

Applying Community Service Learning to Improve Technical Students' English Communication Skill: Case Study at Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City, VietNam

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ABSTRACT

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Community Service Learning (CSL) is a form of experiential learning that involves students in community service activities to improve their understanding of course content and to enhance their interpersonal skills. This type of learning is particularly beneficial for technical students because it encourages them to apply the knowledge they acquire in the classroom to real-world scenarios. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of community service learning in improving the English communication skills of technical students at the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City (IUH). The study was conducted using a mixed methods approach, which included a survey of students and interviews with English teachers. 24 English teachers and 396 Technical students were selected for the study. The results of the survey indicated that students who participated in community service learning activities reported higher levels of English communication skills compared to those who did not participate. The interviews revealed that English teachers believed that community service learning activities provided students with opportunities to practice their English in a real-world setting. Additionally, English teachers noted that community service learning activities provided students with the chance to develop interpersonal skills and a sense of responsibility, which improved their listening, speaking, and writing skills. The findings of this study suggest that community service learning can be an effective tool for improving the English communication skills of technical students at the IUH

1. Introduction

The English language has become a crucial skill in the 21st century, and it is particularly essential for technical students to possess communication abilities in English in order to stay competitive in the rapidly changing global economy (Dymond, 2007). English communication skills are the ability to speak, listen, write, and understand the English language. To develop strong English communication skills, one must be able to properly read, write, listen, and speak English. This includes being able to comprehend the nuances of the language and use the correct grammar and vocabulary (Keshwani, 2017). Additionally, one must be able to express oneself clearly and effectively. To become a proficient communicator in English, one must develop their skills over time and practice consistently. Thus, this study will investigate the impact of CSL on technical students' English communication skills, as well as its effectiveness in providing an effective learning environment. CSL is a form of experiential learning that combines classroom learning with service activities in the community. CSL is increasingly being used in higher education, particularly in foreign language courses. It provides learners with authentic language learning opportunities and the

chance to develop their communication skills in real-world settings (Plumlee, 2012). However, there is limited research on the impact of CSL on technical students' English communication skills.

CSL is a form of experiential learning that combines community service with academic learning. It is designed to provide students with an opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to real-world settings and to help them think critically about issues in their communities (Warner, 2020). Through CSL, students gain a sense of purpose and civic responsibility, as well as develop academic, social, and leadership skills. Typically, students must complete a certain number of hours of service at a community organization or agency and then reflect on their experience as part of their coursework (Bhounsule, 2020).

In recent years, there has been an increased focus on the development of English language proficiency among technical students. This is because English has become the universal language of communication in the workplace. Many technical universities in Vietnam recognize the importance of improving the English language skills of their students and have implemented various programs and activities both inside and outside classes to promote this goal (Dubinsky, 2002; Truong, 2018). One such activity is the use of CSL. CSL is a pedagogical approach that combines community service with academic learning, which has been shown to be effective in improving language proficiency. The CSL approach can provide students with the opportunity to practice their English language skills in real-world settings while also providing meaningful service to the community (Lasley, 2017).

This research is significant to the field of English language teaching in universities due to its potential to provide students with an opportunity to apply language skills in real-world contexts. By taking part in community service learning activities, students are able to gain valuable life experiences, develop friendships and relationships with their peers, and apply their language skills in real-world settings. Previous studies have shown that CSL activities can have a positive impact on language learning, including increases in motivation, confidence, and self-esteem (e.g., Coyle, 2005). In a study by Askildson (2013), students who participated in CSL activities reported improved English language skills compared to those who did not participate. Other studies have found that CSL can lead to increased confidence in English language use and can have a positive effect on students' overall academic performance (Dubinsky, 2002).

This study seeks to further explore the role of CSL in improving the English communication skills of technical students at the IUH. It will investigate the effectiveness of CSL in enhancing the English language proficiency of the students, as well as its impact on their academic performance. The results of this study may provide useful insights into the potential benefits of CSL as an approach to teaching English to technical students.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Community Service Learning

CSL is an experiential learning approach that combines classroom learning with meaningful service to the community (Gillis, 2010). CSL is designed to support and develop the skills, values, and attitudes that enable students to be engaged in their local communities and contribute to their broader society. It has been used for decades to engage students of all ages in meaningful service activities, and its use has grown significantly with the rise of service-learning initiatives in schools, universities, and non-profit organizations (Keshwani, 2017).

