

ENGLISH EDUCATION FOR ELDERLY EMPOWERMENT IN THE GREEN ECONOMY PROGRAM

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Abstract

This study examines the implementation of the English for Green Economy Program, designed to empower pre-elderly and elderly learners through English education integrated with sustainability and entrepreneurship. The program aimed to develop participants' language competence, eco-literacy, and entrepreneurial awareness within the framework of lifelong learning. A mixed-method descriptive–evaluative design was employed, involving twenty participants aged 45–70 who were active in community-based environmental and entrepreneurial groups. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of four sections: program evaluation, trainer performance, training benefits, and participant feedback. Quantitative data were analysed descriptively, while qualitative comments were thematically interpreted. The overall results indicated strong positive perceptions, with 61% of all responses rated “Strongly Agree” and the remaining 39% “Agree.” Specifically, 95% of participants confirmed the program's relevance, 80% highly valued the trainer's performance, and 75% reported enhanced skills applicable to daily and entrepreneurial contexts. Qualitative feedback emphasized extending the duration and focusing on one topic per session to deepen understanding. These findings demonstrate that English language education, when contextually linked with sustainability and entrepreneurship, can effectively promote empowerment, environmental awareness, and lifelong learning among elderly communities.

Keywords: *Elderly, Empowerment, English Education, Green Economy, Lifelong Learning, Sustainability*

Introduction

This study examines the implementation of English education for elderly learners within the context of a Green Economy Program. The initiative reflects a growing movement to integrate language learning with sustainable education and elderly empowerment (Gabaudan, 2022). It involves collaboration among educators and local communities in eco-friendly entrepreneurship, which is also closely connected to the principles of

lifelong learning.

The research is situated within the discipline of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Iswati & Triastuti, 2021; Stoller & Robinson, 2018). It draws interdisciplinary links to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) by promoting language skills that support environmental awareness, economic responsibility, and social inclusion (Chaikovska & Levchyk, 2022). The study explores how English education can serve as a medium for sustainable empowerment among older adults through green business literacy and environmentally responsible communication.

In Indonesia, where the proportion of older adults is steadily growing, empowering the elderly through language and sustainability education becomes a crucial dimension of lifelong learning (Basrowi et al., 2021; Kim & Kim, 2015). The capacity to communicate in English enables older learners to access new knowledge, engage with international markets, and participate in eco-friendly entrepreneurial activities that align with the principles of the green economy (Adnyana et al., 2023).

Previous studies directly linking English education with Green Economy Programs for elderly learners remains limited, although both areas independently show strong potential. Research on English learning among older adults highlights its benefits for self-actualization, social participation, and confidence building (Kim & Kim, 2015; Ochoa Siguencia, 2025). Studies on green economy and sustainability education, however, have largely focused on younger populations, emphasizing eco-friendly behaviors and green job training rather than elderly engagement (Dicha et al., 2024; Rambe & Ayla, 2024; Wagner, 2013).

On the other hand, related initiatives such as green care programs have demonstrated positive effects on older adults' social and learning participation (Santini et al., 2020). These findings collectively suggest a promising opportunity to integrate environmental and language education to foster lifelong learning and empowerment among elderly communities. Drawing upon the principles of sustainable education, lifelong learning, and empowerment theories, this study addresses the following research questions:

(1) How do participants perceive the implementation of the English for Green Economy Program?; (2) How do participants evaluate the trainer's delivery of the program?; (3) What benefits do participants gain from the training?; (4) What feedback do participants provide to improve future program development?.

Methods

This study adopted a mixed-method descriptive evaluative design to assess the implementation and outcomes of the English for Green Economy Program for elderly learners (Akilli, 2008; Qiu, 2010). Demographic information such as age range, educational background, and community involvement was obtained from the program's registration form, which all participants completed prior to the training. The study involved twenty pre-elderly and elderly learners aged 45–70 who voluntarily enrolled in the program. Most were active members of community-based environmental and entrepreneurial groups, and their educational backgrounds varied from primary to tertiary levels.

A convenience sampling approach was used because the research focused specifically on evaluating an existing community empowerment program. Participants were selected based on their availability, willingness to join the training, and direct relevance to the program's aims. This sampling strategy was appropriate as the goal was not to generalize findings to all elderly populations, but to understand the perceptions and experiences of individuals directly engaged in the English for Green Economy initiative.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of four sections: (1) general evaluation of the program, including goal alignment, relevance, and the learning process; (2) evaluation of the speaker or trainer in terms of clarity, relevance, and communication style; (3) perceived benefits of the training, such as improved knowledge, skills, and applicability; and (4) open-ended questions for suggestions and constructive feedback (Aliko et al., 2021; Zafiri & Kaskani, 2021). The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree),

complemented by short written comments to capture participants' qualitative responses (Bloor et al., 2006; Creswell, 2013; Maher & Dertadian, 2018).

