ABDIMAS

Workshop on Classroom Instruction for English Teachers in South Konawe Regency

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Abstract

This program-based community service (PkM) aims to improve the quality of English language learning at the Junior High School (SMP) level in South Konawe Regency through training in the form of classroom instruction and communicative practice activities. The method used in this activity is Asset-Based Community Services (ABCD) which involves English teachers as research subjects and main actors in designing, implementing and evaluating learning changes and improving existing competencies. Classroom Instruction training focuses on introducing innovative language learning methods that are relevant to the needs of junior high school students. In this case, the use of English for Teaching as the teacher's language of instruction in the classroom plays a very important role. This activity involves implementing a collaborative approach between teachers and PkM implementers as well as resource persons to identify the most effective learning strategies in the specific school context. Meanwhile, Communicative Practice Activities are focused on developing learning activities that promote active verbal interaction in English and are student-centered. It is hoped that the results of this activity can provide practical and useful guidance for junior high school teachers in improving the effectiveness of English language teaching. In addition, through a participatory process, it is hoped that a sustainable collaborative culture will be created among teachers to continue to improve the quality of English learning. Continuous evaluation will be carried out to measure the positive impact of implemented learning changes.

Keywords: *Asset-Based Community Services, Classroom Instruction, Communicative Active Practices*

INTRODUCTION

The development of teacher professionalism today emphasizes the ability of teachers to master knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes reflected in their actions and thinking. Professional competence of teachers must be demonstrated in the aspect of mastering the subject matter broadly and deeply, and being able to transfer their knowledge in a good manner to create enjoyable learning. achieve this, many methods can be employed to enhance teacher professionalism, one of which is through training that supports the quality of learning.

The English Education Study Program, in its development following the observation of teachers during the School Field Introduction Program (PLP 1) and the School Field Experience Program (PLP 2), found that English teachers in South Konawe Regency face difficulties in teaching students with various cultural backgrounds and diverse English proficiency levels. Moreover, students also find it challenging to understand the English material presented by the teachers and lack motivation to learn English. This results in low levels of English proficiency among students, which negatively impacts their future in the era of globalization.

To address these issues, a training program aimed at improving the quality of English language teaching in the classroom is needed. Classroom instruction in English is one appropriate solution to implement (Crystal, 2012). Using participatory action research methodology in the form of educational action research (Afandi, Laily, Wahyudi, et al., 2022), teachers and students will be more motivated to learn. This methodology also allows teachers and students to find solutions to problems that arise in English language learning in the classroom. The training provided will be followed up with activities after the workshop, including discussion sessions with several English teacher representatives and classroom implementation. This aligns with research findings at the elementary, junior high, and high

school levels on the use of classroom instruction by Adiwidya (2016), Saragih (2016), and Martiarini (2018), that providing English instructions with specifications of English for Teaching in the form of Classroom Language is an effective way to improve the quality of English language teaching and familiarization for teachers and students, particularly in student-centered learning. Additionally, this community service activity can help teachers and students develop social skills, such as the ability to collaborate, communicate, and think critically, which are highly needed in the globalization era.

This training program aims to enhance the capacity and effectiveness of English teachers in junior high schools across South Konawe Regency, support inclusive student education and teacher professional development, and promote interactive and student-centered educational practices. This activity is initiated by lecturers of the English Education Study Program who have previously been trainers in the English Language Teacher Training (ELTT) program in collaboration with the United States Embassy and World Learning, and will share best practices to solve problems found in schools regarding the provision of appropriate learning instructions.

Several previous studies relevant to this community service activity include the implementation of classroom language usage for elementary schools by Widyahening (2018), which increased teacher and student enthusiasm in learning English, resulting in better quality. Saragih (2016) applied classroom language in junior high school English teaching using strategies such as slower speech, pauses in certain places, correcting student pronunciation, modifying vocabulary, simplifying grammar, and using instructions with everyday life contexts. At the high school level, Martiarini and Lestari (2016) socialized English classroom language, using simulations and team assistance, with discussions and reviews involving school principals and teachers, which resulted in significantly positive effectiveness. Additionally, Simon et al. (2021) observed that the use of classroom instruction and its practice had a very positive impact on students, and Kurniawati (2022) conducted training on classroom instruction for English learners in madrasah ibtidaiyah. All previous studies share similarities in using appropriate classroom instructions. However, this community service will make new and constructive distinctions to ensure smooth and maximal achievements, referring to the right sources, with ongoing consultation and guidance, reflecting teachers' use of established classroom instructions, which are more student-centered.