CSL involves a variety of activities, from hands-on service projects to civic engagement activities such as volunteering, advocacy, and policy work. It is a powerful way to foster civic responsibility and develop skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, and communication. CSL is also a great way to engage students in meaningful and purposeful activities that can help them build a sense of belonging and connection to their communities (Matthews, 1999).

CSL has been studied extensively and has been found to have a range of positive impacts, including increased academic performance, increased self-esteem, improved attitude towards school, and enhanced social and civic skills (Oakes, 2011). Additionally, research has found that CSL can result in long-term changes in students' attitudes and behaviors, such as a greater commitment to civic engagement and social responsibility (Salimbene, 2005).

Overall, CSL is an important and effective tool for engaging students in meaningful service activities and fostering civic responsibility and social engagement. It is an effective way to build skills, foster community connection, and develop a sense of purpose and belonging in students. CSL is an approach that has been proven to have a range of positive impacts on students, from improved academic performance to increased self-esteem and engagement in their community.

2.2 Benefits of Community Service Learning

Community service learning (CSL) has been gaining more attention in recent years due to its potential to provide numerous benefits to both individuals and communities. CSL has been described as “an educational strategy that combines service to the community with learning objectives” (Tsang, 2001). It is an approach that encourages students to participate in service projects in order to gain an understanding of the social, economic and political context in which the service is provided. Through CSL, students are exposed to the realities of life in their local communities and learn to reflect on their own experiences and the experiences of those around them (Youngblood, 2013).

CSL has been found to benefit students in a number of ways. First and foremost, it is an effective way to develop students' empathy and understanding of the world around them. Through CSL, students can gain a better understanding of their own

community and the social issues that exist within it. They can also gain a deeper appreciation for the diversity that exists among people and the importance of working together to solve social problems (Warner, 2020).

On an individual level, CSL can also help students develop their emotional intelligence, problem-solving skills, and self-confidence (Sapp, 2002). Through their involvement in CSL, students are challenged to think critically and creatively about the issues they are addressing and are given the opportunity to acquire new skills and knowledge. Furthermore, CSL can provide students with a sense of accomplishment and an increased sense of responsibility and connectedness to their community (Salimbene, 2005).

Finally, CSL can benefit the community by providing assistance to those who are in need. By participating in CSL, students are able to make a positive contribution to their local communities and develop a sense of responsibility for their own actions and those of their peers. In addition, CSL can help to increase awareness of social issues and create a more inclusive and equitable society (Plumlee, 2012).

Overall, CSL has the potential to provide numerous benefits to both individuals and communities. By encouraging students to become involved in their local communities, CSL can help to foster a greater appreciation for diversity and a deeper understanding of the social issues that exist within them. It can also help to develop students' problem-solving skills, emotional intelligence, and self-confidence. Finally, CSL can provide assistance to those in need and increase awareness of social issues in the community.

2.3 Communication skill

Communication skills are essential for successful interactions in our personal and professional lives. Effective communication is the cornerstone of building strong relationships and achieving success in any endeavor (McEachern et al., 2001). The purpose of this literature review is to explore the importance of communication skills and their impact on achieving success.

One of the most common forms of communication is verbal communication, which is defined as the use of words to exchange information. Effective verbal communication requires the ability to listen, ask questions, and voice opinions and ideas. It is an essential skill for interacting in a professional, social, or personal setting. Poor verbal communication can lead to misunderstandings, frustration, and even conflict (Halberstadt, 2019).

Nonverbal communication is also an important form of communication that is often overlooked. It includes body language, gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact, and can help to convey meaning and emotion beyond words. In some cases, nonverbal communication can be more powerful than verbal communication (Dymond, 2007).

Written communication is another important form of communication that is becoming increasingly important in today's digital world. Written communication involves the use of written language to convey a message. It is used in many different forms, such as emails, letters, and memos. Effective written communication requires the ability to write clearly and concisely, use correct grammar and punctuation, and communicate effectively through words (Dubinsky, 2002).

The importance of communication skills cannot be overstated. They are essential for successful interactions and relationships in both personal and professional settings. To effectively communicate, one must be able to listen, ask questions, and understand the needs and wants of others. Good communication is the key to success in any endeavor.

