

Constructing Community Understanding of the Synergy Between English and Technology for Work Readiness: A Qualitative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Tujuan program layanan masyarakat ini adalah untuk meningkatkan kesadaran publik tentang bagaimana teknologi digital dan keterampilan bahasa Inggris bekerja sama untuk mempersiapkan orang-orang untuk dunia kerja. Program ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dan partisipatif berbasis komunitas untuk menyediakan pelatihan interaktif, latihan bahasa Inggris yang didukung teknologi, dan kegiatan bimbingan yang didasarkan pada skenario nyata di tempat kerja. Untuk mencatat pengalaman belajar dan sikap peserta, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan diskusi kelompok terfokus. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa kombinasi teknologi dengan bahasa Inggris meningkatkan literasi digital, kepercayaan diri dalam berkomunikasi, dan pemahaman peserta tentang ekspektasi di tempat kerja. Program ini juga menunjukkan bagaimana pembelajaran berbasis pengalaman dan partisipatif dapat secara efektif mendorong pengembangan keterampilan dan mendorong pendidikan berkelanjutan. Kesimpulannya, inisiatif ini menekankan pentingnya mengintegrasikan kemahiran bahasa dan kemahiran teknologi dalam program layanan masyarakat guna meningkatkan keterampilan ketenagakerjaan dan fleksibilitas tenaga kerja.

The goal of this community service program is to increase public awareness of how digital technology and English language skills work together to prepare people for the workplace. The program employed a qualitative and community-based participatory method to provide interactive training, technology-mediated English practice, and mentoring activities that were based on actual workplace scenarios. In order to record participants' learning experiences and attitudes, data were gathered via observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group conversations. The results indicate that combining technology with English enhances participants' digital literacy, communication confidence, and knowledge of workplace expectations. The program also illustrates how experiential and participatory learning can effectively promote skill development and encourage ongoing education. In conclusion, this initiative emphasizes the significance of integrating language proficiency and technological proficiency in community service programs in order to increase employability and workforce flexibility.



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INRODUCTION

The workforce skills needed in a variety of industries have undergone major changes over the last ten years due to the fast development of digital technology. In local, national, and international labor markets, a person's employability and flexibility are determined by their proficiency in the English language and their technological literacy, according to the World Economic Forum (2023). English is more and more acknowledged as a language used for international communication as well as a way to access digital resources, global knowledge, and cross-border employment prospects (EF EPI, 2023;

Sharma, 2021). In the meanwhile, technology—from simple digital tools to more sophisticated platforms—has changed workplace expectations, making digital literacy a crucial aspect of career preparation in the modern world (Hadiyanto & Yusuf, 2023).

The integration of technology and English is becoming more and more crucial in Indonesia, particularly as the country moves toward digitalizing its education, business, and public services. However, there is still a lot of confusion and discrepancy in society about how these two skills interact. In many towns, English proficiency is still seen as an academic need rather than a useful skill needed to succeed in technology-driven workplaces. In the same way, technological literacy is frequently practiced alone, without utilizing English as a helpful tool for making the most of online resources, software, or digital platforms (Sari & Pratiwi, 2022). This fragmented understanding contributes to a discrepancy between the skills that the workforce needs and the skills that the community has.

Recent studies suggest that communities, notably in semi-urban and rural regions, often segregate English skills from technical capabilities, which results in false assumptions regarding their importance to job readiness (Mahmud, 2021; Putri & Ramadhan, 2024). For instance, a person may be proficient in using smartphones or computers but have trouble comprehending digital forms, job boards, English-based tutorials, or interfaces. In contrast, some individuals with a fundamental understanding of English are hesitant to utilize technology because of a lack of experience or instruction. The community's capacity to engage in online markets, remote working systems, digital job possibilities, and worldwide communication is diminished by this divide.

Finding gaps in Indonesia, numerous empowerment initiatives have been put into place, but the majority of them concentrate on English instruction or digital literacy as distinct fields. There is a clear absence of qualitative research and community service programs that address:

1. The way communities think about the connection between technology and English,
2. how they create meaning, values, and opinions about this interaction.
3. What social and cultural influences affect how they see things, and
4. How their willingness for employment is impacted by these views.

