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## INVESTIGATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENGLISH ZONE AT ENGLISH DORMITORY IN DARUSSALAM ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL

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**ABSTRACT** The study investigates the implementation of the English Zone (EZ) in the English Dormitory at Darussalam Islamic Boarding School to enhance students' English-speaking skills. Given the global significance of English for communication, education, and professional success, particularly in non-native English-speaking countries like Indonesia, this research explores how an immersive language learning environment can facilitate language proficiency. The study focuses on the methods, strategies, challenges, and opportunities involved in creating an English-speaking zone, examining how structured rules, consistent practice, and supportive environments contribute to language development. The findings aim to provide insights into the effectiveness of the English Zone approach in promoting English language proficiency within a unique educational and cultural context, offering potential implications for similar language immersion programs.

**Keywords:** English Zone, Speaking Skills, Darussalam Boarding School, English Learning, Immersive Environment, Language Development.

**ABSTRAK** Penelitian ini menyelidiki penerapan English Zone (EZ) di Asrama Bahasa Inggris Pondok Pesantren Darussalam untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbahasa Inggris siswa. Mengingat pentingnya bahasa Inggris secara global bagi komunikasi, pendidikan, dan kesuksesan profesional, khususnya di negara-negara yang bukan penduduk asli berbahasa Inggris seperti Indonesia, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana lingkungan pembelajaran bahasa yang mendalam dapat memfasilitasi kemahiran berbahasa Inggris. Studi ini berfokus pada metode, strategi, tantangan, dan peluang yang terlibat dalam menciptakan zona berbahasa Inggris, mengkaji bagaimana aturan terstruktur, praktik yang konsisten, dan lingkungan yang mendukung berkontribusi terhadap perkembangan bahasa. Temuan ini bertujuan untuk memberikan wawasan mengenai efektivitas pendekatan Zona Bahasa Inggris dalam meningkatkan kemahiran bahasa Inggris dalam konteks pendidikan dan budaya yang unik, sehingga menawarkan implikasi potensial untuk program pembelajaran bahasa serupa.

**Kata Kunci:** English Zone, Keterampilan Berbicara, Pondok Pesantren Darussalam, Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, Lingkungan Immersive, Perkembangan Bahasa.

## INTRODUCTION

Language functions as a basic tool for communication. It is a means by which individuals convey thoughts, ideas, emotions, and information to each other. Through language, people exchange knowledge, express feelings, negotiate. Language, especially English, is considered an important tool for communication, education and professional success on a global scale. English has become the lingua franca in various fields such as business, science, technology and academia. Therefore, the ability to communicate fluently in English is highly valued and sought after in various parts of the world,

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including Indonesia. Language encompasses many forms, including spoken words, written texts, gestures, and even non-verbal cues such as body language and facial expressions. persuade, and engage in various forms of interaction. Furthermore, communication is a process where a person or several people, groups, organizations and society create and use information to establish relationships with the environment and other people (Kralova & Dolezelova, 2021). The fact that so many people speak English around the world means it has the potential to become a common language. Anyone who has English as their first language is lucky. because they already have control over the world through language. Knowing the concepts of a language is not just one aspect of learning it; You should also practice speaking and thinking in that language. Language users need to have language skills in order to communicate effectively. Therefore, it can be said that language skills are a must to be able to communicate correctly in English. Speaking, listening, reading and writing are four skills that a person must have if they want to learn English. The English Zone serves as an ideal solution to meet the need for continuous practice and create an environment that supports language development. In the English Zone, students are encouraged and, in many cases, required to communicate exclusively in English during their daily activities

By including English language areas in the curriculum, students are exposed to real life situations where they have to use English effectively. Whether it's engaging in conversations with peers, participating in group discussions, or even casual interactions in the English Zone, students are encouraged to apply what they've learned in class to authentic situations. Additionally, the English Zone helps break down psychological barriers that may hinder language development. This creates a safe and encouraging environment where students can experiment with the language, make mistakes, and learn from them without fear of judgment. This supportive atmosphere fosters self-confidence and motivates students to actively practice their language skills (Wiharno, 2016). The formation of an English-speaking zone in an English dormitory was motivated by several important factors. First, it is apparent that despite living in dormitories where learning English is mandatory, many members do not have the necessary English language skills. The gap between members' expected proficiency and actual skills highlights the urgent need for a structured approach to improving their English communication skills. Second, there are indications that some members are hesitant or reluctant to engage in English

conversation (Brodbeck & Simon, 2020). This reluctance stems from the absence of specific platforms or incentives that encourage and sometimes force them to use English regularly. Recognizing these challenges, it became clear that careful analysis was required to justify the creation of the UK Zone. This analysis underscores the importance of having rules and forums that aim to motivate and engage dorm members in speaking English consistently.