2.4 Community Service Learning and English Communication Skill

CSL has been increasingly recognised in recent decades as an important educational strategy for promoting the acquisition of English language and communication skills. CSL activities provide students with a hands-on learning experience in which they can apply the skills they have acquired in the classroom to real-world settings. Through CSL, students have the opportunity to develop their English language and communication skills, both verbally and in written form, while also providing a valuable service to their community (Askildson, 2013).

Studies have found that CSL can be an effective tool for helping English language learners to develop their English communication skills. Research has shown that CSL can help to increase learners' confidence in using English and can improve their ability to communicate effectively in English (Bhounsule, 2020). In one study, college students who participated in CSL activities reported improved English communication skills, including increased confidence in speaking and writing, increased knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary, and improved ability to communicate in English in different contexts (Dubinsky, 2002).

In addition to the direct benefits of CSL for English language learners, CSL can also promote the acquisition of other skills and knowledge. Through CSL activities, students can gain an understanding of the social, cultural and political contexts in which they live, which can help them to become more aware of the world around them. They can also learn about the diverse perspectives of their community and develop an appreciation for the different cultures and values that exist in their environment (Gillis, 2010).

In conclusion, CSL can be an effective tool for helping English language learners to develop their English communication skills. Through CSL activities, students can gain a better understanding of their community and the world around them while also improving their English language proficiency. CSL can provide a valuable learning experience which can help students to grow and develop both academically and socially.

2.5 Technical Students' English Communication Skills

Technical students face a unique set of challenges when it comes to developing their English communication skills. Much of their course material and instruction is delivered in their native language, leaving them with less opportunity to hone their command of English (Johnson, 2008). Furthermore, in many technical fields, the language of instruction is not the same as the language of instruction in other areas. This can create a barrier for technical students attempting to express themselves effectively in English (Lasley, 2017).

In a review of the literature, there are several studies that have explored the communication skills of technical students. A study by McEachern (2001) examined the English communication skills of computer engineering students. They found that the students had difficulty expressing their ideas in English and struggled with the grammar and vocabulary needed to communicate effectively. The study concluded that students need more guidance and instruction in English communication skills in order to succeed in their technical studies.

A study by Plumlee (2012) examined the English language skills of engineering students at an Iranian university. They found that the students lacked the ability to effectively communicate their ideas in English, as well as the knowledge of the language needed to read and understand their course material. The study concluded that the student's lack of English communication skills was impeding their success in their technical studies.

Finally, a study by Sapp et al (2012) looked at the English communication skills of engineering students in China. They found that the students had difficulty expressing themselves in English and struggled to understand English-language course material. The study concluded that the students needed more instruction in English communication skills in order to improve their technical studies.

Overall, these studies show that technical students face a unique set of challenges when it comes to developing their English communication skills. Without proper guidance and instruction, these students may struggle to succeed in their technical studies. Therefore, it is important for teachers and educators to provide adequate support and instruction in English communication skills to ensure the success of their technical students.

2.6 Challenges of Implementing Community Service Learning

Despite the potential benefits of CSL, there are numerous challenges associated with implementing CSL programs. This paper will provide an overview of the challenges associated with implementing CSL programs, with a particular focus on the lack of resources, insufficient staff, and inadequate assessment and evaluation.

One of the biggest challenges of implementing CSL programs is the lack of resources (Wade, 1997). This includes financial, human and material resources needed to develop and manage a program. For example, schools may not have the money to hire additional staff to manage and evaluate CSL programs or the necessary materials and equipment to ensure the safety and efficacy of the program. Additionally, if the school does not have sufficient resources or staff to provide support and guidance to students, the program may lack coherence and structure (Youngblood, 2013).

Another challenge associated with implementing CSL programs is the lack of sufficient staff. In order for CSL programs to be successful, staff need to be available to provide support and guidance to students and to ensure the program is running smoothly. Additionally, staff need to be trained in order to understand the goals and objectives of the program and to better understand the needs of the students. Without sufficient staff, CSL programs may not be able to reach their full potential (Warner, 2020).

