



IMPROVING WRITING SKILLS OF SANTRI THROUGH ENGLISH TRAINING PROGRAM AT PONDOK PESANTREN

¹Fahrur Rozi, ²Aan Ikhsananto, ³Ayesha Shifa Nazira, ⁴Septiani Kartika Sari, ⁵Elisa Oktafiani

^{1,2,3,4,5}Fakultas Ekonomika dan Bisnis Universitas Negeri Semarang

¹frozi@mail.unnes.ac.id, ²aanikhsananto@mail.unnes.ac.id, ³ayesha.shifa.nazira@gmail.com, ⁴septianikartika15@gmail.com,

⁵elsarhmdhni@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received Sept 10, 2024

Accepted Jan 7, 2024

Available Jan 10, 2025

Keywords:

Writing Skills;

English Training;

Application Letters;

Interview

ABSTRAK

Terdapat empat aspek dalam mempraktekkan Bahasa Inggris yaitu membaca (*reading*), menulis (*writing*), mendengar (*listening*), dan berbicara (*speaking*). *Writing Skills* merupakan bagian ketrampilan menulis dan sering pula disebut dengan seni menulis karena di dalamnya terdapat strategi yang harus dibuat supaya hasil dari tulisan mendapatkan respon baik dari pembaca. Tujuan dari pengabdian ini adalah pendampingan Peningkatan Kemampuan *Writing Skills* Untuk Mempersiapkan Kesempatan Kerja Melalui Pelatihan Berbahasa Inggris di Pondok Pesantren dan merupakan solusi yang tepat untuk membantu mereka mendapatkan wadah dalam belajar dan juga mengetahui bagaimana menulis surat lamaran, persiapan wawancara dan strategi menjawab pertanyaan wawancara dalam Bahasa Inggris, dengan didampingi pengabdian yang berpengalaman dalam Bahasa Inggris sehingga akan tercipta lingkungan yang support secara positif dan meningkatkan konsistensi dalam mengasah keterampilan para santri. Pelaksanaan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini akan dilakukan secara luring (luar jaringan) di Pondok Pesantren Putra Putri As Salafy Al Asror Patemon Gunungpati Semarang selama satu hari. Hasil pengabdian ini adalah santri bisa menulis surat lamaran dan melakukan interview dalam Bahasa Inggris kemudian juga menghasilkan berupa video dan dokumen lainnya. Target luaran yang diharapkan adalah publikasi artikel di jurnal dan publikasi di media masa.

ABSTRACT

There are four aspects of English skills: reading skills, writing skills, listening skills, and speaking skills. Writing skills are often also called the art of writing because strategies must be made to get a good response from the readers. This community service aims to assist santri at Pondok Pesantren Putra Putri as Salafy Al Asror Patemon Gunungpati Semarang to improve their writing skills to prepare for employment through English Language Training. It is the right solution to help them learn how to write application letters, prepare for interviews, and develop strategies for answering interview questions in English. This training is accompanied by experienced English and Economics lecturers who create a positive and supportive environment and increase consistency in sharpening the santri' skills. This community service is implemented offline (outside the network) at Pondok Pesantren Putra Putri as Salafy Al Asror Patemon Gunungpati Semarang for one day. Santri can write application letter and have good interview skill in English. Then, the community service results a video and other documents. The expected output targets are publishing articles in journals and mass media publications.

Address: L Building, Campus Sekaran, Gunungpati, Semarang,
Indonesia, 50229

Correspondent Address :

Fakultas Ekonomika dan Bisnis, Universitas Negeri Semarang

Email : frozi@mail.unnes.ac.id,

INTRODUCTION

English is the most widely used language in the world of work. The majority of job interviews are conducted in English. The majority of company contracts are written in English (Siregar & Nuraida, 2023). Its widespread use creates English as a business language that becomes a competitive edge, especially in the professional world. In today's job market, English proficiency has become essential for professionals in almost every industry. According to Nyagah (2023), developing English language skills is essential to career success: increased job opportunities, improved communication skills, confidence building, better social networking skills, increased mobility, and increased promotion opportunities.

Generation 4.0 students who are agents of change play a role that is no longer limited to the scientific level but also penetrates potential workers who play a strategic role in determining the future of the world of work. Students today are expected to not only study academic education but also develop skills and attitudes relevant to the growing demands of the job market. English writing and speaking skills are essential aspects that can help students build successful careers. Pandey and Pandey (2014) stated that English skills are necessary for a better social life and better job opportunities in the future. Cover or application letters and job interviews are the first opportunity for job seekers to demonstrate their value to employers. Therefore, the focus on skills in writing effective job application letters needs to be improved.

Dwyer (1993: 300) explained that an application letter is persuasive because the writer is always trying to influence employers (readers) to be interested in considering the writer as one of the

candidates who is considered capable of filling the position offered. It is highly recommended that application letters be made as attractive as possible in terms of letter content and packaging (Rahardi, 2007). However, the current reality shows that errors in using tenses, prepositions, grammar, and the like still often occur, so the application letter submitted becomes less persuasive and engaging.

