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Virtual Conversation Partner (VCP) Program

Connecting you to the world...

That's what Fajar Impian Nusa Bangsa's Connect English Community is all about. Now, with our Virtual Conversation Partner (VCP) Program, ANYONE can get connected to a native English speaker that will help them on their English-learning journey—including YOU! As you relate cross-culturally with your VCP, we believe both of you will benefit and maybe also develop a life-long friendship.

PT. Fajar Impian Nusa Bangsa and Connect have designed the VCP Program with you in mind. We know that many of you have studied English for years but often lack confidence when speaking—especially with native English speakers. This program is designed to give you a "safe place" to practice your conversational English with them in a fun and relaxed way.

How does the VCP Program work?

In this program, we connect you with native English-speaking partners (mostly in the United States) who want to help you grow in both your fluency and confidence in spoken English. You will sign up for a particular time slot and video chat with your VCP using Google Meet for one hour a week for 8 weeks. During each of these sessions you can choose the topic and discussion questions from those we provide or even create your own!

What are you waiting for? Get matched with a VCP for an eight-week module for just Rp. 500.000!

How Do I Sign Up?

- 1) Application—The first step in joining the VCP Program is to fill out the application form on our website. Once you submit it, we will call or email you to explain the program in detail and if you are a good fit for it. We will also be happy to answer any questions that you have at that time.
- 2) Matching—If your application suggests you are a good fit, the next step is to make sure we have a VCP available at the same time you are! Since most of them live on the other side of the world and in a different time zone, the more time slots you can be available for, the greater the chance we can match you with a VCP.
- 3) Payment—Once you are notified that you have been matched with a VCP, you will have 48 hours to make a 50% deposit and send us proof of your payment. This means that in order to begin the program, you will need to pay Rp. 250.000. The remaining Rp 250.000 will be due before your 5th session (halfway through the module). If you are located in Bandar Lampung, you can pay in our office using Cash or Debit. Otherwise you can pay using GoPay, Ovo, or Bank Transfer.
- 4) Once we receive your proof of payment, we will send you the contact information for your VCP, information about how to use Google Meet for your sessions, and work with you to arrange your first meeting.



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Values

In order to maintain a positive experience for everyone involved, every participant in the VCP program (including the native speakers) is asked to agree to our core values: Caring, Honest, Responsible, Friendly, Respectful, Teachable, and Appreciative. With these values as a guide, we want you to feel free to ask questions, raise concerns, etc. that will help you enjoy the program more and get the most out of it.

One of the other benefits of this program is that by practicing your English with those from the United States (or other English-speaking country), you will also have the opportunity to grow in cross-cultural understanding as you learn about the similarities and differences between you.

In fact, here are a few cultural differences that you will probably encounter right away:

- A) Punctuality—Most native English speakers are more time-oriented than Indonesians or other Asian cultures. Your VCP will likely only be free for the one hour your session is scheduled. That means if you start ten minutes late, your session will be cut short and only last 50 minutes. Your VCP will wait no longer than 15 minutes for the start of the session. After that your session will be cancelled. Please be aware that due to the number of students who want to work with one of our VCPs, no “make-up” sessions will be given if you do not log in at the scheduled time. However, you and your VCP may reschedule up to 2 sessions as long as you give each other at least 24 hours notice.
- B) Directness—Native English speakers also tend to be more direct. At times this more direct approach may seem a bit impolite in your culture. However, the benefit is that you can be more direct with them too! For example, if there is a topic you would rather not talk about with your VCP (ie politics, religion, etc), don't be shy about telling them. Interestingly enough, the less direct approach of many Asian cultures can sometimes be misunderstood by native speakers as seeming insincere or even dishonest. Don't worry though! This will be a chance for you both to learn about each other's culture, so just be friendly and forgiving as you work together.
- C) Transparency—The third cultural difference you may notice is transparency. While this may not be true of every native speaker, it is true of many. Many native English speakers may share their thoughts and feelings with a bit more openness than you might. We hope you will allow yourself to be stretched in this area and feel comfortable opening up to them too. Many times greater transparency provides an opportunity for better conversation and deeper relationship—especially when we are struggling with a particular issue in our lives.