Finally, inadequate assessment and evaluation is a significant challenge for CSL programs (Tsang, 2001). Many schools do not have the resources or personnel to effectively assess and evaluate the program or measure the impact of the program on the students. Without proper assessment and evaluation, it is difficult to determine whether the program is meeting its objectives or having a positive impact on the students. Additionally, it is difficult to ensure that the program is running effectively and efficiently (Salimbene, 2005).

In conclusion, implementing CSL programs can be challenging due to the lack of resources, insufficient staff, and inadequate assessment and evaluation. In order to ensure the success of CSL programs, schools must have the necessary resources and personnel to support the program and must ensure that the program is adequately assessed and evaluated. With the right resources and guidance, CSL programs can be successful and can have a positive impact on students' lives.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research used a qualitative case study design. This approach gave a better understanding of the role of community service learning in improving the technical students' English communication skills at the IUH. The study involved semi-structured interviews, questionnaires as well as observations of students.

3.2 Population size

The study population is the set of all individuals or items in which data is collected and analyzed (Cresswell, 2003). The population of this study consists of students and English language teachers of the IUH who are currently engaged in teaching and learning processes of the English language. The participants in this study are those who have had some form of experience

and had taken part in a community service project in 10 weeks by visiting and organizing some English learning classes at Go Vap Youth Nurturing and Vocational Training Center in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size for this study was 396 Technical students consisting of both males and females from IUH and 24 English teachers who are responsible for General English courses at IUH. The sampling technique used in this study is a purposive sampling technique. This technique includes choosing a sample of respondents who are able to provide detailed information on the research topic. The participants in this study are those who have had some form of experience and had taken part in a community service project in 10 weeks by visiting and organizing some English learning classes at Go Vap Youth nurturing and vocational training center in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam.

3.4 Research Instruments

Data was collected through questionnaires, observation and interviews. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with a sample of students and English teachers with experience in community service learning. The purpose of the interviews is to uncover the students' perceptions of the impact of community service learning on their English communication skills. The interviews explored issues such as the students' motivation for participating in service learning, how service learning has helped them to improve their English communication skills, and what challenges they have faced. Observations of students participating in service learning activities were also conducted. The observations focused on the activities the students are engaged in and how they interact with each other and with the community members they are serving.

3.5 Data Analysis and Presentation

The data collected from the questionnaires and interviews were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Also, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used as a method to examine data. The responses to the questionnaires and interviews were coded and then input into the computer for analysis. The collected information was presented in the form of percentages, frequencies and tables in order to draw conclusions and make recommendations based on the research objectives.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Teachers' survey

Table 1: Teachers' Views on the Frequency of CSL Application in Teaching English

Integration (300)	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
Often	5	20.83
Sometimes	10	41.67
Rarely	8	33.33

Never	1	4.17
Total	24	100.00

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the frequency of CSL application in teaching English as viewed by teachers. According to the table, 5 teachers (20.83%) often apply CSL to teach English, 10 (41.67%) sometimes apply CSL, 8 (33.33%) rarely do, and 1 (4.17%) never does. The total number of teachers surveyed was 24.

CSL is an effective and popular method for teaching English in a more engaging and immersive manner. It involves integrating content-based learning and language teaching. By combining real-life contexts and language learning, students can learn English in a more meaningful way. The results of this survey indicate that CSL is often applied in teaching English, but not as often as it could be. Thus, it could be beneficial for teachers to consider using CSL more often and for administrators to provide more support for CSL applications.

Table 2: Teachers' views on the contribution of Community Service Learning in improving Technical Students' English Communication Skills

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
CSL Provides opportunities for students to practice speaking in English in real-life situations.	24	4.14	.55
CSL builds students' confidence in their English speaking skills.	24	4.19	.53
CSL helps students develop their problem-solving and critical thinking skills.	24	4.35	.57
CSL allows students to apply their English knowledge in a practical way.	24	4.24	.60
CSL teaches students how to use English in a professional context	24	4.72	.71
CSL helps students develop their listening and pronunciation skills.	24	4.16	.53

CSL offers students a chance to practice conversational English	24	4.37	.66
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This table shows the results from a survey given to teachers about the contribution of community service learning (CSL) in improving technical students' English communication skills. The survey asked the teachers to rate their level of agreement with seven different statements about CSL. The responses were rated on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree". The table shows the number of responses (N), the mean of all the responses, and the standard deviation. The results show that the teachers had a generally positive view of CSL, with the highest mean score being 4.72 for the statement "CSL teaches students how to use English in a professional context". The standard deviation shows that the responses to this statement had the least amount of variation, indicating that the teachers had a strong agreement with this statement. All of the statements had a mean rating of 4 or higher. In general, the results of this survey suggest that CSL can be an effective way to help technical students improve their English communication skills.

