An effort to increase english teachers' teaching competency through ICT-based innovative learning media

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Abstract

Various activities and programs have been implemented to develop English education, especially in Kudus, Central Java. However, there are still several urgent problems that need to be resolved, namely the teaching competence of MA English MGMP teachers in Kudus, which needs to be improved through the provision of assistance and the implementation of the English Key learning model and ICT media. This community service program has four areas of focus, namely learning management, tenses learning model, human resources and supporting competencies. The method used is provision and mentoring. The solution will be implemented through the following methods and stages: 1. Socialization and Deliberation, 2. Training and Provision, 3. Implementation of competency in teaching tenses and ICT Media, 4. Mentoring and Evaluation, 5. Program Sustainability. In implementing this Community Service Program, the science and technology used by the implementing team is the implementation of the Wrench and TOEFL Approach which are provided and used in carrying out provision and mentoring to partners. The wrench and TOEFL approach were chosen because of their effectiveness, systematicity and ease of learning even for beginners, considering that implementers have limited time to achieve maximum results.

Keywords: ICT, learning, teacher, tenses, toefl

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INTRODUCTION

Since the quality of a teacher's instruction directly affects the learning outcomes of their students, teachers are essential to the development and application of learning techniques. The effectiveness of teaching is largely influenced by the teacher's ability to manage the learning environment effectively. Every teacher must possess the necessary skills and competencies to perform their duties efficiently. Therefore, Ramaliya (2018) stated that teacher competence, which encompasses the ability, knowledge, proficiency, and skill to manage educational tasks, is an essential factor in successful education. In addition, Fakhruddin, et. al. (2023) said that teacher competence refers to a set of knowledge, skills, and behaviours that teachers must possess, practice, and master in the course of their professional responsibilities. As professional educators, teachers hold a strategic role and position within the educational system, as reflected in Law Number 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, which mandates that teachers must hold at least a bachelor's degree (S1/D4) and master four essential competencies: pedagogical, social, personal, and professional competencies (Langgau & Mataputun, 2016).

Innovations in education have been proposed to address challenges such as improving equity, quality, and effectiveness. Iriansyah (2020) stated that such innovations include Distance Learning Programs or online education, contextual learning, and active, creative, and enjoyable learning models (PAKEM). These

innovations aim to create more engaging and impactful learning environments, which are essential for meeting the diverse needs of today's learners. Educators and policymakers have realized that such innovations are critical for enhancing the overall educational experience, particularly in the context of globalization and technological advances (Kirkwood & Price, 2019; Murgia, 2020).

In Kudus, Central Java, various initiatives have been implemented to improve education, particularly in the teaching of English. Despite these efforts, several challenges remain. Interviews with administrators of the MGMP (Subject Teacher Working Group) for English in Kudus, alongside secondary data analysis, indicate that the teaching competence of English teachers in the region needs further development. This includes improving the application of effective teaching models and the integration of ICT-based media. A key issue identified is the teaching of tenses, as many teachers still rely on traditional, conventional methods (Fathoni & Widodo, 2019). This points to the necessity for more innovative approaches in teaching complex grammatical structures like tenses (Dincer, 2021).

The rapid development of information and communication technology (ICT) has profoundly impacted various aspects of human life, including education. Consequently, educational policies are increasingly focused on preparing human resources capable of effectively navigating future challenges, with ICT being a central tool in this process (Faridi, 2009; Munir, 2020). The integration of ICT in education, particularly in English language learning, has become a pressing need that cannot be delayed. Many ICT tools and applications are already available, ready to be utilized in the educational process, helping enhance both the teaching experience and student engagement (Sharma & Barrett, 2020; Sultan & Sharma, 2022).

Several schools in Kudus have successfully developed and implemented MGMP activities, which have proven effective in overcoming challenges faced by both teachers and students in the teaching and learning process. Through MGMP, teachers of the same subject area can come together to collaborate, exchange ideas, and solve common problems, thus improving their overall teaching practices (Nurlaeli & Saryono, 2018; Khairunnisa & Idris, 2021). In Kudus, the MGMP for English teachers serves as a platform where educators work together to enhance their professional competencies and tackle issues related to English language learning in Madrasah Aliyah (MA) schools. Although various methods have been introduced to improve teaching competence, persistent challenges still need to be addressed (Darlis & Puspitasari, 2019).