Although existing studies have a tendency to focus on skill outcomes, such as advancements in English proficiency or digital literacy, they rarely address the fundamental understandings, values, and interpretations that communities have about the integration of these skills (Putri & Ramadhan, 2024). Because these socio-cognitive aspects are not thoroughly investigated, there is a gap in the development of empowerment programs that are culturally based, contextually relevant, and responsive to community demands.

Therefore, the current community service initiative is crucial in addressing this gap by performing a qualitative study on how the community perceives the synergy between English and technology and how this perception influences their preparation for the workforce. The results will inform the development of specific training modules, seminars, and learning interventions that promote the integration of English and technology in culturally significant ways.

Program urgency, in order to stay competitive in the workforce's growing digitalization—from online job applications, digital communication tools, remote work systems, to the widespread automation of simple tasks—communities must have integrated skill sets. It's not just advantageous but essential to improve their knowledge in order to guarantee:

1. greater access to employment options,
2. Increased participation in digital economic activities,
3. increased self-assurance while utilizing technology mediated by English,
4. improved capacity to learn independently via online resources, as well as
5. Increased ability to adjust to the changing needs of Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0.

This initiative is in line with national and international goals for workforce development, digital inclusion, and sustainable community development.

Through qualitative analysis, this project seeks to understand community perspectives and advance a more complete, integrated, and practical approach to skill development that immediately prepares people for the workforce in today's tech-driven and globalized world.

METHOD

This community service initiative uses a qualitative descriptive method with the goal of improving and exploring the community's understanding of the relationship between English and technology for job preparedness. In order to ensure that the activities are in line with community needs, sociocultural realities, and the current labor market trends, the strategy combines participatory approaches, field-based research, and empowerment-oriented interventions.

The community's perceptions, interpretations, and lived experiences pertaining to the integration of English and technology are captured using a qualitative descriptive method. This approach is suitable since it enables facilitators to explain community knowledge in a realistic, contextual, and holistic manner without changing the environment (Marshall & Rossman, 2021; Creswell, 2020).

The design incorporates three fundamental elements:

1. Discovery – recognizing current knowledge, challenges, and perceptions.
2. Interpretation – comprehending how communities make sense of the connection between technology and English.
3. Intervention: creating and executing empowerment initiatives specific to the results.

Participants and Setting

The participants are:

1. community members between the ages of 18 and 45
2. People looking for jobs or who are going through a transition
3. Youth groups in the community
4. local people with varying degrees of digital and English proficiency

In line with current data in Indonesian socio-cultural contexts (Putri & Ramadhan, 2024; Sari & Pratiwi, 2022), the environment is a semi-urban area where technology use is only somewhat prevalent and comprehension of digital English skills is still lacking.

To guarantee that participants reflect a range of levels of English fluency, digital literacy, and employment backgrounds, a purposive sample approach is employed.

Data Collection Techniques

The three qualitative methods utilized are:

Half-Structured Interviews

Used for gaining insight into one's own perspective, difficulties, and comprehension.

Thematic topics in interview guides include things like:

1. How people feel about English for the purpose of using it in the digital realm
2. Knowledge of technology-facilitated communication
3. The perceived significance of English for employment
4. Obstacles to combining English and technology

Interviews provide a lot of narrative information (Galletta, 2020).

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

FGDs are used to: and consist of 6–10 members each group.

1. Determine shared convictions
2. Examine community-wide trends
3. comprehend the impact of society and culture on learning
4. Map shared interpretations

FGDs foster interactive meaning-making, which is appropriate for community empowerment contexts (Bryman, 2021).