In analyzing the data, quantitative data from the Likert-scale items were analyzed descriptively using frequency and percentage distributions to identify overall trends in participants' perceptions. Qualitative comments were analyzed thematically to capture participants' views on the strengths, challenges, and perceived impacts of the program (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Fatmawati & Haryanti, 2025; Naeem et al., 2023; Sjöden et al., 2018). The integration of both data types provided a holistic evaluation of the program's implementation. However, due to the questionnaire and participants limitation to a specific group of voluntary participants, the results are not generalizable beyond this sample and reflect only the perceptions of the targeted participants involved in the program.

Findings and Discussions

After collecting and analyzing the questionnaire responses from twenty pre-elderly and elderly participants of the English for Green Economy Program, the researcher discussed the findings into several key categories: program evaluation, trainer evaluation, training benefits, and participant feedback.

1. Program Evaluation

The English for Green Economy Program was designed as a participatory learning model within the framework of sustainable education for elderly learners (Caniglia et al., 2018; Chaikovska & Levchyk, 2022; Gabaudan, 2022). The program fostered technopreneurship to elevate creativity and entrepreneurial motivation through project-based English tasks centered on eco-friendly business ideas (Saptaria & Setyawan, 2021). Consistent with 21st-century skills and PBL approaches participants collaborated to produce green product descriptions and English promotional materials (Fatmawati, 2018). In addition, facilitators applied scaffolding strategies through constructive feedback to enhance engagement and comprehension among elderly learners, aligning with sociocultural

perspectives on learning (Entusiastik, 2019). Implemented over June-September 2025 with written English as the medium of instruction, the program guided participants in processing hazardous waste into environmentally friendly products such as aromatherapy candles and eco-friendly soaps then promoting them digitally in English to enhance global competitiveness.

Figure 1 Program Evaluation Results

Indicator	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Interpretation
Objectives are relevant	40	55	Highly relevant
Materials match participants' needs	35	60	Strongly aligned
Learning process is engaging	70	30	Interactive
Time is well managed	55	45	Effective
Materials are easy to use	50	50	User-friendly

The results in Figure 1 show that participants viewed the English for Green Economy Program as highly relevant and well-organized. The majority agreed that the objectives and materials were directly applicable to their personal and community needs. Engagement levels were notably high, with most participants acknowledging that the sessions were interactive and enjoyable. Time management and accessibility of materials also received strong agreement, reflecting effective instructional design. Overall, this suggests that the program successfully connected English learning with participants' experiences in sustainability and entrepreneurship.

The findings on the program that was highly relevant, interactive, and aligned with participants' eco-entrepreneurship needs, were supporting Gabaudan's (2022) view that sustainability themes enhance contextual engagement. The strong participation also reflects Fatmawati's (2018) findings on the value of project-based, real-life tasks in boosting motivation. These patterns echo Kim and Kim's (2015) conclusion that elderly learners persist when activities relate to their goals and social contexts. Overall, the results suggest that sustainability-focused English learning effectively fosters both linguistic and ecological awareness among older adults.

2. Trainer Evaluation

In relation with the teaching practices, Figure 2 illustrates consistently positive perceptions of the trainer's performance. Most participants found the trainer's communication style engaging and the delivery method clear and easy to follow. The high percentage of "strongly agree" responses (especially 80% for topic relevance) indicates that the content was well-aligned with participants' expectations and community contexts. Practical examples were appreciated for helping learners connect theory to real-life applications. These findings confirm that the trainer's approach was effective and responsive to the learning characteristics of elderly participants.

Figure 2 Trainer Evaluation Results

Indicator	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Interpretation
Materials are clear	50	50	Accessible
Topic is relevant	20	80	Very relevant
Examples are practical	40	60	Contextual
Communication is engaging	30	70	Effective

The results showing that participants rated the trainer's performance very positively in terms of clarity, communication, and the use of contextual examples align with Stoller and Robinson's (2018) claim that ESP teaching is most effective when input is clear and field specific. The strong agreement on topic relevance also reflects Iswati and Triastuti's (2021) view that ESP content must match learners' backgrounds, which is especially important for elderly learners who benefit from supportive and well-paced instruction. The findings further indicate that embedding sustainability and entrepreneurship themes enhanced trainer effectiveness by drawing on familiar, community-based examples, supporting a sociocultural perspective that learning improves when connected to learners' real environments.

