

PIERS

Project to Improve English in Rural Schools



Disediakan oleh:

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PIERS was carried out to plant the seeds of confidence and motivation to acquire English among students from rural schools by engaging them in group efforts. The program was carried out in four secondary schools in the district of Kuala Pilah over a period five months. The objectives of PIERS were:

- i) to build students' self-confidence to use English language.
- ii) to eradicate the presumption that English is a difficult language to acquire by making acquiring English fun.

More than 400 secondary school students participated in the program. To guide the school students, 40 university students from UiTM Cawangan Negeri Sembilan Kampus Kuala Pilah (UiTM CNS KP) were trained as facilitators. Three activities were carried out: Readers Theatre, Choral Speaking and Storyboard.

During the program the facilitators got to brush up on their leadership, communication and facilitating skills. Based on a study that was carried out to check on the students' perception on PIERS before and after the activities, there was a sharp improvement in the students' motivation and confidence to use English. According to the same study one of the features that gave rise to the marked improvement was the support and encouragements that they received from the student facilitators, who encouraged them to use online tools such as dictionaries and google search to enhance the final product of their group activities.

There were three spin-offs from this project whereby four UiTM CNS KP lecturers (PIERS advisors) produced a product (PIERS booklet) that won a Silver Award at Invention, Innovation & Design Exposition (IIDEX2019). Secondly, five UiTM CNS KP students (PIERS facilitators) showcased the PIERS project at International Invention, Innovation Creation Exhibition (IIICE2019) that won the team a Silver Award. Finally, based on the success of the program the District Education department and the school principals requested that the program to be carried out as a continuous effort to foster greater collaboration between UiTM CNS and its surrounding communities. Hence, this program was adopted as part of the "UiTM for Community" project spear-headed by the Rector of UiTM CNS, Prof Dr Yamin Yasin. Hence, PIERS became ELERS (English language Enhancement for Rural Schools) and it will be carried out at a bigger scale in the state of Negeri Sembilan in 2020.