Program Implementation Stages

The community service program was implemented as a structured and sequential procedure intended to optimize the effects on participants' knowledge of the synergy between English and technology in the context of job preparedness. The intensive preparation phase, during which programme facilitators did a thorough needs assessment to determine the target community's current language skills, digital literacy, and perceived obstacles to being ready for the workforce, marked the start of the process. To adapt training modules that were contextually relevant and in line with professional needs, talks were held with community leaders, teachers, and prospective trainees throughout this preparatory period. Drawing on the increasing acknowledgment that digital instruments

are changing language learning and usage in the workplace, materials were created to combine practical English communication activities with popular technological applications. This integration reflects data indicating that technology has revolutionized conventional language teaching by integrating online resources, mobile apps, and digital platforms to improve communicative competence (Amir & Rustam, 2025).

The program then moved into the socialization and orientation phase, where all participants were officially informed of the program's aims, framework, and anticipated results. This stage was critical in raising knowledge of the necessity of English proficiency and technological fluency in order to succeed in today's labor market. Participants were encouraged to express their personal goals and reflect on their current skills through engaging orientation sessions, which helped lower anxiety about digital learning and promote early involvement. By setting clear expectations at this point, participants were better able to participate fully in the following activities.

The implementation and training phase, in which participants participated in a number of engaging workshops that combined real-world English activities with the use of digital technology, was the program's core. Among the activities covered in these workshops were creating professional emails in English, creating digital résumés, participating in virtual interview simulations, and using digital communication platforms for group assignments. Experiential learning was emphasized, with participants honing their skills in realistic or simulated workplace settings rather than simply receiving theoretical knowledge. This strategy is consistent with community service models that place a strong emphasis on active learning and contextualized instruction in order to improve skill relevance and retention. Recent community service initiatives have demonstrated that these integrated training models are extremely effective at improving participants' linguistic and digital skills in accordance with the demands of the workplace (Suharni et al., 2025; Meylina, 2025).

The curriculum moved into the mentoring and practice phase after the workshop series, which offered a more individualized learning atmosphere where participants could use their newfound knowledge under the guidance of a mentor. Participants were able to improve their use of digital tools and develop their English communication skills with the help of tailored coaching and support provided by facilitators. Particularly for people who were initially hesitant about using either language or technology, this continuous assistance was really helpful. According to studies, the mentoring phase, which is intended to promote learner independence and reflection on individual progress, is crucial for fostering long-term engagement and higher learning results.

The evaluation and reflection phase, which followed, was used to gauge the program's efficiency and the participants' advancement. During this phase, facilitators were able to gain a nuanced understanding of how participants' attitudes and abilities changed throughout time through formative assessments, focus group conversations, and individual reflections. Qualitative assessment techniques were especially helpful in determining the degree to which participants were able to combine English fluency and digital literacy in a way that immediately improved their work preparedness. The feedback from participants emphasized their greater understanding of the significance of both abilities for professional growth and self-improvement.

The program ultimately came to a conclusion with the reporting, dissemination, and sustainability phase, during which all results, ideas, and recommendations were methodically recorded in a thorough last report. To broaden the program's reach outside of the direct participants, the results were shared with community stakeholders, educational partners, and perhaps in academic or professional forums. Dissemination also included proposals for future projects, stressing the necessity of ongoing cooperation in order to overcome structural issues such as disparities in access to digital devices and internet access. The program sought to foster broader discussions on integrating English and digital literacy in community education—a priority in many recent service efforts in the educational field—by recording and sharing lessons learned.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This community service program's results show that promoting community awareness of the synergy between English and technology is essential for enhancing work readiness, especially among participants of productive age. Prior to the program, the majority of participants saw technology and English as distinct talents and frequently thought of English as complex, abstract, and unrelated to their

daily or professional requirements. Likewise, the majority of people saw technology as a source of amusement rather than as a vehicle for job advancement or business communication. These early observations support earlier research that emphasizes the lack of understanding of integrated language and digital skills in community environments (Kusuma Dewi et al., 2024).

Participants were gradually exposed to practical and contextual learning exercises that integrated English communication with the usage of digital technologies regularly used in workplace settings throughout the implementation phase. Participants were able to use English as a practical skill rather than a theoretical concept through activities like composing professional emails, creating digital curriculum vitae, taking part in online debates, and giving brief presentations utilizing digital platforms. Participants consequently demonstrated a marked improvement in their capacity to express thoughts, directions, and business communications in English via technology-mediated channels. Recent studies have shown that contextualized English instruction improves communicative competence and job self-assurance, which is supported by this conclusion (Suharni et al., 2025; Wibowo & Latif, 2025).