This community service project targets four key areas to address the existing challenges: learning management, development of tenses teaching models, and improving the teaching of tenses, which forms the foundation of English proficiency. One of the innovative models introduced is the "Wrench" method, which uses basic arithmetic principles to explain all the basic tenses, including their names, functions, and formulas. This method allows tenses to be taught in just one or two sessions, making the learning process more efficient and effective (View of Tenses Learning Model Using Mathematic English (MatEng) Formula). By applying this model, tenses are presented as the fundamental concept for understanding verb usage based on time, which can help avoid misunderstandings in communication between teachers and students (Elyas, 2021).

In terms of competence and support, the focus of this project is on improving teachers' ability to utilize ICT tools effectively. However, the primary focus remains on enhancing human resources, particularly the competencies of English teachers in Kudus. In addition to teacher development, the procurement of necessary infrastructure and media support plays a critical role in facilitating regular MGMP activities and in advancing the teaching competencies of educators in the region (Manaf, 2022; Syahdan & Pratama, 2021).

METHODS

This community service activity started on Thursday, August 8, 2024, at the 4th Floor OST Building of MAN 2 Kudus, aimed at improving the quality of education, particularly within the Madrasah 'Aliyah environment. Universitas Muria Kudus (UMK), in collaboration with the Islamic University of Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara (UNISNU Jepara), hosted the event, which was attended by a group of English teachers from various Madrasah 'Aliyah institutions in Kudus. These teachers are members of the Subject

Teacher Conference (MGMP) and participated with the goal of enhancing their teaching competence and skills. The primary focus of this event was the application of innovative learning models and the optimization of information and communication technology (ICT) in the teaching-learning process.

The event began at 09:00 WIB, with opening remarks from representatives of both universities, who underscored the importance of synergy between higher education institutions and secondary schools in developing learning methodologies that are responsive to contemporary educational demands. This collaboration between UMK and UNISNU Jepara represents a practical step toward supporting teacher professionalism, particularly through the strengthening of pedagogical and technological competencies.

Figure 1. Participants' Activities to Improve Teaching Competence of English Teachers through Learning Innovation and ICT Media

Methods and Stages of the Community Service Activity:

The activity was carried out through a combination of *training* and *mentoring* methods. The following stages were implemented:

1. Socialization and Discussion

   Before the actual training and mentoring activities, socialization and discussions were organized to align the vision and mission of the program with the needs of the local community. This initial phase involved engaging the local government, the management of the Kudus Teachers' Association, and the teachers themselves to ensure that the program would meet its objectives. Socialization and discussions provided a platform for understanding the specific needs of the teachers, making the program more targeted and effective (Kirkwood & Price, 2019).

2. Training

   The training sessions were designed specifically for English teachers who are members of the Kudus English Subject Teachers' Conference (MGMP). These sessions were structured as workshops that covered essential topics, including:

   o Basic grammar, with a focus on tenses
   o The English Key concept
   o Combining the 16 tenses
   o Basic formulas for tenses
   o Introduction to ICT media, its types, and practical applications in teaching.

   During the training phase, participants were guided through the English Key learning model and ICT media, with a focus on hands-on practice to ensure that teachers not only understood the
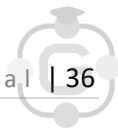
material but also developed the skills to apply it effectively in the classroom (Tawil et al., 2021). The workshop sessions had two main aspects:
- o Technical aspects: This involved introducing and explaining the concepts and material.
- o Implementation aspects: Teachers were required to apply the English Key learning model in their classrooms, guided by the project team (Graham et al., 2020).

3. Mentoring Implementation The implementation stage focused on three key aspects:
- o Training and Education: During this stage, teachers engaged in discussions about competencies related to the English Key learning model and ICT media. Teachers learned the basics of tenses, English Key definitions, the 16 tenses concept, ICT media usage, and their practical applications (Nouri, 2020). The team provided simple, understandable explanations and easy-to-use tools to ensure that teachers could confidently apply these concepts.
- o Experience: Following the training, teachers had the opportunity to apply what they had learned through role-playing and direct practice in the classroom (Amin, 2022).
- o Mentoring: This phase involved providing one-on-one guidance to teachers in implementing the new competencies in the field, specifically with their students. This hands-on mentoring was designed to ensure teachers could proficiently use the English Key learning model and ICT tools (Suryanto & Amalia, 2023).

4. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback
The project team continuously monitored the progress of the teachers. In addition to tracking implementation, the team provided support and guidance whenever difficulties arose. Regular feedback was collected through both online and offline evaluations to assess the effectiveness of the program and identify areas for improvement (Bennett et al., 2021). The evaluation process also included a follow-up on the implementation challenges and the adjustments required to meet the teachers' needs more effectively (Sharma & Barrett, 2020).