Considering the above context, researchers tend to conduct comprehensive research that focuses on the application of the English Zone method in English boarding schools with the aim of improving speaking skills. The English Language Zone program is emerging as an important subject of inquiry, primarily because of its potential to encourage increased participation in speaking activities and interactions among dorm members (Septiyana et al., 2020).

Through this research, the author aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the English Zone approach in a British Dormitory environment, seeking answers to important questions. In addition, this research aims to identify the application of the English Zone (EZ) in English conversations and activities in the dormitory environment. Second, to identify strategies for implementing the English Zone (EZ) in the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School English Language Dormitory. Finally, to identify challenges and opportunities during the implementation of the English Zone (EZ) in the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School English Language Dormitory. These challenges may include cultural, logistical or other contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of the UK Zone approach.

The decision to conduct further research with the title "Investigating the Implementation of the English Zone in the English Dormitory at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School" was motivated by several strong reasons. First, the concept of the English Language Zone has gained significant attention in recent years as a promising approach to enhancing language learning, particularly in immersive environments. However, its application in the unique context of dormitories, such as what happened at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School, is still relatively unexplored in the academic literature. This creates a knowledge gap that requires investigation to better understand the potential benefits and challenges associated with implementing UK Zones in such an environment.

Second, the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School presents a different cultural and educational context. The school's commitment to Islamic education, combined with its aspirations to increase English language proficiency, creates an interesting juxtaposition. Investigating the application of the English Language Zone in this setting offers an opportunity to explore the intersection between language learning, cultural dynamics, and pedagogical strategies. By conducting this research, we aim to explain how English Language Zones can be effectively adapted to meet the specific needs and goals of schools and their students, ultimately contributing to the broader discourse regarding language education and immersion programs.

## **THEORETICAL STUDY**

1. Oktaviany et al., (2019) To determine if the English Zone in English Language International Course can motivate students to speak English Descriptive method with observation, indirect communication, and questionnaires. Students of English for Youth level 3 in speaking class at English Language International Course. Eight students. 76.37% of students were highly motivated to speak in the English zone. Most students had instrumental motivation (43.21%) at a moderate level. Similar objective of investigating motivation through an English Zone. Different context and student level (English Language International Course).
2. Setyawati, M. S. (2019) To explore students' perceptions toward the English Zone at the English Study Program of IAIN Curup. Descriptive research with a questionnaire. Dataset All students in all semesters at the English Study Program of IAIN Curup Sample Size 37 students. Main Findings Majority of students had a positive perception of the English Zone. Similarities with the current research Both studies explore the English Zone Differences with the current research Different location and the focus on perception.
3. Laili & Nashir, (2019) Objective To integrate the English material in the curriculum of TPQ (Al -Qur'an Learning Center), so the students can know earlier about English as a global language The research method used is a qualitative method and methods used were drilling, flashcard, and songs in training and giving Basic English materials to the students Dataset Students at TPQ Al-Mataab - Tembokrejo - Muncar - Banyuwangi Sample Size Students class A (students aged 7 -10) and class B (students aged 11-14) The mean score result of class A showed the enhancement from 43.89 in pre test to

62.41 in posttest . While in class B the pre test result was 61.4 and in posttest increase into 71.6. It indicated that students are eager and excited in learning English and it is feasible and potential to be integrate d in TPQ curriculum Similarities with the current research Similar focus on the implementation English language to students Differences with the current research. Different location and research data collection techniques

4. Septiyana et al (2020) Objective To describe the implementation of English Zone (EZo) activities in learning English speaking skills for young learners. Methodology Qualitative descriptive study with observations and interviews. Dataset Young learners at Al-Fatimah Mosque, Kampung Sawah, West Hadimulyo. Sample Size Young learners. Main Findings EZo activities improved students' speaking skills, increased confidence, and reduced hesitation. Similar focus on the implementation and impact of the English Zone. Different age group (young learners)
5. Mulyadi et al., (2022) The aim of this research is to find out how the use of English is implemented among students and staff at the Sriwijaya State Polytechnic (English zone) The research method used is a qualitative method with data collection techniques used, namely: interviews, observation and documentation Dataset Students and all the staff at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic Sample Size Students and all the staff at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic. Based on the results of research that has been done regarding the implementation of the English zone (the use of English) at the Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya. So it can be concluded that from the 6 (six) root causes (Manpower, Machines, Methods, Materials, Media, Motivation). Similar focus on the implementation and impact of the English Zone. Different location and the focus on perception.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Research design entails the arrangement or framework of a research investigation, delineating the techniques and protocols to be employed in tackling the research queries or aims. It serves as a roadmap for executing the study, guaranteeing the systematic and credible gathering and examination of pertinent data (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018).

