English Language Teaching and Learning during Holiday Camps: A Case Study from Malaysia

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Abstract
Language holiday camps for children or adolescents who are learners of a second or additional language are a world-wide phenomenon. They are particularly popular in the USA, Canada and Britain for languages such as French, German and Spanish. Youth camps (also called summer camps) during the European school holidays to learn English or other languages have also enjoyed a long tradition. In Malaysia, English language holiday camps are prolific and have been running since the 1940s. With such popularity that these camps enjoy the world over, the subject is coming under research. In line with such researches, the present study covers a four day long residential English language holiday camp in Malaysia for 31 female students (aged 16) during May 2013. Its aim was to identify activities that actively engage learners and increase their attitudes positively in regards to learning English.

The paper is intended to stimulate further research into extra-curricular activities, specifically English language holiday camps due to their global abundance, to build a corpus of literature in order to fill the current vacuum, and to gather empirical data on the value of such camps. The findings of the focused study have broad relevance internationally due to the significant numbers of language camps around the world and will contribute to the scanty knowledge currently available on this topic. It is anticipated that the issues discussed in this paper will be useful for students, teachers, researchers, policy makers and practitioners of English language studies alike.

Keywords: holiday camps, English language, attitudes, adolescents, Malaysia