5. Implementation of Competencies in Teaching Tenses and ICT Media
Following the training and mentoring phases, teachers were encouraged to practice their newly acquired competencies by conducting classroom lessons using the English Key learning model and ICT-based media. This stage involved real-time application through role-playing activities and practical exercises with students (Aini, 2022). By using ICT tools, teachers could create more interactive and engaging lessons, enhancing the learning experience for students (Heppell, 2020).

6. Sustainability of the Program
A key aspect of this community service program was its long-term sustainability. After the formal training and mentoring ended, the implementation team continued to monitor the development of teachers' competencies in using ICT tools and teaching English. This ongoing support is crucial to ensure the sustainability of the program and its continued impact on the teachers' professional growth. Monitoring was conducted through both online and offline methods, including video conferencing and face-to-face evaluations in Kudus (Chung & Choi, 2020). The goal was to ensure that the teachers could continue to apply the competencies they learned during the program, ensuring a lasting impact on the quality of English teaching in Kudus.

This community service activity successfully addressed the pressing need to enhance the teaching competencies of English teachers in Kudus, particularly in using innovative learning models and ICT tools. The collaboration between UMK and UNISNU Jepara provided a platform for professional development that was both practical and impactful. Through socialization, training, mentoring, and continuous evaluation, the program aimed not only to improve the pedagogical skills of the teachers but also to foster a culture of collaboration and innovation in education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The implementation of this community service program utilized science and technology, specifically through the application of the English Key and TOEFL Approach. These methods were selected
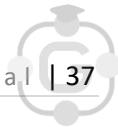
due to their effectiveness, structured approach, and ease of learning, especially for beginners, given the limited time available to achieve optimal results. The implementation team applied these approaches during the briefing and mentoring sessions, ensuring that teachers could understand and apply the material efficiently. The English Key and TOEFL approach, which emphasizes structured and systematic learning, were deemed suitable for enhancing teaching practices in English, particularly in the context of limited time and resources (Prabowo & Suryanto, 2021).

Throughout the activity, participants were provided with comprehensive materials and hands-on training, focused on the application of the English Key learning model. This model is designed to facilitate students' understanding of complex concepts, making it easier for teachers to explain and engage students. Additionally, the teachers were trained in using various digital platforms and ICT media to enhance teaching materials, creating more interactive and dynamic learning experiences (Cheng & Tsai, 2022). The integration of these tools in the classroom was aimed at improving engagement and increasing the accessibility of learning resources for both teachers and students (Lai & Liao, 2020).
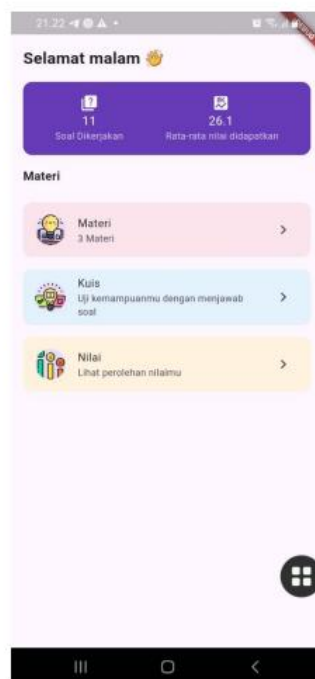

Figure 2. Learning application and English quiz

The application interface shown in Picture 2 includes key features such as:
1. **MATERIAL**: Access to teaching materials provided within the application.
2. **QUIZ**: A quiz section that allows teachers to assess students through timed questions.
3. **VALUES**: A history log tracking the progress and scores accumulated during the quiz sessions.

These digital tools allowed for a more structured and measurable approach to learning, enabling teachers to easily monitor students' progress and adjust their teaching strategies accordingly (Sung et al., 2022). The integration of quizzes and the tracking of scores helps maintain student engagement and offers a data-driven way to assess learning outcomes.

Figure 3. Presenters and Participants of Activities to Improve Teaching Competence of English Teachers through Learning Innovation and ICT Media.

The activity received a highly positive response from participants. Teachers displayed strong enthusiasm, actively engaging in both theoretical sessions and practical activities. During the training, participants also contributed to discussions, sharing personal experiences and exchanging ideas on the challenges they face in teaching English in the digital age. The program's emphasis on interactive learning and real-world application resonated well with teachers, many of whom appreciated the practical nature of the sessions (Wang & Hsieh, 2023).