The researcher used a descriptive qualitative research design. The aim is to provide a clear picture by describing every data found in the research. This descriptive qualitative research produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words and observations of respondent behavior. The primary objective is to gain a deep and nuanced

understanding of how the English Zone is integrated into the daily lives of the students and its impact on their English language skills (Assarroudi et al., 2018).

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Implementation of the English Zone (EZ) in English Language Conversations and Activities within the Dormitory Setting**

The application of the English zone is considered very effective as a method of learning English for students. Therefore, a dormitory at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School implements an English zone in **students'** conversations and daily activities. This aims to familiarize students with using English and to make students more proficient in English conversation. The method for implementing the English zone in the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School dormitory is as follows:

1. Create a series of rules that everyone must obey

To create a good English language environment, there must be rules created in the dormitory environment. This regulation is in the form of an obligation to speak English not only to students but also to teachers, employees and other people who come to visit.

2. Manage time in English

Time is important in applying language because it is related to consistency.

3. Provide penalties for violations of regulations

In principle, punishment is created to deter someone. In implementing the English zone, a punishment is created to create discipline in implementing the English zone.

4. Provide instructions so that students practice frequently

Practice is one of the keys to success in various things, including language fluency. To improve English at the Darussalam dormitory, tutors and students often do exercises so that English pronunciation becomes more fluent. From the results of interviews conducted to improve students' language skills, the teacher provides instructions so that students often practice, either alone or in groups. The more often students practice a language, the more confidence they will have in speaking the language. so that in the dormitory the language used by students is other than English, students also use regional languages outside of the English zone implementation hours. The use of two mixed languages shows good

language skills. There are several studies that say using more than one language shows the ability to multitask or do many things at one time. Other research also finds that being able to speak more than one language allows a person to make choices more rationally. Another study also revealed that mastering more than one language makes a person more sensitive to the environment

#### **B. Strategies to Implement the English Zone (EZ) in the English Dormitory at Islamic Darussalam Boarding School**

The language environment is the overall condition that allows language learners to get various input about the language they want to learn. The environment greatly influences the understanding of a second language. The English speaking zone is an area for communicating verbally using English. Everyone within the English zone must speak English. To implement this, a mature strategy is certainly needed.

Strategy is a plan carried out by someone in managing an organization or with the aim of achieving the goals of establishing the organization. Strategy is one measure of the success of a planned agenda. In implementing the English zone, of course there are strategies created so that the implementation of the English zone runs smoothly and smoothly. The strategies implemented by the dormitory at Islamic Boarding School are as follows:

##### **1. Approach students and teachers**

Based on the results of interviews conducted with tutors, it was stated that to implement the English zone, one of the strategies carried out by the hostel was to approach students. The approach is carried out by the teacher coming to the students and then inviting the students to talk. Not only students there, there is also an approach to the teacher, namely by students going to the teacher if they want to ask about a sentence they don't know how to pronounce.

##### **2. Provide vocabulary for objects in the dormitory**

One strategy in the English zone in the dormitory is to give students vocabulary related to objects around them. They discuss basic vocabulary first. And if they already know all the things they encounter in the dorms, we need to change as we do in normal conversations between teachers and students. So we guide them first, a student approach. We approach students, how they get a lot of vocabulary so they can explain what they want to say.

3. The teacher reminds students to always speak English

Based on the results of interviews related to the strategy for implementing the English zone in the Darussalam dormitory with students, it was found that one of the strategies carried out by tutors to implement the English zone in the Darussalam dormitory was to guide and support students in speaking English. Teachers always remind students to speak English. When students forget to speak English, students will receive punishment.

4. Restrict students from using regional languages

One of the strategies used to implement the English zone is to restrict students from using in Indonesian or regional languages besides English. Students in basic classes are limited to only using 3 Indonesian words. Intermediate classes are limited to only using a maximum of 2 Indonesian words. Meanwhile, advanced classes are limited to a maximum of only one word.

**C. Challenges and Opportunities during the Implementation of the English Zone (EZ) in the English Dormitory at Islamic Darussalam Boarding School**

In an era marked by rapid globalization, English is emerging as a lingua franca in international communication, business, science and technology. The ability to speak English has become a key determinant of success, opening doors to higher education, employment, and cross-cultural collaboration. Therefore, educational institutions around the world have placed great emphasis on English language education to equip students with the skills and competencies necessary to thrive in an interconnected world.

This makes many schools and boarding schools run language development programs. Carrying out an activity certainly requires support from various parties so that the activity runs perfectly. However, it is not uncommon for there to be obstacles in the process of carrying it out that make the process not run smoothly. Based on the results of interviews conducted, there are many supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing the English zone in the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School English Language Dormitory. The opportunities generated in implementing the English zone strategy are as follows:



1. Vocabulary

The supporting factor in implementing this strategy is vocabulary. The more students master vocabulary, the easier it will be for students to master English. Vocabulary is one of the main determinants when you want to communicate with other people.

