

## **EMPOWERING UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC STAFF THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED ENGLISH TRAINING: A LANGUAGE CENTER INITIATIVE FOR STRENGTHENING PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION**

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### **ABSTRAK**

Keterbatasan akses terhadap pelatihan bahasa Inggris yang relevan masih menjadi hambatan utama dalam pengembangan profesional dosen dan staf akademik, terutama dalam komunikasi ilmiah, publikasi riset, partisipasi dalam konferensi internasional, dan kolaborasi lintas negara. Kemampuan berbahasa Inggris akademik sangat penting bagi mereka untuk dapat terlibat secara aktif dalam wacana akademik global dan memenuhi target kinerja institusi. Namun, kebutuhan ini sering kali diabaikan dalam program pengabdian kepada masyarakat yang diselenggarakan oleh perguruan tinggi. Tulisan ini menyajikan program pelatihan bahasa Inggris enam sesi yang dikembangkan dan dilaksanakan oleh dosen Pusat Pengembangan Bahasa UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, yang secara khusus ditujukan bagi staf akademik universitas dan keluarganya. Program ini menggunakan model desain instruksional ASSURE dan mengintegrasikan pendekatan Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), serta pemanfaatan alat bantu berbasis kecerdasan buatan seperti Grammarly dan ChatGPT. Berdasarkan hasil pre-test, post-test, survei kepuasan peserta, dan observasi, temuan menunjukkan bahwa program pelatihan jangka pendek ini secara signifikan meningkatkan keterampilan menulis dan berbicara akademik peserta, sekaligus meningkatkan kepercayaan diri mereka. Kajian ini menegaskan bahwa program pengabdian masyarakat dapat berfungsi tidak hanya sebagai bentuk kontribusi sosial, tetapi juga sebagai intervensi pedagogis strategis untuk pengembangan institusi, terutama ketika ditujukan secara internal kepada para profesional akademik di lingkungan universitas, bukan sekadar melibatkan mereka sebagai fasilitator, tetapi juga sebagai penerima manfaat.

**Kata Kunci:** *pelatihan bahasa Inggris, pengabdian masyarakat, dosen pusat bahasa, komunikasi akademik, pengembangan profesional*

### **ABSTRACT**

Limited access to relevant English training remains a major obstacle to the professional development of university lecturers and academic staff, particularly in scholarly communication, publishing research, participating in international conferences, and collaborating across borders. Proficiency in academic English is essential for them to effectively engage in global academic discourse and meet institutional performance targets. However, this need is often overlooked in university-led community service programs. This paper presents a six session English training initiative developed and implemented by lecturers at the Language Center of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, specifically targeted at university academic staff and their families. The program employed the ASSURE instructional design model and integrated Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and AI assisted tools such as Grammarly

and ChatGPT. Based on pretests, posttests, participant surveys, and observations, the findings show that this short-term program significantly improved participants' academic writing and speaking skills, as well as their confidence. This study argues that community service initiatives can serve not only as acts of social contribution but also as strategic pedagogical interventions for institutional development, especially when they are aimed internally, targeting academic professionals within the university, not merely involving them as facilitators but as beneficiaries.

**Keywords:** *English language training, community service, language center lecturers, academic communication, professional development*

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## INTRODUCTION

The increasing demand for English proficiency among academic staff is critical in enhancing academic communication, fostering international collaborations, and engaging in global scholarly discourse. Studies indicate that English competence is vital for professional development, particularly for those involved in publishing research, attending international conferences, and collaborating across different linguistic backgrounds [1], [2]. Despite the importance of English proficiency, many academic staff and lecturers face several challenges, including limited access to structured training programs, time constraints, and inadequate opportunities to practice English in academic contexts [3]–[5]. Furthermore, a lack of engaging, effective language training can hinder their progression and participation in higher education environments dominated by English language use [6], [7]. Therefore, addressing these barriers is essential to improving the English proficiency of academic staff and enhancing their contributions to international academia.