Expectations

In order for you to have a good VCP Program experience, it is important to understand what the VCP Program is and what it is not.

The VCP Program is NOT:

- An English “course” with lessons prepared by a trained teacher
- Focused on grammar formulas and scoring well on a particular test
- Led by a trained English teacher who is able to answer all of your questions about grammar
- A guarantee that you will be able to perform at a certain level

The VCP Program IS:

- An opportunity to grow in fluency and confidence in spoken English
- Led by a native English speaker who will help you learn new vocabulary and improve fluency
- An opportunity for you to push yourself to improve with each weekly session
- A mutual opportunity that encourages you to teach your VCP things about your culture as well.

How do the Weekly Sessions Work?

Each week, your VCP will try to “meet you in your comfort zone” and then help you grow from there with increased vocabulary, better sentence structure and greater fluency. He/she will do this by helping you learn to RAP—no beatboxing required! In the VCP program, RAP stands for:

RELATE-We believe that language is best learned in the context of relationship. The more you care about people, the more you will want to communicate with them. Your weekly sessions are designed to encourage this kind of friendship with your VCP from another culture.

ACHIEVE-Developing greater confidence will come not only from increased fluency as you improve in the use of vocabulary, pronunciation, sentence structure and more, but also from having a positive experience in using English.

PROGRESS- Finally, we want to encourage you to USE what you are learning to make progress outside your VCP session as you grow in your understanding of the world outside your own country/culture.

Weekly Session Structure (1 Hour Total) :

A Look Back (10 min)– This unstructured time is used to “hear one another’s stories” and catch up on what has happened in each other’s lives since the last session. The goal is to help you build a relationship with your VCP while still improving your fluency and confidence using spoken English.

Discussion (35 min)– This is the heart of the session. As the learner, each week YOU will be the one to choose the topic you discuss with your VCP. We have over 100 topics for you to choose from, ranging from dating to aliens to television. If you would prefer, you can even make up your own! Each of these topics includes three types of questions: "Knowledge" (more concrete), "Reflection" (more abstract), and "Life Application" (connecting to everyday life)."

Wrap-Up (10 min) – This is a chance to end the topical discussion with feedback provided by your VCP. This feedback will focus on 3 elements:

- Encouragement—Your language helper will seek to encourage you in certain areas as you make progress each week. Recognize that you should also be trying to encourage your VCP. He/she needs to know if they are actually helping you!
- Pronunciation—Your VCP will mention a few words that were mispronounced multiple times. This might also include words you mispronounced only once, if your VCP thinks the word is particularly important.
- Vocabulary—If your VCP heard you using a word several times incorrectly, he/she might explain that word more clearly and then suggest a more accurate one.

*Your VCP will also ask for feedback. They will appreciate it if you let them know what they can do better in helping you. Remember, native English speakers appreciate directness and transparency as long as you are doing it in a polite and friendly way!

A Look Ahead (5 min)– This is an opportunity to discuss how you will make progress by applying what you’ve learned in the week ahead. This may include:

- Personal Application—Think about how you might be able to continue the day’s conversation with friends in the coming week. This will help you remember the new vocabulary you learned during the session.
- Upcoming Events—Talk about what will be happening in the coming week. This is an opportunity for both of you to learn more about each other’s world and to use or ask about vocabulary that might prove useful during the week.

A Final Word

While we believe that the structure of these weekly conversational sessions is well-designed for you as a learner to increase in both fluency and confidence in the context of a growing relationship with your VCP, there is no guarantee of success.

The more you participate actively in the session, give helpful feedback to your VCP, and practice what you have learned until you meet the following week, the more you will improve.

If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, feel free to contact us any time at info@fajarimpiannusabangsa.com. The entire VCP Program will benefit from your input!

We hope to hear from you soon!

Warm Regards,

PT. Fajar Impian Nusa Bangsa
and the entire Connect family