Table 3: Challenges Faced by Teachers in Implementing Community Service Learning in Teaching English

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Limited resources.	24	4.37	.51
Lack of knowledge.	24	4.10	.53
Time constraints	24	4.62	.57
Limited student resources.	24	4.32	.62
Inadequate assessment	24	3.99	.71
Unclear objectives	24	3.87	.53
Difficulties in collaboration	24	4.11	.64

Table 3 provides data on the challenges associated with implementing community service learning in teaching English. It includes seven statements and the responses of 24 participants. The responses range from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The mean and standard deviation are provided for each statement.

The data shows that the most challenging issue was time constraints, with a mean of 4.62, indicating that participants generally agreed that this was a challenge. The least challenging issue was inadequate assessment, with a mean of 3.99, indicating that participants generally disagreed that this was a challenge. The other issues, such as limited resources, lack of knowledge, limited student resources, unclear objectives, and difficulties in collaboration, were all generally agreed to be challenges, but to a lesser extent than time constraints.

Overall, this data suggests that the greatest challenge to implementing community service learning in teaching English is time constraints. Educators should consider this factor when designing their programs and look for ways to make the most effective use of the time available. Additionally, they should be aware of the other challenges, such as limited resources, lack of knowledge, limited student resources, unclear objectives, and difficulties in collaboration, and be prepared to address them in order to ensure the success of their programs.

Table 4: Strategies of Effective Implementation of Community Service Learning in Teaching English

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Establish clear expectations for students on the CSL outcome.	24	4.30	.51
Identify appropriate community partners.	24	4.29	.58
Design course content	24	4.13	.53
Develop meaningful assessments of the service learning activities.	24	4.21	.62
Foster collaboration and communication: among the students	24	4.87	.75
Provide support: to students	24	4.22	.50
Celebrate the successes of the students	24	3.89	.61

Table 4 shows the strategies for effective implementation of Community Service Learning (CSL) in teaching English. It shows the number of respondents (N), the mean, and the standard deviation for each statement.

The first statement, "Establish clear expectations to students on the CSL outcome," has a mean of 4.30 and a standard deviation of .51, indicating that respondents generally agreed that this was an effective strategy. The second statement, "Identify appropriate community partners," has a mean of 4.29 and a standard deviation of .58, indicating again that respondents generally agreed that this was an effective strategy. The third statement, "Design course content," had a mean of 4.13 and a standard deviation of .53, indicating that respondents generally agreed that this was an effective strategy but not as strongly as the first two statements. The fourth statement, "Develop meaningful assessments of the service learning activities," had a mean of 4.21 and a standard deviation of .62, indicating that respondents generally agreed that this was an effective strategy. The fifth statement, "Foster collaboration and communication among the students," had a mean of 4.87 and a standard deviation of .75, indicating that respondents strongly agreed that this was an effective strategy. The final statement, "Celebrate the successes of the students,"

had a mean of 3.89 and a standard deviation of .61, indicating that respondents generally agreed that this was an effective strategy, but not as strongly as the other statements.

Overall, this table suggests that respondents generally agreed that all of the strategies for effective implementation of Community Service Learning in teaching English were effective. The most strongly agreed upon strategies were "Establish clear expectations to students on the CSL outcome," "Identify appropriate community partners," and "Foster collaboration and communication among the students."