The need for faculty and staff development in language skills is increasingly recognized in academic institutions, yet current English language training programs frequently fail to address the specific requirements of academic professionals. Many of these programs tend to be overly general or prioritize everyday communication skills instead of focusing on the nuances required in academic and professional discourse [8]. Moreover, the demanding schedules and various administrative duties of faculty and staff inhibit their capacity to engage in long-term language courses, resulting in an impediment to their language advancement [9]. Therefore, it is essential to develop targeted English training initiatives that concentrate on practical academic communication abilities tailored to the unique contexts and demands of university faculty and staff [8].

In response to these challenges, the Language Center of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang initiated an English language training program as part of a university-wide community service agenda during Ramadan 2025. The program, titled Pusat Bahasa Mengabdi, was mandated through Rector's Decree Number 484 of 2025, which instructed the Language Center

to deliver language teaching programs specifically for the university's academic community. This initiative aimed to address the prevalent challenges in English language proficiency among university staff, lecturers, and their families. Launched in March 2025, the program focused on enhancing essential language skills such as grammar, reading, listening, writing, and speaking, utilizing effective pedagogical approaches. By implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) methodologies, the program emphasized interactive and contextual learning, ensuring that participants engage in activities relevant to their academic and professional environments. CLT is recognized for its efficacy in fostering communicative competence through meaningful interaction [10], [11], while TBLT has been shown to improve language skills by centering activities around practical tasks that enhance learner engagement [12], [13]. The integration of these methodologies supports a comprehensive skill development framework, addressing the diverse learning needs of the participants and promoting a supportive language learning environment [14].

The primary objectives of this initiative are twofold. First, it seeks to create an accessible platform for academic staff to develop their English language skills in a way that directly supports their professional responsibilities [15]. This emphasis on accessibility aligns with the notion that effective communication and collaboration are crucial for enhancing academic engagement [16]. Second, it aims to build confidence among participants in using English effectively in their academic and workplace settings. Such confidence is essential, as research indicates that a positive attitude and active engagement in collaborative learning initiatives significantly improve students' communication skills and overall academic competency [17]. Additionally, the program fosters a collaborative and supportive learning environment, which encourages the continuous application and practice of English skills beyond the formal training sessions. The importance of collaborative learning has been well documented, with findings suggesting that it enhances communicative competence and cultivates a sense of community among learners, thus fostering ongoing engagement in scholarly activities [18].

The theoretical foundation of this initiative is deeply embedded in contemporary language learning approaches that underscore the significance of interaction, practical application, and learner-focused instruction. Within this framework, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) plays a pivotal role by providing participants with authentic contexts to enhance their spoken and written communication skills, as supported by studies demonstrating CLT's effectiveness in fostering communicative competence and reinforcing meaningful interactions in language learning environments [10], [19], [20]. Furthermore, Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

facilitates engagement in practical activities that closely simulate actual academic tasks such as writing abstracts, delivering presentations, and discussing research findings, resonating with findings that highlight TBLT as an effective methodology in language acquisition, particularly for adult learners [21]. Additionally, theories surrounding self-determination and adult learning emphasize the essential roles of motivation and autonomy in the language learning process. These factors are particularly important for professionals who require relevant language skills for their careers; the alignment of these pedagogical principles enables participants not only to acquire necessary technical competencies but also to cultivate confidence in their practical application [22], [23]. Therefore, by adhering to these comprehensive educational theories, the initiative is poised to provide a robust platform for developing both the linguistic skills and personal growth of its participants.

This paper outlines the design, implementation, and outcomes of the English language training program conducted by the Language Center of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang as part of its institutional community service mandate. The contribution of this study lies in its demonstration of how an internal university-led service program can effectively strengthen the academic capacity of university personnel. It presents a replicable model for other institutions seeking to enhance faculty English proficiency through short term, targeted interventions using pedagogical innovations and institutional policy support. The following sections describe the methodology used in structuring the training, the key findings from pre and post training assessments, and the implications for future language development programs within academic institutions. The pedagogical, institutional, and practical dimensions of the initiative are examined to demonstrate how this study contributes to the growing discourse on faculty development and English for academic purposes in Indonesian higher education.

