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A Training on The Utilization of Generative Artificial Intelligence in English Learning for EFL Teachers of Vocational High Schools

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Abstract: This community service aims to implement the utilization of Gen-AI in English learning for EFL teachers of vocational high schools to improve the teachers' technological competence as well as to unveil their interest in participating in the training. The community service method was training and simulation. The participants of this training were 35 EFL teachers of state and private vocational high schools located in Eastern Jakarta, Indonesia. The data collection was derived from a Google form questionnaire. The quantitative data were then analyzed descriptively by presenting the percentages, and the written reflections were analyzed by data condensation, display, and conclusion. The results of the training showed that most participants felt enjoyable taking part in the program, describing its practicality, its relevance, their confidence, and contributing to higher motivation. Therefore, it could be recommended that EFL teachers should practice using more relevant Gen-AI tools to improve teaching and learning, their confidence, and have more joyful situations in class.

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Introduction

English language teaching in vocational high schools (SMK) in Jakarta faces various complex challenges, along with the demands of the world of work that increasingly require mastery of technology and language skills. One of the proposed solutions is the utilization of the latest technology, such as Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen-AI), which has great potential to support the learning process and aims to create more personalized and efficient instruction (Grover, 2024). Gen-AI is able to assist in generating learning materials, composing questions, and providing feedback to students more efficiently (Ali & Muhammed, 2024; Kovalenko & Baranivska, 2024).

However, the introduction and application of this technology require readiness and deep understanding from teachers. Currently, most vocational EFL teachers face challenges in integrating technology into their teaching methods, especially Gen-AI. Their understanding of the benefits, challenges, and optimal ways to utilize the technology varies widely (Hoernig et al., 2024), and this can affect teaching effectiveness.

To anticipate the emergence of challenges to the use of technologies among EFL teachers, it is necessary to conduct community service by implementing a training on the use of Gen-AI as this tool is believed to have important roles in increasing the learning quality by presenting more interesting, interactive, creative, and practical approaches for students. In addition, this community service provides EFL teachers' practices in creating their own

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Pg : 270-277

digital content to attract the students' interest in learning English and accommodate their needs.

Through this community service, it is hoped that EFL teachers at SMK in Jakarta can better understand and utilize Gen-AI in the English learning process. As there are many studies and some community service programs on Gen-AI and technological tools (Apoko et al., 2022; Hartono et al., 2023; Tafazoli, 2024; Waluyo & Kusumastuti, 2024; Wei, 2023), the main focus of this community service is to explore teachers' perceptions towards the utilization of Gen-AI in English learning in vocational high schools, and one of the Gen-AI tools used in this training is Story Journey. Such Gen-AI tool is believed to be rarely conducted in some trainings for EFL teachers. This training not only aims to improve the teachers' technological competence, but also to ensure that the implementation of this technology can run effectively and efficiently in the classroom.

Method

The method of this community service was a training design which included a presentation and simulation. This design would show how the participants were active and interactive with the source person during the presentation and simulation. This training was attended by 35 EFL teachers of vocational high schools, in Eastern Jakarta, Indonesia. Meanwhile, the source person or speaker is one of the EFL lecturers from Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. Hamka, presenting two materials during the training. The training itself was held at one state vocational high school number 22 (SMKN 22). The following are the demographics of the participants.

Table 1. The demographics of the participants

Categories	Sub-categories	Number of participants	Percent
Gender	Female	27	77.14
	Male	8	22.86
Age	25-30 years old	8	22.86
	31-35 years old	7	20.00
	36-40 years old	5	14.29
	41-45 years old	7	20.00
	> 46 years old	8	22.86
School status	State	7	20.00
	Private	28	80.00
Teaching grade	10	15	42.86
	11	6	17.14
	12	14	40.00
Teaching experience	< 5 years	11	31.43
	5-10 years	14	40.00
	11-15 years	3	8.57
	16-20 years	3	8.57
	> 20 years	4	11.43
Ever used Gen-AI tools	Yes	25	71.43
	No	10	28.57

Table 1 describes that the majority of the participants were female (77.14%), while 22.86% were male. Participants' ages were distributed across five groups, with the largest being 25–30 years old and over 46 years old (22.86% each). Most participants worked at private schools (80.00%), while 20.00% were from state schools. Regarding the grades taught, 42.86% taught grade 10, 40.00% in grade 12, and 17.14% in grade 11. In terms of