2. Motivation

Keeping students motivated to learn English can be an uphill battle for teachers. Many students do not feel or see the direct use or relevance of English language skills in their lives. In implementing the strategies carried out so far, students look enthusiastic and motivated.

3. Supporting Activities

Apart from the strategies implemented above, to increase students' interest the teacher also holds games such as charades. Guessing words is sometimes done between students and teachers, and between students and strangers who are invited to the dormitory environment.

This is also in accordance with statements from other tutors who stated that the supporting factors for implementing this strategy are vocabulary, games and also punishment.

“Of course showing facilities like books for vocabulary, game, and also punishment”

Apart from the supporting factors, there are also inhibiting factors which become obstacles to the successful implementation of the English zone strategy in the Darussalam Islamic boarding school dormitory. The inhibiting factors are:

1. Individual factors

If everyone lacks self-awareness in implementing the rules then these regulations will be in vain. The results of interviews conducted with tutors showed that one of the inhibiting factors was each member's lack of self-awareness regarding the regulations that had been made. This is because students feel bored with the existing rules.

2. Monitoring Factor

Based on the results of interviews conducted with teachers, it was found that one of the influencing factors in implementing the English zone

was because students were not well controlled. Many teachers and tutors still let children use their respective regional languages.

3. Environmental Factor

Students are not in the dormitory for 24 hours, many students also carry out activities outside. The activities carried out by the students do not necessarily use English. Sometimes students outside use language freely so that it becomes one of the understanding factors in implementing the English zone

These challenges must of course be avoided so that the implementation of the English zone can run smoothly. There are several ways to overcome this challenge, including:

1. Hold a meeting with tutors

To overcome the problems that arise in implementing the English zone, the hostel holds a meeting of all tutors once every 2 weeks. The meeting will discuss problems that arise and steps to resolve them.

2. Hold a meeting with students

This meeting with students will discuss the difficulties that students may face. If they have difficulty with vocabulary then they will hold a meeting to learn vocabulary and they must have at least 5 to 10 vocabularies. If it is not carried out, punishment will be given.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

1. English is an important language to master because English is an international language and is part of the mandatory curriculum at the education level. Many educational institutions create English zone implementation programs with the aim of developing students' abilities, one of which is the English zone. The implementation of the English zone at the Dormitory Darussalam Islamic Boarding School is carried out in several ways, namely first, making a series of rules that everyone must obey. Rules were created to be obeyed by everyone in the dormitory, from teachers, students to dormitory tutors. Second, set the time for speaking English, in implementing the English zone in the dormitory starting from dawn to dusk. This aims to ensure that they have more time to speak English, thirdly, to provide punishment for violations of regulations. In principle,

punishment is created to deter someone. In implementing the English zone, a punishment is created to create discipline in implementing the English zone. Fourt, provide instructions so that students practice frequently.

2. The strategy implemented by the dormitory at Islamic Boarding School is as follows: Approaching students and teachers. The approach is carried out by the teacher coming to the students and then inviting the students to talk. Not only students there, there is also an approach to the teacher, namely by students going to the teacher if they want to ask about a sentence that they don't yet know how to pronounce. Second, provide vocabulary for objects in the dormitory. Third, the teacher reminds students to always speak English. Fourth, restrict students from using regional languages. One of the strategies used to implement the English zone is to limit students from reading in Indonesian or other languages besides English. Students in basic classes are limited to only using 3 Indonesian words. Intermediate classes are limited to only using a maximum of 2 Indonesian words. Meanwhile, advanced classes are limited to a maximum of only one word.
3. Supporting factors in implementing the English zone in the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School English Dormitory. in implementing the English zone strategy as follows: first, vocabulary, the more students master vocabulary, the easier it will be for students to master English. Second, motivation, maintaining students' motivation to learn English can be an uphill battle for teachers. Many students do not feel or see the direct use or relevance of English language skills in their lives. Third, supporting activities. Meanwhile, the challenges faced in implementing the English zone in Islamic boarding school dormitories: first, individual factor. If everyone lacks self-awareness in implementing the rules then these regulations will be in vain. Second, monitoring factor, many teachers and tutors still allow children to use their respective regional languages. Third, environmental factor, students are not in the dormitory for 24 hours, many students also carry out activities outside. The activities carried out by the students do not necessarily use English.

## A. Suggestions

### 1. For Teachers

It is hoped that teachers will always guide and direct students to participate in all learning well. Teachers do not only provide theoretical lessons but also good attitudes and exemplify them directly every day with the aim that students can model good attitudes, behavior and words.

### 2. For Students

It is hoped that students will follow every lesson that has been carried out with enthusiasm and participate in school activities with discipline. This aims to ensure that students can absorb the knowledge provided to the maximum.

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