## **METHOD**

This community service program involved university staff, lecturers, and their families at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang as the primary participants. The program was conducted at the Language Center, with the objective of enhancing participants' English language proficiency through structured training sessions. A total of 50 participants voluntarily enrolled in the program, comprising 26 lecturers, 14 administrative staff, and 10 family members of university employees. Participation was open to all academic and administrative members of the university, including their families, who wished to improve their English communication skills.

Recruitment for the program was conducted through an open announcement circulated via internal communication channels, including WhatsApp groups and official bulletin boards, following the issuance of Rector's Decree Number 484 of 2025. This decree mandated the Language Center to organize community service in the form of English language instruction for the university's academic community during the month of Ramadan. A digital poster containing program details and registration deadlines was disseminated across university units, and participants registered on a first-come, first-served basis. In line with ethical research practices, all prospective participants were informed about the purpose of the training and the intended use of assessment data for academic publication. Written consent was obtained prior to the start of the program, and strict confidentiality of participants' personal information was maintained. Participation in all assessments and surveys was entirely voluntary, and individuals were free to withdraw from the program at any point without consequence.

The ASSURE instructional model comprises six distinct stages and offers a systematic approach to instructional design. The initial stage, Analyze Learners, involves conducting pre-training assessments and administering questionnaires to gauge participants' initial English proficiency levels and unique learning needs, aligning with principles outlined in quality assurance in education [24], [25]. Subsequently, in the State Objectives stage, explicit learning goals are established to correspond with the academic and professional communication demands of participants. This stage incorporates tasks like writing academic papers, delivering presentations, and engaging in discussions as critical components of the curriculum [26].

The third stage, Select Media and Materials, entails a strategic selection of instructional resources, which is critical for enhancing learning outcomes. To ensure content relevance and reliability, all instructional materials used, including grammar tasks, reading passages, and listening activities, were adapted from internationally recognized EFL resources that have been peer reviewed or widely used in academic English instruction. AI assisted tools such as Grammarly and ChatGPT were selected based on their accessibility, user control, and proven usability in language learning contexts. The instruments used for assessment, such as pretests, posttests, and satisfaction surveys, were reviewed by three senior English language instructors at the Language Center to ensure face and content validity. The survey questions were piloted with a small group of nonparticipant staff members to refine clarity and appropriateness.

In the fourth stage, Utilize Media and Materials, interactive activities such as role-plays, structured discussions, and peer reviews were implemented to foster engagement and the practical application of language skills. Research indicates that peer review activities

significantly enhance students' learning by promoting meaningful interactions, which are pivotal for language development and writing skills [29], [30].

The fifth stage, Require Learners' Participation, encouraged active involvement through workshops, one-on-one coaching, and guided speaking tasks that allowed learners to apply new language skills in realistic academic contexts. These tasks included practicing professional conversations, simulated academic discussions, and scenario-based role-play exercises, all of which emphasized the use of English in workplace-relevant settings. This mirrors findings that student-centered approaches, encompassing peer activities and interactive formats, bolster engagement and improve learning outcomes through collaborative interaction [31], [32].

Finally, in the Evaluate and Revise stage, post-training assessments involving pre- and post-tests, self-reflection surveys, and instructor feedback were employed to measure participants' progress. Such evaluations are essential for assessing program effectiveness, as they provide a structured framework for reflecting on learning experiences and outcomes, ensuring that both instructional strategies and learner engagement are systematically analyzed [33].

The training sessions were conducted over six days: March 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, and 20, 2025. The first three sessions focused on foundational language skills, while the latter three emphasized practical application through simulated academic tasks and interactive engagement. The training incorporated Communicative Language Teaching and Task Based Language Teaching approaches, ensuring that participants engaged in real-world communication tasks rather than passive language learning.

A structured methodology enabled the program to offer practical strategies for English language development, contributing to a more confident and competent academic community. The significance of sustained language training for university faculty and staff is underscored in literature, emphasizing that systematic training programs can enhance proficiency and teaching methods [34]. In particular, continuous professional development programs are crucial for the long-term improvement of English proficiency, which aligns with findings that advocate for diverse teaching practices and ongoing assessments to enhance faculty capabilities in language instruction [35]. Furthermore, the integration of innovative teaching methodologies has been shown to facilitate language development and engagement among both instructors and learners, underscoring the importance of these initiatives in higher education [35].