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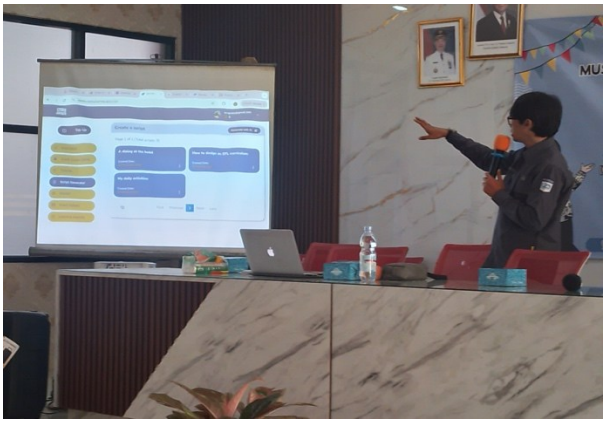
Pg : 270-277

teaching experience, 40.00% had 5–10 years of experience, 31.43% less than five years, and smaller proportions had longer experience. Notably, 71.43% of the participants had used Gen-AI tools, whereas 28.57% had not, showing a significant level of familiarity with AI technology among the group.

Regarding the data collection, a Google form questionnaire consists of questions with participant data, five questions on their perceptions of the Gen-AI training, and one question for the written reflections on their impressions and experiences on participating in the training. The questionnaire was distributed to all the participants after the training ended. After the data were collected, they were analyzed descriptively by presenting the percentages of each question on the participants' perceptions of the Gen-AI training in English learning, displaying the number of percentages for strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. For qualitative data, the written reflections from the participants were selected by condensing, displaying, and concluding.

Result and Discussion

Picture 1. Opening ceremony



Picture 2. A presentation from a speaker

Picture 3. Discussion & answer-questions

Picture 4. A simulation within teams

As displayed in pictures 1-4, the training design implemented for the EFL teachers covered some activities. The first activity was that the source person delivered some questions to do a prior knowledge orientation regarding the kinds of AI tools and how they had ever used Gen-AI. Another activity was a presentation of the material on the utilization of Gen-AI tools in English learning and its potential as well as the barriers of Gen-AI uses. While presenting, there were some questions from the participants. The third activity was a simulation or a kind of practice in creating an English learning media (video animations) and

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Vol. 6, No. 2 (May 2025)
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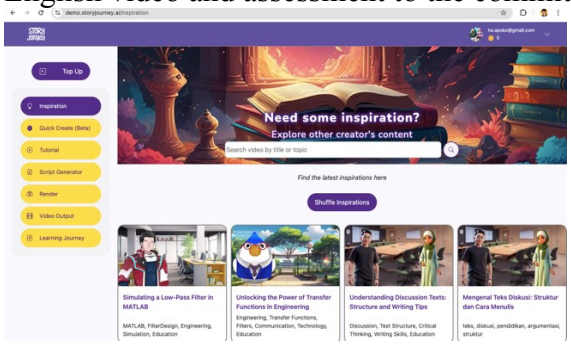
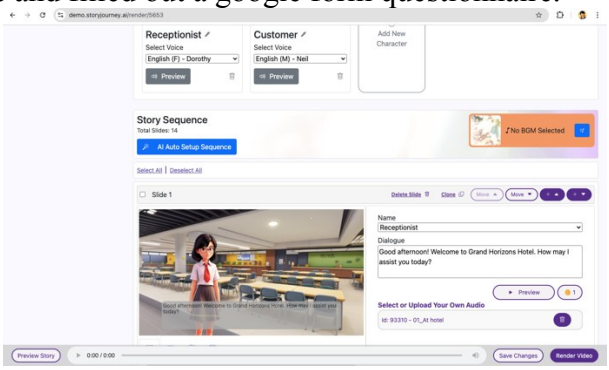
Pg : 270-277

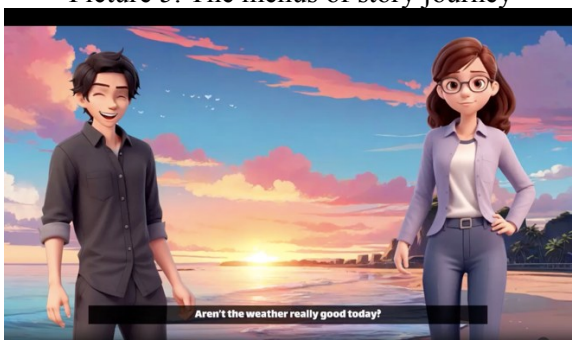
English assessments. In creating a learning media, Story Journey https://storyjourney.ai as one Gen-AI tool was introduced and practiced by the participants. The two other Gen-AI tools TTSMaker and ChatGPT were used to support the video creation with Story Journey. The menus of the story journey and the results of the videos created by the participants can be seen in pictures 5-8. Meanwhile in creating English assessments, ChatGPT, Quizgecko, and Questgen were used. At the end of the training, each participant submitted the projects of English video and assessment to the committee and filled out a google form questionnaire.