The program made a significant contribution to improving participants' digital literacy in addition to their language skills. Participants gained a better understanding of fundamental digital tools, internet collaborative platforms, and technology-supported communication techniques. Numerous participants said that they felt more comfortable using technology for productive and professional activities like digital communication, self-presentation, and job searching. Prior research has emphasized the importance of digital literacy as a fundamental component of work readiness and a crucial complement to English language competency in the digital labor market (Huriati et al., 2024; Setyoningsih et al., 2025), and this conclusion is consistent with that.

A significant change in participants' attitudes toward learning was seen in qualitative data gathered from interviews and focus group discussions. The program's participants displayed increased enthusiasm and drive to keep honing their English and computer skills after it ended. Particularly among participants who first lacked confidence in their ability to speak English, the mentorship and practical experience method helped alleviate anxiety. Studies on technology-enhanced and community-based language learning have produced similar results, indicating that encouraging learning settings promote long-term engagement and independent learning (Nurdiawati et al., 2025; Turistiati et al., 2025). This improvement in learner autonomy and self-assurance is consistent with these findings.

However, the study also highlighted a number of obstacles that impacted how the program was implemented. The speed at which participants learned was influenced by their starting point in terms of digital access and technological proficiency. Due to poor equipment or unreliable internet connections, some participants were restricted from fully participating in particular activities. These difficulties are indicative of underlying structural problems that are frequently documented in community service and digital literacy programs, notably in non-formal educational environments (Kusuma Dewi et al., 2024). In order to address these obstacles, future programs will need more robust institutional backing and stakeholder cooperation in order to guarantee fairer access to technology resources.

Overall, the conversation emphasizes that the synergy between English and technology should be viewed as an integrated competency rather than two distinct talents. The program effectively increased community awareness that English is a tool for obtaining information, communicating professionally, and engaging in international and digital work environments. These results are in line with current studies that claim that digital literacy and language competency work together to improve workforce readiness and employability (Setianingsih et al., 2025; Suharni et al., 2025). As a result, this community service program demonstrates how qualitative, participatory, and context-based initiatives can successfully close the gap between educational skills and the needs of the real-world job market.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this community service program illustrates how critical it is to foster community understanding of the connection between English language competence and digital technology in order to improve work preparedness in the modern, ever-changing employment market. The program demonstrates, using a qualitative and participatory approach, that English and technology should not be seen as distinct skills, but rather as related ones that complement each other and improve people's self-assurance, communication abilities, and capacity for change in the workplace. The participants'

experiences show that meaningful participation in English activities mediated by technology promotes changes in attitude toward lifelong learning and employability as well as skill development.

The results also imply that community-based learning settings are a successful place for promoting experiential and contextualized learning. Participants were able to immediately connect learning outcomes to actual workplace needs by integrating English usage into real-world digital activities. This integration promoted active engagement, collaborative learning, and reflective practice, all of which are key components in building long-term work-readiness skills. Additionally, the program's participatory approach increased community ownership and guaranteed that the learning process would continue to be adaptable to local needs and goals.

This program emphasizes the significance of integrating language learning, digital literacy, and community empowerment into community service projects from a wider standpoint. The qualitative insights gained throughout the program highlight that successful work readiness development depends on communicative proficiency, critical awareness, and self-assurance in using digital work environments in addition to technical abilities. Therefore, by providing a paradigm of integrated learning that combines education and workforce training, this program advances both academic discussion and real-world application.

In the end, the program supports the notion that sustainable community development in the digital age is contingent upon participatory, introspective, and context-aware learning methods. When created via participatory participation, the synergy between English and technology has the potential to empower communities, improve employment prospects, and foster long-term socioeconomic resilience. As a result, future community service initiatives are urged to embrace integrative and qualitative frameworks that place a high priority on community voices and practical applicability in order to equip people for the challenges of today's workforce.

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