## FINDINGS

The community service program aimed to enhance the English language proficiency of university staff, lecturers, and their families at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. The program followed the ASSURE instructional model, which stands for *Analyze learners, State objectives, select media and materials, utilize media and materials, require learner participation, and evaluate and revise*. This model provides a systematic framework for designing instruction that is interactive, learner centered, and adaptable to diverse learning contexts. It was selected because it aligns well with the needs of adult learners, particularly in higher education, where clarity of objectives, contextual material use, and continuous feedback are essential. Each stage of the model was used to guide the development of the training content and activities, ensuring that the sessions were practical, relevant, and aligned with participants' academic communication needs. Conducted over six sessions on March 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, and 20, 2025, the program engaged 50 participants in interactive learning activities such as workshops, one on one coaching, role play exercises, and structured communication tasks. The application of the ASSURE model proved effective, as indicated by the notable improvement in language proficiency scores (Table 3) and high satisfaction levels across all training components (Table 4). These outcomes suggest that the model supported both instructional clarity and participant engagement throughout the program.

The structure of the English training program, as outlined in Table 1, reveals a deliberate and pedagogically sound sequence of activities that reflects the principles of adult learning and the ASSURE instructional design model. Each session was strategically designed to address both the linguistic gaps and practical communication needs of the participants, who were university staff, lecturers, and family members.

**Table 1. Program Schedule and Activities**

Session	Date	Activity	Focus Area
1	March 11	Pre-training questionnaire, introduction	Needs assessment
2	March 12	Grammar and writing workshop	Sentence structure, coherence
3	March 13	Listening and reading exercises	Academic comprehension

4	March 18	Speaking and discussion activities	Fluency, pronunciation
5	March 19	Role-play and guided language practice	Practical communication in real contexts
6	March 20	Post-training assessment and feedback	Evaluation, future planning

The program commenced with a pre-training assessment in session one to identify each participant's baseline proficiency and learning needs. This diagnostic phase was essential not only for mapping the individual challenges in language use but also for setting the tone for a personalized and participant-centered learning experience. The results revealed that the majority of participants experienced difficulties in writing academic texts, lacked confidence in speaking English in formal situations, and had limited exposure to structured English language training. These findings helped shape the content and pedagogical approach in the subsequent sessions.

Session two addressed the need for academic writing improvement by focusing on sentence structure and coherence. This session integrated grammar review with practical writing exercises, aiming to build participants' competence in producing clear and logically organized academic texts. Grammar instruction was not presented in isolation but embedded within writing tasks, thereby contextualizing grammar learning and reinforcing its relevance to professional communication. This stage of the program is illustrated in Figure 1, which captures a session on grammar and academic writing.



**Figure 1.** Workshop Session on Grammar and Academic Writing

Session three focused on receptive skills, emphasizing listening and reading for academic comprehension. The integration of these skills supported the development of discourse

awareness and academic vocabulary, both of which are crucial for understanding and producing scholarly texts. Activities in this session were designed to simulate real academic tasks, such as listening to lectures and reading journal abstracts, enabling participants to practice extracting meaning from complex input.

Following the development of receptive skills in the previous session, session four shifted the focus to productive oral skills. Participants engaged in speaking and discussion activities that targeted fluency and pronunciation. Through guided conversations, peer interactions, and speaking drills, they were encouraged to use English spontaneously while receiving constructive feedback to improve clarity and accuracy. This session was especially significant for many participants who reported feeling anxious or hesitant to speak English, and it played a key role in fostering greater confidence. Evidence of this improvement is reflected in the post training participant satisfaction survey (Table 4), where more than 90 percent of respondents agreed that their confidence in speaking English had increased as a result of the training. Many participants specifically highlighted speaking practice and one on one coaching as the most helpful components in overcoming their anxiety and becoming more comfortable using English in academic settings. Instructor observations further supported this, noting a visible increase in participants' willingness to engage in spontaneous conversation, initiate academic discussions, and respond more actively during group sessions. As shown in Figure 2, participants actively engaged in group discussions and fluency practice during this stage of the training.