This activity will greatly benefit and have a wide impact on pesantren teachers in Kendari City. It is part of significant learning system innovation and will bring new perspectives to the teachers participating in this workshop. The hope is that the good practices related to classroom instruction will not only be implemented in the workshop but also followed up in English classes in junior high schools across South Konawe Regency.

METHODS

The theory used in this community service related to classroom instruction refers to the concept categories that language teachers must consider in designing English learning according to Brown (2001), namely (1) Intellectual Development, (2) Attention Span, (3) Sensory Input, (4) Affective Factors, and (5) Authentic, Meaningful Language. Classroom instruction falls into one of the categories of meaningful language, including the authentication of using English to teach English based on this concept. Additionally, the theory related to how to teach English from Harmer (2007a, b) is also a relevant theory used as a reference for teaching or classroom instruction.

The Community Service (PkM) method utilizes the ABCD approach by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) in classroom instruction and communicative practice. This approach not only addresses students' needs but also involves them in exploring the potential and resources available in the community, in this case, the potential of teachers being developed as they are generally the subjects of this community service.

Thus, the ABCD approach can create a more meaningful and relevant learning experience for students to strengthen positive relationships between schools, the campus, and the community, in this case, the learning community (KomBel) of the MGMP English Language Junior High School teachers across South Konawe Regency.

The Community Service (PkM) activities are initiated from problems identified in the community and address these needs through workshop activities. The steps of the service activities are as follows:
1. Identification of community problems or needs.
2. Selection of the theme or focus of the service, which in this case emphasizes the use of classroom instruction and communicative practice activities as the core theme of the PkM.
3. Collaboration with relevant parties, in this case, KomBel MGMP English Language Junior High

School teachers in South Konawe Regency.

4. Planning the Service Program and implementing the program, which is conducted over two days on September 9 and 10, 2023.
5. Conducting the training, which includes several warm-up activities, lead-in, explanations, and several practice activities using classroom instruction and alternative communicative practice activities.
6. Evaluation (in the form of activity reflection and surveys, as well as adaptation by teachers regarding the PkM theme).
7. Dissemination of service results, revision of some feedback, and preparation of the PkM Report.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Communicative Practice Activities implemented in the community service activities based on the English Education study program generally incorporate integrated skills elements that lead to more effective classroom instruction. This is marked by the enthusiasm of the teachers when practicing these activities, which include warming up with a snowball activity, a lead-in using think-pair-share (TPR), running dictation, detailed discussions related to the theme, followed by classroom practice maximizing technology with games like word soup, guess what, bridge words, picture this, board game, concentric circle discussion, and understanding concepts like guessing and matching related to classroom instruction.

The adaptation in the workshop includes the technique of throwing paper not in a fighting manner but by throwing it forward, as well as picking up paper and finding the owner of the writing by practicing the use of English in the classroom in terms of asking, responding, and continuing communication. The Think-Pair-Share (TPS) technique used in the workshop is based on the concepts of active learning and cooperative learning (Slavin, 2008), as reviewed by Lighter and Tomaswick (2017). Simply put, Think-Pair-Share (TPS) is a cooperative learning activity that can be conducted in classrooms of various sizes and in any subject, specifically focused on English language learning in this workshop. The instructor (trainer) poses a question, and teachers as participants first THINK individually before being instructed to discuss their responses with the person sitting next to them (PAIR). Finally, the group SHARES what they discussed with their partner (another teacher) with the entire class, and the discussion continues.

Teachers have time to think critically, creating a learning environment that encourages high-quality responses. TPS provides students the opportunity to work in groups towards a common goal, enhancing their own and others' understanding in a safe environment for making mistakes. The study used in this activity focuses on how activities should be practical and represent good practices that teachers have implemented at their respective workplaces (schools), which are then shared with other teachers and disseminated massively in the classroom in the form of flexible and communicative interactive dialogues, providing a platform for practicing English. This is also adapted for their subsequent activities when teaching again at their respective schools. Experiences from other teachers with different school contexts will enrich the insights of junior high school English teachers across South Konawe Regency.

Running Dictation is a language learning activity that involves movement, collaboration, and listening skills. It is a fun and engaging way to practice listening, writing, and speaking in a foreign language, such as English. In this workshop, teachers conducted running dictation activities during the procedural lead-in, after being briefed on the theme of the community service, and then strengthened with movement and concentration activities. Here is the step-by-step procedure for using running dictation as applied in PkM and can be practically adapted for kinesthetic students in English classes. Running dictation is not only an effective language learning tool but also a dynamic and enjoyable way to reinforce listening and speaking skills in English classes.