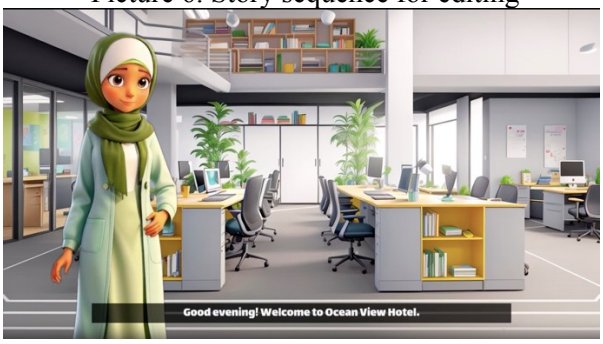
Picture 5. The menus of story journey



Picture 6. Story sequence for editing



Picture 7. The result of the video



Picture 8. The result of the video

From the participants' responses to the questionnaire evaluating training on the integration of Gen-AI in English teaching for vocational high schools, the current results found that most participants agreed or strongly agreed that the training provided clear and practical examples of Gen-AI applications in English teaching, with 74.29% agreeing and 8.57% strongly agreeing, while only a small minority (2.86%) were neutral. Similarly, 74.29% of participants agreed, and 8.57% strongly agreed, that they felt more confident in integrating Gen-AI tools into their teaching practices following the training, with 17.14% remaining neutral.

In addition, the training was highly rated for addressing challenges and solutions related to Gen-AI in English language teaching, with 80% of participants agreeing and 2.86% strongly agreeing, while 17.14% were neutral. Additionally, 77.14% agreed and 5.71% strongly agreed that the resources and tools introduced were relevant and applicable to the vocational high school curriculum, with 17.14% neutral. Lastly, the training inspired motivation among participants to explore and implement Gen-AI technologies in their teaching, as reflected by 71.43% agreeing and 11.43% strongly agreeing, while 17.14% were neutral. Notably, no participants disagreed with any of the statements, highlighting the training's overall positive reception.

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Vol. 6, No. 2 (May 2025)
E-ISSN : 2722-5097
Pg : 270-277

Table 2. EFL teachers' perceptions of the training

No	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The training provided clear and practical examples of how Gen-AI can be applied to enhance English teaching for vocational high school students.	0	2.86	14.29	74.29	8.57
2	I feel more confident in integrating Gen-AI tools into my teaching practices after participating in the training.	0	0	17.14	74.29	8.57
3	The training addressed challenges and potential solutions for using Gen-AI in English language teaching effectively.	0	0	17.14	80	2.86
4	The resources and tools introduced during the training are relevant and applicable to the vocational high school curriculum.	0	0	17.14	77.14	5.71
5	I am motivated to further explore and implement Gen-AI technologies in my English teaching practices as a result of this training.	0	0	17.14	71.43	11.4

The qualitative feedback from participants highlights the training's effectiveness in increasing teachers' knowledge and skills in using Gen-AI for English learning. Participants appreciated learning new techniques, such as creating engaging and visually appealing lessons using Gen-AI tools, noting their intention to apply these methods in their classrooms. They valued the practical, hands-on approach, with clear explanations and supportive guidance from the speaker or trainer, although one participant suggested slowing down the pace of certain demonstrations for better comprehension. Participants found the training inspiring and beneficial in expanding their technological capabilities, with specific mentions of tools like story journey for creating interactive videos. Overall, the feedback reflects a positive perception, emphasizing the training's role in improving teaching practices through innovative technology, and this obviously supports the quantitative data. The following are the excerpts from the selected participants' written reflections.

> "It was interesting! I really learned new things that I didn't know before, and also, I got more knowledge about how to use Gen-AI to create a lesson that will be more interesting and eye-catching, where I can practice it with my students later. The explanation is also quite good and simple, but understandable. We are able and free to ask if there is something that we don't understand. The speaker is willing to approach us to practice and show the tutorial that we have to do if we don't understand it." (Participant 5)

> "I am so excited to learn about making some videos but a little bit faster when the trainer describes how to make videos and the sounds of the videos from the story journey. I think we have to describe a little bit slowly, but overall it is nice and interesting. Good job. Thank you so much." (Participant 8)

> "I really like and enjoy the workshop, because it gives new knowledge and also guides us to practice using Gen-AI which we all just heard, and the result is interesting and will likely to apply it later in our classroom, thank you." (Participant 10)