**Figure 2.** Group Discussion and Fluency Practice in Session Four

Session five introduced role play and guided communication practice. Participants were required to simulate real academic interactions such as presenting papers, discussing research findings, and participating in professional meetings. These practical applications reinforced the

relevance of the training and helped participants internalize communicative strategies necessary for workplace environments.

The final session functioned as a phase for both post-assessment and reflection. Participants completed language proficiency tests and provided feedback on their learning experiences. This session enabled instructors to measure the program's impact while helping participants articulate their individual progress and future language development goals.

The careful sequencing of these six sessions reflects a coherent pedagogical approach that began with identifying learner needs, progressed through scaffolded skill development, and concluded with evaluation and forward planning. Each session built logically upon the previous one, ensuring that participants were acquiring not only discrete language skills but also the ability to integrate them into meaningful academic practices. The structure ensured that all four language domains, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, were addressed within an academic context and supported by practical tools and participant centered strategies. In sum, the design and content of the training program demonstrated thoughtful alignment between instructional goals, learner needs, and professional expectations within the higher education context.

An overview of participants' initial language difficulties, as identified in the needs assessment, is presented in Table 2. These results helped determine which language skills required greater instructional attention and guided the sequencing of the training sessions accordingly.

**Table 2. Pre-Training Needs Assessment Results**

Language Skill	% of Participants Identifying Difficulty
Academic Writing	72%
Speaking	68%
Listening	45%
Reading	39%
Grammar	61%

At the conclusion of the program, participants completed a post training assessment to measure progress and identify areas for further development. A summary of participants' progress across language skills is presented in Table 3. The evaluation demonstrated measurable improvement in all assessed areas, indicating the effectiveness of the instructional strategies used throughout the training.

**Table 3. Comparison of Pre- and Post-Training Language Proficiency Scores**

<b>Language Skill</b>	<b>Pre-Training Average Score</b>	<b>Post-Training Average Score</b>	<b>Improvement (%)</b>
Academic Writing	55	78	41%
Speaking	50	74	48%
Listening	65	82	26%
Reading	70	85	21%
Grammar	58	80	38%

In addition to quantitative assessments, qualitative feedback was gathered through participant surveys and instructor observations. Participants highlighted several key aspects of the training program that they found most beneficial. Many reported that writing support was particularly helpful, as the integration of Grammarly and structured writing exercises enabled them to improve clarity, coherence, and grammatical accuracy. Speaking activities, including structured discussions and guided role-play sessions, significantly increased participants' confidence in using English for academic communication. These activities offered opportunities to practice oral interaction in professional contexts, such as expressing opinions, participating in academic discussions, or responding to questions with fluency and precision. One-on-one coaching was also highly valued, as it provided personalized feedback and allowed participants to address individual linguistic challenges in a focused setting. Furthermore, the integration of AI-assisted learning tools, such as ChatGPT, facilitated real-time support and allowed participants to explore language alternatives, refine grammatical structures, and self-correct writing errors more independently.

The final evaluation of the English language training program included a participant satisfaction survey designed to assess perceptions of various training components and the overall learning experience. The results are summarized in Table 4 and offer empirical evidence of the program's perceived effectiveness from the participants' point of view.

**Table 4. Participant Satisfaction with Training Program**

Aspect of Training	Satisfaction Level (% Positive Responses)
Workshop Content	92%
Interactive Activities	89%
AI Tool Integration	85%
Role-Play and Structured Practice	87%
One-on-One Coaching	95%
Overall Program Experience	93%

As shown in Table 4, all elements of the training program received highly positive evaluations, with scores ranging from 85 percent to 95 percent. The highest satisfaction rate was recorded for one-on-one coaching, which received 95 percent positive responses. This result underscores the central importance of individualized instruction, particularly in adult learning contexts where participants often require tailored feedback to address specific linguistic difficulties. Personalized support likely created a low-anxiety environment that encouraged risk-taking and exploration, contributing to increased learner confidence and motivation. Closely following in satisfaction is the overall program experience, with 93 percent of participants expressing a favorable impression. This rating indicates that participants found the training not only relevant and engaging but also effective in supporting their immediate academic and professional language needs.