With the help of technology, this game was used in the workshop in the form of an Adobe player played competitively by each group of teachers formed during the workshop. The appearance and procedural game are displayed on a screen connected through a projector and worked on together to guess and form as many words as possible in English. Participants are given 2 minutes with 3 attempts to generate as many words as possible based on the letters displayed on the laptop/game screen, so the maximum score will be recorded and become the competition score for each group. The impression in this game is that participants create a word soup that becomes a delicious dish in English learning. Good collaboration and teamwork, as well as active communication, are necessary to achieve the highest score.

Guess What is a game used to play word guessing and is very adaptive for use in English classes. The procedure of this game along with sample word cards can be downloaded for free from the book "Activate: Games for Learning American English" (Published by: Office of English Language Programs Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs United States Department of State Washington, D.C. americanenglish.state.gov. p. 71).

Word Bricks is one of the games applied in this training activity. Workshop participants are given several pieces of paper to be arranged into a complete sentence according to correct English grammar. After arranging the words for about 6 minutes, participants then count the score of the number of words and write the complete sentence on the given paper and discuss it to avoid mistakes. The committee then counts and checks at the end of the activity and provides follow-up in the form of activity adaptation by the teachers as participants.

Picture This is one of the games played according to the procedural activities in this PkM training, where participants take turns, as with activities at other stations, gradually completing a series of challenges in the form of games. Picture This can be used as a model and learning strategy in schools, where they can draw something, explore the language and vocabulary they have to guess the target word. This activity is done in pairs, where there is a clue question for the questioner and a clue answer for the respondent, facilitating smooth communication between participants. This activity provides room for participants to express themselves and perform their role-play in communicating.

Board Games in this PkM activity were designed and used materials from the RELO US Embassy. Three board games were used in this workshop: About Me, Use a Word, and Have You Ever? Oh When...?. Another activity, the procedural activity concentric circle discussion, is an adaptation of the circle memory procedure by Edwards (2023).

Based on the comments and adaptations submitted in the list column provided, it is evident that teachers believe that classroom instruction with practical communicative practice activities provides good ideas and impacts that can be adapted in their classrooms, as shown by the presentation of adaptive ideas that become comments in reflections after conducting various activities at each learning post and practical during the workshop.
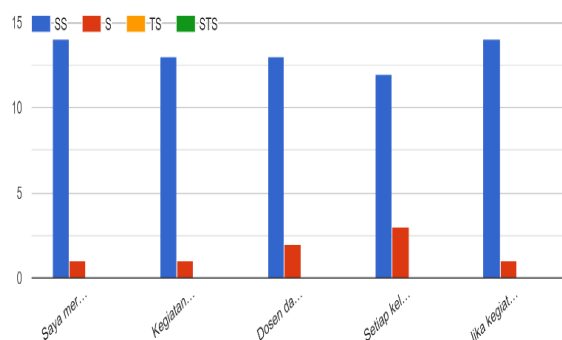

Fig. 1. Respondents' satisfaction survey results towards the PkM activities.

Additionally, several satisfaction surveys were conducted after the workshop event. These surveys included statements regarding satisfaction with the Prodi-based community service activities, whether they met the expectations and needs of the partners, if there was feedback provided during the activities, the perceived level of benefit, and if the partners would be enthusiastic and willing to participate again if similar activities were held in the future. The results showed that 95% of respondents strongly agreed with all the statements provided (based on charts and Google Forms distributed to the respondents/partners).

CONCLUSION

Community service through Classroom Instruction and Communicative Practice Activities for English teachers has shown a positive impact on enhancing the English language skills of students and the general public. Involving teachers in these activities not only enriches students' learning experiences but also helps develop the communication skills needed in daily life. By focusing on communication-oriented teaching methods, this service provides a strong foundation for improving understanding and mastery of English, particularly among junior high school teachers in South Konawe Regency.

The recommendations from this Prodi-based community service (PkM) activity are as follows: (1.) Improvement of teaching methods: Teachers can continuously refine teaching methods that focus on communication. Innovation in using various learning strategies is necessary to encourage students to actively participate in English language activities; (2.) Use of EFT-based lesson plans (English for Teaching) and communication practice: It is recommended that teachers utilize more communication-based lesson plans. Integrating communicative situations into the curriculum can enhance students' ability to use English effectively in real-life contexts; (3.) Utilization of additional resources: Teachers can utilize additional resources, such as multimedia, interactive teaching materials, and project-based activities. This can provide variety in learning and increase students' interest in English lessons.

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