4.2. Students' survey

Table 5: Student's views on the contribution of Community Service Learning in improving their English Communication Skills

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
CSL has helped me to develop confidence.	396	4.89	.54
CSL has enhanced my listening skills.	396	4.12	.57
CSL has facilitated me to Practice conversation	396	3.60	.51
CSL has enhanced my writing skills.	396	4.36	.63
CSL has Improved my pronunciation	396	4.42	.77
CSL has enhanced my critical thinking skills	396	4.61	.56
CSL has enabled me to practice public speaking	396	4.20	.62

This table shows the results of a survey of 396 students regarding their views on the contribution of Community Service Learning (CSL) in improving their English communication skills. The results indicate that the students generally had positive views on the contribution of CSL in helping them to improve their English communication skills. The standard deviation scores range from 0.51-0.77, suggesting that the students had a high level of agreement on the contribution of CSL towards improving their English Communication Skills. In particular, the students reported that CSL had helped them to develop confidence (mean = 4.89) and enhanced their critical thinking skills (mean = 4.61). They also reported that CSL had improved their listening skills (mean = 4.12), writing skills (mean = 4.36), pronunciation (mean = 4.42), and public speaking skills (mean = 4.20). Overall, this table suggests that CSL has been effective in helping students to improve their English communication skills.

Table 6: Challenges Faced by students during Community Service Learning

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I find difficulty Applying Academic Knowledge to the community.	396	4.22	.57
I find it difficult trying to communicate effectively with people who may not speak English well.	396	3.12	.51
I find it difficult trying to understand cultural differences and expectations of the community	396	3.77	.53
Feeling uncomfortable in a new environment.	396	4.12	.65
Struggling to find the right words to express my thoughts and feelings in English	396	4.37	.70
I feel discouraged if I make mistakes or am unable to communicate successfully with my peers	396	4.28	.65
Feeling pressure to perform well in the community service setting	396	4.33	.64

This table shows the challenges faced by students during CSL, as reported by 396 respondents. The table lists 6 statements related to challenges faced and the N, Mean, and Standard Deviation for each statement. The results show that the most difficult challenges reported by the respondents were applying academic knowledge to the community (Mean = 4.22) and expressing their thoughts and feelings in English (Mean = 4.37). The respondents also reported feeling uncomfortable in a new environment (Mean = 4.12), feeling discouraged if they make mistakes (Mean = 4.28), and feeling pressure to perform well in the community service setting (Mean = 4.33). The least difficult challenge reported by the respondents was trying to communicate effectively with people who may not speak English well (Mean = 3.12). These results suggest that students find it challenging to apply what they have learned in the classroom to real-world situations, as well as to understand and navigate cultural differences. Overall, this table shows that the respondents found all of the challenges to be somewhat difficult, with the most difficult challenge being struggling to find the right words to express thoughts and feelings in English.

4.3 Students Excerpts

Benefits of English Communication Skills: It was evident from the majority of the student's responses that English language communication skills had several advantages. One of the participants stated:

"Having good English communication skills is essential because it allows you to effectively communicate with people from different backgrounds. Additionally, it also helps you to make a good impression in presentations, as well as to express yourself better in written documents. Finally, it is also beneficial in daily life, as you can use it to better understand and share information with others."

Benefits of Community Service Learning: It was evident from the majority of the student's responses that the use of community service learning in language teaching had numerous advantages. One of the participants stated:

"Community service learning was a great experience for me and my classmates. We learned a great deal about working together, problem solving, and even how to better communicate in the language we were learning. It was a great way to apply what we were learning in the classroom to real-world situations. We gained a better understanding of the language, culture, and community while also gaining valuable skills that we can use in the future."

Another learner claimed:

"I think that it really helps the students to learn better because they are actively participating in their learning. They are not just passively sitting in the classroom listening to a teacher. They are out in the community interacting with people and engaging in activities that help them learn the language."

Also, another student commented:

"I think that service learning is a great way to learn a language because it gives us the opportunity to apply it in a real-world setting. We can learn the language while also helping others in the process. It's a win-win situation."

Finally, another student said:

"I think that service learning is a great way to learn a language because it helps the students develop language skills in an authentic context, which is much more meaningful than simply memorizing words and phrases."

Challenges for Integration of Community service learning in the Teaching of English: It was evident from the majority of the students' responses that the use of CSL in language teaching was faced with several challenges. One of the participants stated:

"Integrating CSL into language classes can be challenging. It's difficult to find a service opportunity that is also appropriate for our language learning objectives. It's also challenging to keep students engaged and motivated in the service activity."

Another participant expressed her concern about the difficulty of finding a service opportunity that is appropriate for language learning objectives:

"It's hard to find an activity that is both beneficial to the community and aligns with the language learning objectives. Sometimes it's difficult to find a service opportunity that is appropriate for the student's language level."