According to Nurjamal (2011), English language skills consist of four aspects: listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills, and writing skills. In a job application letter, writing skills are the main focus that needs to be developed because the mastery of writing skills in English for somewhat lacking students is the main reason for errors that cause job application letters to be less efficient and not accepted by the company. Based on a study by Prihatmi (2017), 70% of students stated that the most significant difficulty in writing was not knowing the words to use (vocabulary), and 20% of students indicated grammar/tenses as an obstacle in writing.

English writing skills are something that can be learned regularly through individual awareness. By having a high awareness of the importance of English language skills, a student can have a high enthusiasm for learning by himself or with professional help. However, not all students as santri are aware of the importance of learning English at Pondok Paseran. They only focus on deepen knowledge of the Quran, particularly through the study of Arabic, traditions of exegesis, the Sayings of the Prophet, law and logic. Farmasari et al. (2021) revealed that the lack of time, place, and access to the use of English in daily life, including in the academic environment, forms a perception that the use of English does not affect students' overall learning achievement. In addition, in a study conducted by Wahyuningsih,

Kusuma, & Listyanti (2021), some students think that English is not necessary in the world of work because there are many types of jobs, so not all require English language skills. This reason could be valid, but it also proves that students are not fully aware of the importance of English language skills.

Students such as Santri are examples of those who have not fully realized the importance of speaking English. Santri who live in boarding schools get minimal time, place, and access to English daily because, in general, boarding schools are prioritized for learning Arabic. In addition, santri who live in boarding schools tend to have denser activities than ordinary students. Not only focusing on academic study activities, students like Santri also have a schedule of recitation activities that the rules of the boarding school must follow. Some of these things are why the priority level of English language skills in Santri is still low.

Because of these problems, the devotion team reviewed to carry out community service related to developing writing skills as well as increasing employment opportunities through training in writing application letters and job interviews in English among santris so that it can become a medium or forum for improving the soft skills of them. Thus, it is hoped that this service can provide value to the santri and help them improve their English language skills, especially writing skills, they can expand employment opportunities and compete in the world of work.

Based on the previous explanation, it found a problem, namely Santri of the Pondok Pasanteren As-Salafy Al-Asror, who need strategies for writing in English. Apart from being useful for international relations, having the ability to master English can be an added value for a person to be able to compete and will make it easier

to get job opportunities (Thariq et al., 2021). Since not all new graduate students can easily find a job, extra effort is needed to find one after or before graduation (Fitria, 2022). Based on the observation of the community service team, this skill of santri is still minimal due to the constraints of the daily schedule and the lack of expert assistance.

Based on the analysis of partner conditions, the problem that the community service team wants to help overcome is how to improve writing skills and job opportunities for santri of the Pondok Pasanteren As-Salafy Al-Asror.

METHOD

The implementation of community service entitled "Improving Writing Skills of Santri through English Training Program at Pondok Pesantren" was carried out offline (outside the network) at Pondok Pesantren Putra Putri As Salafy Al Asror Patemon Gunungpati Semarang City during one day. It was on Sunday, June 9, 2024, at 09:00 to 12:00 A.M. This community service was attended by 25 santri of Pondok Pesantren Putra Putri As Salafy Al Asror Patemon Gunungpati.

The first activity was writing a job application letter and a Curriculum Vitae (CV) in English. Then, the next activity was learning about tips for answering questions when conducting compelling interviews and continued with interview practice in English. Three methods are used during the service's implementation: lecture, demonstration, and practice.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are several stages in the implementation of community service, the first of which is the planning stage. The initial step taken is to determine the target partners that will be used

as the location for community service activities. After determining the target partners, the service team compiled and submitted a proposal to the partner. Next, preparations will be made by visiting the Pondok Paseren and checking the hall's location, which will be used during the community service. After the planning stage is completed, the next is the training implementation. Three (3) methods are used when implementing community service: lecture, demonstration, and practice.



Figure 1. The community service team uses the demonstration method

The lecture method explains the theory of writing skills and provided tips for improving writing skills using English. The community service team uses the demonstration method to give examples of English presentations according to the proper structure. The exercise method is used to practice the theory that the service team has delivered. The series of event arrangements are as follows. After the planning stage is completed, the next is the training implementation. There is a schedule of activities during the training implementation, namely:

1. Opening and welcome

The first activity in the implementation of community service is opening. The activity is opened by reading Basmalah, hoping the community service implementation activities run smoothly, and then continued with the delivery of

remarks by Mr. Fahrur Rozi, S.Pd., M.Pd, Ph.D as the head of community service and representative of the leadership of Pondok Paseren Al-Asror.