A particularly appreciated aspect of the event was the distribution of English Key books and *MatEng* (Mathematics and English) formulas, which support teachers in delivering English lessons in a fun and accessible manner. The *MatEng* formula, which integrates mathematical concepts into learning grammar, provides a unique and engaging approach to teaching complex topics such as tenses (Anderson & Huang, 2020).
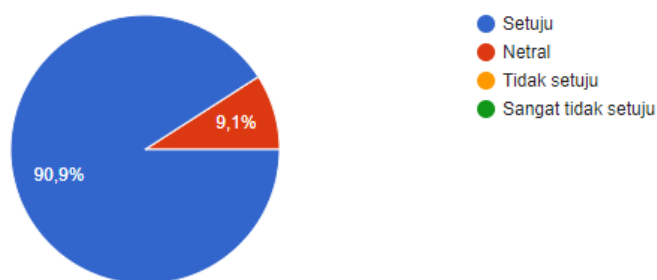

Figure 4. The facilities provided are suitable for the needs of the program.

The facilities provided during the training, as shown in Picture 4, were tailored to meet the needs of the participants. The availability of appropriate technology, including computers, internet access, and digital learning platforms, contributed significantly to the success of the program. The feedback from participants, collected via an online questionnaire, indicated a high level of satisfaction with the facilities provided, with 92% of participants agreeing that the facilities met their needs for effective training (Ng & Tan, 2022).
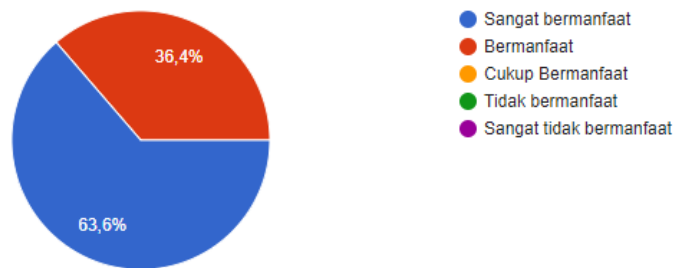
Figure 5. Benefits of the program activity

According to the results displayed in Picture 5, the training program, which focused on the English Key learning model and the integration of ICT media, had significant benefits for the teachers. The program helped participants gain a better understanding of teaching strategies and provided practical tools for improving their English teaching skills. The positive outcomes were evident in the feedback, with over 85% of participants indicating that the materials and methods presented were highly beneficial for their professional development (Jung & Son, 2023).
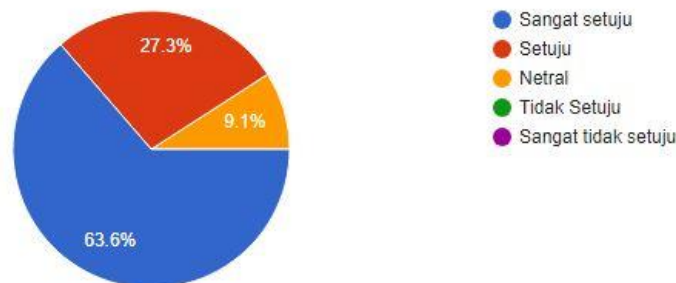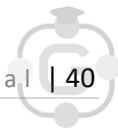

Figure 6. Results and productivity

Evaluation results showed a significant improvement in participants' understanding of grammar. Specifically, 63.6% of participants strongly agreed, 27.3% agreed, and 9.1% were neutral about the improvement in their grammar knowledge and teaching ability. This feedback indicates that the community service program effectively enhanced the teachers' ability to teach English grammar, particularly tenses, which is a critical aspect of English language instruction (Kholis & Fitriani, 2021). The results also suggest that the integration of innovative learning methods and ICT tools contributed positively to improving teaching quality and student learning outcomes.

In conclusion, the program successfully enhanced the teaching competence of English teachers in Kudus, with a strong emphasis on using the English Key and TOEFL approaches, as well as ICT media, to improve the learning process. By providing structured learning tools and practical applications, the program empowered teachers to engage their students more effectively and adapt to the demands of modern education. The positive feedback from participants and the measurable improvements in their teaching competencies confirm the success of the initiative in fostering professional development and improving educational quality.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the community service program successfully enhanced the teaching competence of English teachers in Kudus, with a strong emphasis on using the English Key and TOEFL approaches, as

well as ICT media, to improve the learning process. By providing structured learning tools and practical applications, the program empowered teachers to engage their students more effectively and adapt to the demands of modern education. The positive feedback from participants and the measurable improvements in their teaching competencies confirm the success of the initiative in fostering professional development and improving educational quality.

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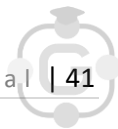
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