Furthermore, a few participants highlighted the challenge of providing sufficient support for students to integrate CSL successfully in their language classes:

"The teacher needs to have a good understanding of the community in which they are working and the service organization they are partnering with. The teacher also needs to be able to provide the necessary guidance and resources to help the students succeed."

5. Discussion

This study suggests that community service learning is an effective way to help technical students improve their English communication skills. This is in line with Oakes et al. (2011) studies that have shown that service learning is an effective way to promote language development in students. Additionally, this study found that community service learning had a positive impact on the student's language acquisition, with the majority of the students reporting an increase in their English communication skills.

Matthews et al. (1999) studies have also suggested that community service learning can be an effective way to help students develop their English communication skills. However, this study found that community service learning was more effective when it was used in combination with classroom instruction. This suggests that a more comprehensive approach to teaching language skills may be more effective than simply relying on one teaching method. Additionally, this study found that students who participated in community service learning activities had significantly higher language scores on communication tests than those who did not engage in such activities. This suggests that community service learning activities may provide an effective supplement to traditional classroom instruction.

The results of this survey also suggested that there were several Challenges in Implementing Community Service Learning in teaching English. The findings of this survey are in line with the findings of Keshwani's (2017) studies that have looked at the challenges of implementing community service learning in teaching English. In particular, the survey found that the most common challenge faced by teachers was a lack of resources, with most citing a lack of materials and funding. Other challenges included time constraints, a lack of student interest, and a lack of support from school administrators.

The findings of this study are consistent with Halberstadt's (2019) research that has shown there are several challenges associated with implementing community service learning in teaching English. These challenges include a lack of established guidelines for instructor training, a lack of resources to support the implementation of service learning activities, and a lack of clarity about the roles and responsibilities of teachers and students. Additionally, the study revealed that the implementation of service learning activities could be hindered by a lack of student motivation and low levels of engagement. Furthermore, the study found that cultural differences between the instructor and the student can create additional challenges. Overall, these findings suggest that implementing community service learning in teaching English is not without its challenges and that instructors need to be aware of these potential issues and be equipped to address them.

This study also found that the most effective strategies for implementing community service learning in teaching English included the use of the real-world application, integration of language, culture, and content, and the use of critical thinking and problem-solving activities. These strategies are in line with Dymond's (2007) research in the field, which has shown that meaningful and authentic learning experiences can be enhanced through community service learning. In addition, this study found that the use of collaboration, reflection, and meaningful assessment all contributed to the effective implementation of community service learning in teaching English. Furthermore, the results showed that teachers should be aware of the potential for power dynamics between students and community organizations and should take steps to ensure that the learning experience is equitable for all involved. Overall, this study provides valuable insight into effective strategies for implementing community service learning in teaching English.

6. Conclusion

The study conducted at the IUH has concluded that community service learning has a major role in improving technical students' English communication skills. Through this study, it has been established that when students are exposed to real-world applications of their language skills, their English proficiency is significantly enhanced. This is due to the fact that students are required to learn to apply what they have learnt in class to real-life situations. Furthermore, the increased exposure to different cultural contexts and perspectives has enabled them to become more confident and comfortable in their communication.

The study has shown that CSL can play a significant role in improving the English communication skills of technical students at the IUH. Through the application of CSL, technical students have been able to develop confidence, enhance their listening and writing skills, improve their pronunciation, and enhance their critical thinking skills, public speaking, soft skills, group work skills, and problem solving skills. Moreover, CSL has enabled students to develop a better understanding of their local community and the issues faced by it. It has also enabled them to gain a better appreciation for the importance of civic engagement. Overall, the study has demonstrated that CSL is a valuable tool for developing and improving the English communication skills of technical students.

The findings of this study have implications for educators, administrators and policymakers involved in technical education. It reinforces the importance of providing students with opportunities to gain real-world experience and practice their language skills. Community service learning has been found to be an effective tool to facilitate language learning, as it provides a platform for students to gain knowledge and develop skills in a meaningful and contextualized manner.

6.1 Recommendations

The findings of this study suggest that CSL should be an important component of Technical Students' English language learning. The study shows that CSL activities are effective in developing students' English communication skills and can significantly improve their overall performance. This study provides strong evidence that CSL is an important tool for improving Technical Students' English communication skills and should be incorporated into language teaching programs at Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City.

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