> "It is a very impressive experience, because we can increase our insight and knowledge in English learning activities through the development of the latest information technology media". (Participant 12)

> "I am glad I joined this workshop because I gained new knowledge on using AI, which allows me to create more engaging animated videos. The training has expanded my skills and provided valuable tools to enhance my teaching methods, making lessons more interactive and visually appealing for my students." (Participant 13)

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Email: pengabdian@undikma.ac.id

Vol. 6, No. 2 (May 2025)
E-ISSN : 2722-5097
Pg : 270-277

> "I'm happy because it can increase my capability to master a new technology. By story journey, I can use it to create an interesting video." (Participant 29)

The results from the training program demonstrate an overwhelmingly positive response from vocational high school EFL teachers regarding the integration of Gen-AI in teaching practices. Quantitatively, the results show high levels of agreement with the statements assessing the training's effectiveness, particularly in providing practical examples, addressing challenges, and inspiring motivation to implement Gen-AI in teaching. The neutral responses suggest that while most participants benefited significantly, a minority might require additional support to fully engage with the material. These findings align with research indicating that professional development programs that offer hands-on, contextualized experiences tend to improve teachers' confidence and motivation to integrate technology into their classrooms (Apoko & Cahyono, 2024).

Qualitative data further supports these quantitative results by emphasizing the practical and accessible nature of the training. Participants highlighted their appreciation for hands-on practice, clear explanations, and the opportunity to learn new Gen-AI tools, such as Story Journey, to create visually appealing lessons. This is in line with previous studies showing that trainings or workshops incorporating active learning and real-world applications can enhance teachers' technological self-efficacy, skills and readiness for innovation (Menon et al., 2023; Park & Son, 2022). However, some participants suggested slowing down the pace of certain demonstrations, which underscores the need for differentiated instruction within this professional development program. This feedback aligns with the literature stressing the importance of accommodating diverse teacher learning needs to maximize the impact of training (Koraishi, 2023).

The results also show that Gen-AI has the potential to improve English language learning in vocational high schools by making lessons more engaging and interactive. Teachers' positive reflections on tools for creating animated and interactive content indicate that such technologies can promote student motivation and learning outcomes. This result is consistent with the growing body of research on the benefits of Gen-AI-assisted tools in education, particularly in promoting student engagement and creativity (Gjermeni & Prodani, 2024). However, some researchers caution against over-reliance on AI, pointing out challenges such as the digital divide, concerns over academic and ethical integrity, and the need for sustained professional development to ensure effective use (Khlaif et al., 2024). Addressing these challenges is important to ensure equitable and meaningful integration of Gen-AI in diverse educational contexts.

From the results and discussion, this community service is obviously beneficial for EFL teachers in improving their understanding of Gen-AI use and promoting their motivation in creating digital learning materials. Thus, this kind of training should be designed with a series of advanced trainings on the use of Gen-AI in English learning to deepen vocational high school EFL teachers' skills in utilizing Gen-AI tools. This would involve making mentoring programs for participants to support their ongoing integration of Gen-AI in classroom practices. Collaborating with the English subject teacher society in some local areas to integrate Gen-AI training into long-term professional development frameworks can also further strengthen its impact and ensure its sustainability.

Vol. 6, No. 2 (May 2025)
E-ISSN : 2722-5097
Pg : 270-277

Conclusion

The evaluation results reveal the training's general success in preparing vocational high school English instructors to include Gen-AI into their teaching techniques. The extremely positive comments, both quantitatively and qualitatively, highlight the training's effectiveness in giving clear, practical examples, increasing instructor confidence, and addressing AI implementation issues. Participants appreciated the tools and materials' applicability to the vocational curriculum, and several expressed a desire to learn more about and implement these technologies in their classrooms. The qualitative responses further emphasized the training's hands-on, engaging approach; however, several participants proposed pacing modifications to better meet varied learning needs. The findings illustrate the training's significance in increasing instructors' technological competence and creativity, hence supporting its potential to improve teaching practices and generate new, student-centered learning experiences.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, it is recommended that EFL teachers in vocational high schools should have follow-up activities to practice creating Gen-AI-based learning materials better. In addition, the school principals as the policy-makers should encourage more teachers to be more creative and innovative to integrate their instructions with Gen-AI tools by providing follow-up support, such as online resources, mentoring, or refresher sessions. This could further promote teachers' confidence and sustain their motivation to integrate AI tools into their classrooms.

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Vol. 6, No. 2 (May 2025)
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