all prior language	Confidence, reflection, achievement

Lesson Design Characteristics

Each lesson plan is built upon a communicative and student-centered framework. The format was intentionally kept simple and consistent across all sessions to support delivery by non-professional tutors in low-resource community learning centers. The instructional approach includes structured stages, character education, and low-tech materials that can be delivered using paper-based visuals and mobile apps. This design reflects best practices in non-formal education and supports inclusive, values-driven language instruction (Laurillard, 2020; Stockwell, 2020; Rerung & Hartono, 2020).

Table 2. Lesson Design Characteristics

Component	Description
Lesson Duration	60 minutes per session
Structure	Opening (prayer/ice breaker) – Presentation – Practice – Reflection
Learning Objectives	Includes both linguistic (grammar, vocabulary) and value-based objectives
Warm-ups	Ice breakers (e.g., Thumbs Up/Down, Would You Rather?), reviews, simple games
Teaching Media	Flashcards, cue cards, word cards, visuals, printed charts and worksheets
Digital Tools (Optional)	Google Translate, Padlet, YouTube – optimized for use on mobile phones
Values Integration	Emphasized across lessons: respect, cooperation, confidence, responsibility
Student Activities	Pair work, group work, mini-presentations, roleplays, object-based tasks
Assessment Techniques	Formative assessment via oral production, games, written work (rubrics in development)
Tutor-Friendly Format	Clearly labeled stages, adaptable to non-formal education, no advanced tech required

As part of this research, five structured and interactive English lesson plans were developed for ISCO Grade 7 students, focusing on the themes of expressing opinions and understanding facts. Although the lesson plans have not yet been implemented in classrooms, they were distributed to ISCO's volunteer tutors for early review and validation. The tutors, who will be responsible for delivering the lessons in the future, provided constructive feedback based on their teaching experience and understanding of the learners' context.

The lesson plans were designed using a communicative and values-based approach, integrating simple English expressions, critical thinking, and moral education. The feedback revealed several key insights:

1. Clear Learning Goals and Values

Tutors appreciated that each lesson included both linguistic skills and character values. The plans clearly stated the intended outcomes for both language use (e.g., expressing opinions, identifying facts) and soft skills such as respect, courage, and cooperation.

2. Well-Defined Lesson Structure

Tutors acknowledged that each lesson followed a logical and consistent format, including a clear opening, body, and closing activity. This structure helps students anticipate the flow of the class and supports tutors in time management and classroom control. Many noted that even without a formal background in teaching, they could confidently understand and deliver each stage.

3. Simple, Comprehensible Language

One of the most consistent praises was the simplicity of language used in instructions and dialogue examples. Tutors highlighted that the vocabulary and phrases were age-appropriate and easy for students to grasp, increasing the potential for successful classroom implementation without overwhelming learners.

4. Variety of Activities and Engagement

The inclusion of role plays, games, and group tasks was highly appreciated, as these interactive elements promote participation and maintain attention in large or mixed-level classrooms. However, tutors noted that ice breaker activities were only present in Meeting 1. They suggested adding brief games or creative review methods to the opening sections of Meetings 2–5 to sustain energy and curiosity from the start

5. Coherence and Progression

Tutors acknowledged that the five lessons were well-connected, building progressively from expressing simple opinions to constructing fact-based statements. They emphasized that the lessons were well-structured and logically sequenced, making them suitable for both learners and volunteer tutors with varying teaching experience.

6. Feasibility and Accessibility for Community Settings

A major strength highlighted by tutors was the lesson plans' practicality in low-resource settings. The materials were designed to be implementable with only basic tools—printouts, posters, flashcards, and optionally a smartphone for pronunciation support (via Google Translate or YouTube). Tutors emphasized that these materials are adaptable and do not rely on internet connectivity or advanced technology, which matches the infrastructure at ISCO centers.

7. Empowerment of Tutors

Tutors reported that these lesson plans increased their confidence, giving them a concrete roadmap to follow during class. They appreciated the embedded guidance, teacher prompts, and flexibility to adjust content. The combination of structured content and freedom to adapt was seen as empowering, especially for those with limited classroom experience.



Picture 5 and 6 Implementation of Syllabus

Suggestions for Improvement

Tutors provided several constructive suggestions for improving the lesson plans, particularly concerning the opening segments and content breadth. They recommended aligning the opening prayers more closely with versions commonly recited by children at ISCO centers to foster a more familiar and spiritually comfortable start to each session. Additionally, while Meeting 1 included an interactive ice breaker, Meetings 2 through 5 relied on simple review questions for warm-ups. Tutors felt that incorporating brief games or interactive warm-up alternatives could more effectively energize students and smoothly transition them into the learning material.

Further suggestions focused on expanding the scope of content and refining formatting. For Lesson 3, which primarily focused on professions, tutors recommended including a wider range of factual categories, such as facts about objects, weather, locations, or personal details. This would enable students to generalize the concept of factual statements beyond a single theme. Regarding presentation, some tutors noted that the lesson stage and activity tables could benefit from clearer formatting, requesting revisions to make listings of materials and methods more visually accessible and quicker to reference during teaching.

Despite these suggestions for improvement, tutors highly praised several aspects of the lesson plans. They acknowledged the strong coherence and logical progression across the five lessons, noting

how they effectively built from expressing simple opinions to constructing fact-based statements. Tutors emphasized that this well-structured and logically sequenced approach made the lessons suitable for both learners and volunteer tutors with varying levels of teaching experience.

A major strength highlighted by tutors was the practicality and accessibility of the lesson plans in low-resource community settings. The materials were intentionally designed to be implementable with only basic tools, such as printouts, posters, flashcards, and optionally a smartphone for pronunciation support via Google Translate or YouTube. Tutors particularly appreciated that these materials are adaptable and do not depend on consistent internet connectivity or advanced technology, which perfectly matches the existing infrastructure at ISCO centers. Crucially, the lesson plans significantly contributed to the empowerment of the volunteer tutors. Tutors reported a notable increase in their confidence, as the plans provided a concrete roadmap to follow during classes. They valued the embedded guidance, clear teacher prompts, and the flexibility to adjust content as needed. This combination of structured content and adaptable freedom was perceived as highly empowering, especially for those with limited prior classroom experience.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This community service project focused on implementing a digital technology-integrated English syllabus to support adaptive and interactive learning in community learning centers run by ISCO (Indonesian Street Children Organization). The program developed ten lesson plans for Grade 7 learners, covering monthly topics from January to December. Each lesson was designed to be simple, engaging, and accessible, using a communicative and values-based approach with low-tech teaching materials that can be used in limited-resource settings. Although classroom implementation is planned for the next phase, the materials were reviewed by ISCO tutors who will teach them. Their feedback showed that the lesson plans are well-structured, easy to use, and suitable for community-based education. Tutors also recommended improvements—such as adding ice breakers to more sessions and expanding examples of factual statements—which were included in the final revision. This project shows that a digital-supported, value-based English syllabus can be effectively designed for low-resource, informal education settings. It supports both student learning and tutor confidence, and serves as a model for other non-formal learning environments. The approach aligns with current research on digital learning, inclusive teaching, and character education (Bransford et al., 2000; Laurillard, 2020; Rerung & Hartono, 2020).

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