Workshop content received 92 percent approval, demonstrating that the instructional materials and topic choices were well-aligned with participants' learning goals. These workshops, which focused on grammar and writing accuracy, were particularly important given that academic writing had been identified as one of the major challenges during the initial needs assessment. Meanwhile, interactive activities such as group discussions and collaborative exercises earned an 89 percent satisfaction rating. This suggests that the communicative and learner-centered methodologies used in the training were successful in maintaining engagement, encouraging peer learning, and reducing speaking anxiety among participants.

Role-play and structured practice, which involved simulating real-life academic scenarios like professional discussions, meetings, or research presentations, received a strong approval rating of 87 percent. This figure confirms that participants valued the opportunity to rehearse practical academic communication in a low-stakes environment. These sessions likely provided them with space to internalize and apply newly acquired language strategies in contextually

meaningful ways, reinforcing the connection between language learning and workplace application.

Although AI tool integration received the lowest satisfaction score at 85 percent, it still indicates a generally favorable response. The use of platforms such as Grammarly and ChatGPT allowed participants to receive immediate feedback and improve their writing autonomously. However, the slightly lower rating may reflect varying levels of digital readiness or unfamiliarity with such tools among participants, suggesting the need for more structured onboarding in future programs. Additional tutorials or guided usage sessions could help participants maximize the potential of AI-supported learning.

Taken together, the satisfaction data indicate that participants not only appreciated the content and delivery of the training but also felt that it met their personal language development needs in a meaningful and professionally relevant way. The positive response to both human-centered and technology-assisted components demonstrates the value of blending traditional and innovative instructional strategies. These findings reinforce the effectiveness of community service-based training initiatives led by university lecturers, especially when the program is designed to be adaptive, collaborative, and directly linked to real academic communication challenges.

## **DISCUSSION**

The English language training program implemented at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang produced significant improvement in participants' proficiency across all measured language skills. Based on pre- and post-training assessments, participants experienced the most notable progress in speaking and academic writing, two areas previously identified as major challenges. In addition, positive qualitative feedback from participants confirmed the perceived benefits of the program, with many highlighting the helpfulness of structured writing support, interactive speaking activities, and one-on-one coaching. The high levels of satisfaction reported in the post-training survey further support the program's overall effectiveness in responding to participants' specific needs.

The successful outcomes of the program can be attributed to its meticulous integration of instructional models and learning principles specifically designed for adult academic learners. The ASSURE model, which stands for Analyze learners, State objectives, select media and materials, utilize media and materials, require learner participation, and evaluate and revise, was fully applied during the six-session workshop. Learner analysis was conducted through

pretraining assessments and questionnaires to identify participants' language backgrounds and skill gaps. Objectives were clearly defined at the beginning of each session, such as mastering sentence structure in writing or developing fluency in academic speaking. The team selected relevant materials, including academic texts, AI-supported writing tools, and listening exercises, all adapted from credible sources. These materials were actively used during instruction through hands-on workshops and interactive tasks. Participation was emphasized through peer discussions, one on one coaching, role play, and guided speaking activities. Finally, evaluation and revision were carried out through post training assessments, feedback surveys, and instructor reflections, which allowed the team to measure learning outcomes and refine the instructional approach. This systematic design, aligned with learners' profiles, proved highly effective in addressing adult education needs [36]. The incorporation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) further facilitated meaningful interaction and contextual learning, thereby promoting active engagement among participants during relevant academic tasks such as presentations, discussions, and academic writing [37], [38]. Furthermore, integrating AI based tools like Grammarly and ChatGPT provided real time language support, fostering learner autonomy by enabling participants to independently review, revise, and apply feedback [39], [40]. This combined approach not only enhanced linguistic development but also significantly elevated participants' confidence in their language skills [41].