2. Introductions

Introduction is done by a moderator who introduces the supervisor, Fahrur Rozi, S.Pd., M.Pd, Ph.D who has expertise in English Language Teaching, and continued by introducing the community service team members. Furthermore, community service teams give mementos to the Pondok Paseren Al-Asror.

3. Material Presentation

The material "Writing Skills as well as Job Opportunities through CV and Job Application Letter Training in English" was presented using PPT (Powerpoint Presentation) facilities. In the presentation slides, the material presented included the importance of writing skills in preparing job application letters and CVs for santri; the definition of CV and job application letters in English, basic English dictionary for writing job application letters and CVs; structure and format of application letters and Curriculum Vitae; tips and tricks for writing application letters and CVs in English; and English job interview strategies.

The presentation of this material is well listened to by the santri of Al-Asror Islamic Boarding School. The santri also actively participated in the communication between the presenter and the audience through question and answer sessions.

4. Q&A Session

The question and answer session is intended to provide an opportunity for santri who have questions about Job Application Letters, CVs, and Interviews to ask questions, which will later be answered directly by Mr. Fahrur Rozi, S.Pd., M.Pd, Ph.D who has expertise in English

Language Teaching and the community service team members.

5. Writing and Interview Practice

To learn more about the santri' understanding of the material presented, the service team prepared a challenge for santri to make an English job application letter and prepare English interview answers within 20 minutes. This challenge was carried out by dividing the group into five parts. After the assignment practice was completed, the santri is asked to present it in front of the audience.

6. Distribution of Gifts

The santri who actively participated in the activity and succeeded in preparing the best job application letters and interviews received gifts in the form of books, ballpoint pens, and snacks. In addition, participants who actively asked questions and were willing to give their impressions of the service activities were also given the same gifts.

7. Closing

After all series of implementation activities are completed, the activity is closed by saying "alhamdulillah" to the santri and the community service team as gratitude because the stages of implementing community service had run smoothly.



Figure 2. Implementation of community service

CONCLUSION

All series of community service activities can be carried out well and run smoothly. All Santri of Prondok Pasenteren have enthusiastic participating in this community service and is fully supported by the Head of the Pondok Pasanteren Foundation, Mr. KH. Almamnuhin Kholid. The head of the foundation hopes that this community service can be continued in the following year because it gives benefits for santri who are preparing for or entering the world of work. Further the community service is also expected to increase the knowledge and skills of the santri, especially other English skills.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, C. (2016). *TED Talks -the official ted guide to public speaking*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Devito, J. A. (2015). *Humam communication the basic course. (New York: Pearson Education Limited, 2015.ed.13)*.
- Farmasari, S. M. (2021). Maksimalisasi penggunaan flashcard untuk penguatan kosa kata bahasa inggris siswa SMP pinggiran di Kota Mataram. *Darma Diksani*, 78-88.
- Fitria, T. N. (2022). bimbingan karir bagi lulusan mahasiswa: pelatihan mencari lowongan pekerjaan, menulis surat lamaran pekerjaan dan mendesain CV Mmenarik. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Community Innovations (JECI) 1.1* , 9-15.
- Fraleigh, D. M. (2017). *Speak up! an illustrated guide to public speaking (L. Winters (ed.); 4th ed.). Bedford / St. Martis's*.

- Megawati, F. (2016). Kesulitan mahasiswa dalam mencapai pembelajaran bahasa inggris secara efektif. *Jurnal Paedagogia*, 147-156.
- Nyagah, G. (2023, August 5). Importance of english speaking skills in today's global job market.
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/importance-english-speaking-skills-todays-global-job-market-nyagah/>
- Petrus Tamelab, M. H. (2021). Meningkatkan kepercayaan diri mahasiswa dalam kemampuan public speaking di Sekolah Tinggi Pastoral Keuskupan Agung Kupang. *Jurnal Selidik Vol 2 No (1)*, 54-63.
- Reddy, M. S. (2016). Importance of English language in today's world. *International Journal of Academic Research*, Vol. 3 Issue 4(2), 179-184.
- Susanthi, I. G. (2021). kendala dalam belajar bahasa inggris dan cara mengatasinya. *Linguistic Community Service Journal*, 64-70.
- SusyLOWATI, E. Z. (2022). Pelatihan bahasa inggris bagi santri di Pesantren Al-Mashduqie di Kabupaten Bangkalan. *Jurnal Abdi Dharma Masyarakat (JADMA)*, 29-33.
- Sutardi, A. (2011). *The pocket handbook of daily conversation and dictionary of basic english*. Mobile English Plus.
- Thariq, P. A., Husna, A., Aulia, E., Djusfri, A. R., Lestari, R., Fahrimal, Y., & Jhoanda, R. (2021). sosialisasi pentingnya menguasai bahasa inggris bagi mahasiswa. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat: Darma Bakti Teuku Umar 2.2*, 316-325