3. Training Benefits

About the training benefits, as shown in Figure 3, participants conveyed substantial learning gains from the program. Most strongly agreed that their knowledge and skills had improved, particularly in the context of sustainable business communication. The data also highlight that participants could apply the lessons in daily life and community initiatives, reinforcing the program's practical value. The combination of language learning and green entrepreneurship topics appeared to enhance both confidence and motivation. This finding aligns with the broader aim of empowering elderly learners through lifelong and sustainable education.

Figure 3 Training Benefits

Indicator	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Interpretation
Knowledge improved	20	80	Significant
Skills enhanced	25	75	Positive
Applicable in daily life	35	65	Practical

In addition, participants reported significant improvements in knowledge, communication skills, and confidence in applying English to eco-entrepreneurial tasks, supporting Basrowi et al.'s (2021) view on the benefits of lifelong learning for older adults. The integration of sustainability themes with English tasks also enhanced eco-literacy and linguistic competence, consistent with Chaikovska and Levchyk (2022) and Wagner's (2013) findings that ESD and green economy education are more effective when tied to real-life practices. This study further shows that elderly learners can engage successfully with technopreneurship-oriented English activities when supported by structured scaffolding and community relevance, reinforcing the potential of combining green education with ESP as an empowerment strategy.

4. Participant Feedback

Lastly, the evaluation of participants' qualitative feedback, as shown in Figure 4, indicates that many respondents requested a longer program duration to allow more practice and discussion time, demonstrating strong engagement and enthusiasm for learning. The suggestion to focus on one topic per session reflects a desire for clarity and depth, especially given the varying language proficiency levels. Participants also expressed appreciation for the link between English and green entrepreneurship, viewing it as relevant and empowering. Overall, the feedback was constructive and provided valuable input for refining future iterations of the program.

Figure 4 Participant Feedback

Feedback Theme	Summary	Interpretation
Program duration	Should be extended for deeper learning	Constructive
Content focus	One topic per session preferred	Actionable
Practical relevance	Continue linking English with eco-business	Supportive

Note. Open-ended feedback was summarized thematically from written comments.

The participants' suggestions extending the program duration, focusing on one topic per session, and maintaining the integration of English with eco-business provide important insights for improving the program. The request for longer sessions aligns with Kim and Kim's (2015) observation that elderly learners benefit from slower pacing and extended practice. The preference for focusing on one topic at a time also reflects pedagogical principles that emphasize clarity, simplicity, and a manageable cognitive load.

In addition, their positive response to the integration of English and eco-entrepreneurship supports Rambe and Ayla's (2024) finding that sustainable English tasks enhance motivation by reinforcing real-world relevance. Collectively, these findings indicate that elderly learners not only accept but prefer English instruction grounded in green economy contexts, suggesting a strong alignment between community-based empowerment initiatives and ESP approaches. This reinforces the researcher's view that such integration

strengthens both social participation and economic agency for older adults.

The findings across the four aspects demonstrate that the English for Green Economy Program effectively integrated language learning with sustainability-based education for elderly participants. High levels of agreement in program relevance, trainer performance, and perceived benefits indicate that the initiative was both meaningful and motivating. Participants valued the practical connection between English communication and eco-friendly entrepreneurship, which enhanced their confidence and community engagement.

Qualitative feedback further supported these results, emphasizing the need for extended duration and focused sessions to maximize learning outcomes. Collectively, the data suggest that the program successfully promoted lifelong learning, environmental awareness, and empowerment among elderly learners through a contextually grounded English education model.

Conclusion

This study evaluated the implementation of the English for Green Economy Program designed to empower pre-elderly and elderly learners through language education integrated with sustainability and entrepreneurship. The findings revealed that participants perceived the program as highly relevant, engaging, and beneficial. The integration of English instruction with eco-friendly business themes enhanced learners' motivation, language proficiency, and awareness of sustainable practices. Trainer performance and the interactive learning process were consistently rated positively, while participants' feedback emphasized the need for longer sessions and more focused content per meeting.

The implications of these results extend beyond the immediate context of the training. The program demonstrates that English language education can serve as a medium for promoting sustainable development and lifelong learning among older adults. It also highlights the potential of community-based education models to enhance social inclusion and economic

participation through environmentally responsible initiatives. Educators and program designers are encouraged to adopt geragogical principles, emphasizing contextual learning, relevance, and experiential engagement tailored to elderly learners' needs.

Future implementations should consider expanding the program duration, incorporating more task-based projects, and developing digital learning components to sustain participation and learning continuity. Further research could explore longitudinal impacts, such as how elderly learners apply their English and sustainability knowledge in real community settings. Overall, the English for Green Economy Program provides a valuable model for integrating language education, sustainability, and empowerment within the framework of lifelong learning.

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