The findings suggest that the key problems highlighted in the introduction, such as limited access to structured training, time constraints, and inadequate opportunities for academic language practice, are not insurmountable when the training design is responsive, practical, and learner centered. The improvement in writing and speaking indicates that these difficulties stem not only from a lack of language knowledge but also from the absence of targeted pedagogical support. This interpretation is supported by the substantial gains reflected in Table 3, where participants' writing scores improved by 41 percent and speaking scores by 48 percent, the two highest increases among all assessed skills. Furthermore, qualitative feedback from participants, as discussed earlier and reflected in Table 4, consistently pointed to the effectiveness of writing support sessions and interactive speaking tasks, including one on one coaching, in addressing specific learning gaps. These responses suggest that pedagogical strategies designed to meet academic communication needs contributed significantly to the progress achieved.

In comparison with earlier studies, this initiative both affirms and extends existing findings. Previous research emphasized the necessity of English competence for academic staff in professional communication and global academic participation [2], [1]. However, these studies noted that the lack of well-designed training programs hampers language development. This study supports those concerns but provides additional empirical evidence by demonstrating how a well-structured short-term program can effectively overcome such barriers. Similarly, while Devi [3], Rudd and Honkiss [4], and Ahmed et al. [5] highlighted the institutional and logistical constraints faced by lecturers, the results of this training program reveal that tailored instructional planning and flexible scheduling can still yield measurable improvements. Furthermore, although Clark and Ackerley [8] argued that many programs focus too much on general English, the current program directly addressed this gap by focusing explicitly on academic and professional English, with activities such as academic discussions, role-play tasks, and structured writing exercises. In this way, the findings both support previous critiques and illustrate how specific adjustments in program design can significantly change learning outcomes.

Beyond confirming earlier insights, this study contributes new knowledge regarding the use of AI tools in academic language training. While previous works largely focused on classroom-based or face-to-face methods [6], [7], the present study demonstrates how AI-assisted feedback and content generation can enhance the learner experience. This integration of technology into the learning process addresses the need for more flexible and autonomous learning strategies, especially for adult learners balancing professional and personal responsibilities.

Theoretically, this study affirms the relevance of constructivist and interactionist approaches to adult language learning, which emphasize meaningful engagement, learner autonomy, and real-world task orientation [23], [22]. Methodologically, it highlights the applicability of the ASSURE model as a guiding framework for short-term professional training in higher education. Practically, the success of this program suggests that academic institutions should consider embedding similar training into their professional development agendas, especially as demands for international publication and collaboration continue to grow. Future training efforts may benefit from extending the program duration, adding mentorship components, and integrating post-program follow-up sessions to reinforce learning and provide continued support.

## CONCLUSION

Surprisingly, this community service program carried out by lecturers of the Language Center at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang demonstrated that even a short-term English training initiative can result in meaningful improvements in language proficiency among university staff and their families. Contrary to the widespread belief that language development requires long-term courses and intensive schedules, the findings showed that carefully structured training with relevant academic tasks can significantly enhance speaking and writing skills. It turns out that when academic professionals are provided with purposeful learning opportunities tailored to their needs, their confidence and ability to engage in academic communication can improve within a short period. This challenges the assumption that time limitations are the primary barrier to faculty development in language skills.

The study contributes to the growing understanding of how community service in higher education, particularly when led by university lecturers, can directly address institutional needs while advancing public benefit. The lecturers of the Language Center at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang successfully designed and implemented a program that combined Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching, and AI-assisted tools within the ASSURE instructional framework. This approach not only supported the professional growth of university staff but also highlighted the potential of community service as a platform for academic contribution and innovation. By aligning their expertise with the needs of the university community, the lecturers demonstrated that community service can serve as a bridge between academic knowledge and social responsibility, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for continuous learning.

However, this initiative was limited in its duration and participant diversity, involving a single institution and focusing primarily on short-term outcomes. The program did not yet explore the long-term application of English skills in the workplace or academic outputs following the training. Future community service initiatives led by language center lecturers should consider extending the training over a longer period, involving a broader range of participants, and including follow-up activities to support sustained language use. Comparative studies across faculties or universities may also enrich the understanding of how language-focused community service can be scaled and adapted in different educational settings. These future directions will strengthen the role of university-led community service in enhancing academic communication and faculty development in Indonesia and beyond.

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