

Strengthening the Pedagogical Competence of English Education Students through Information Gap Activities Design Training

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Article Info	Abstract
Article history: Received: December 12, 2025 Accepted: June 12, 2026 Published: July 31, 2026 Keywords: Communicative language English education Pedagogical competence This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License © 2026 Bubungan Tinggi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat	The low English proficiency among the Indonesian society is partly influenced by the dominance of learning approaches that focus on grammar and vocabulary memorization, thereby limiting students' opportunities to use the language in meaningful communication. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach that emphasizes language use for authentic communication purposes, with information gap activities (IGA) serving as one of the primary techniques to foster classroom interaction. This community service activity aims to enhance the pedagogical competence of pre-service English teachers in designing and implementing CLT-based IGA. The activity was conducted using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method, involving students from the English Education Study Programs at Universitas Sari Mulia and Universitas Lambung Mangkurat. The needs analysis results indicated that most participants lacked an adequate understanding of the IGA concept and still tended to employ traditional, teacher-centered learning activities. Through this training, participants gained an understanding of CLT principles and skills in designing communication-oriented activities centered on information exchange. Following the training, participants were capable of developing and practicing various information gap activities, such as Jigsaw Reading, Missing Schedule, and Spot the Differences, integrated into communicative learning scenarios. The questionnaire results demonstrated that this training strengthened the pedagogical competence of pre-service English teachers in designing communicative, interactive, and student-centered learning. Therefore, similar training needs to be conducted sustainably to support the quality improvement of communicative English language learning. To cite this article: Kamal, S., Triana, N., Arapah, E., Dewa, M. R. K., Ahadiyah, Z., & Ebrahim, M. (2026). Strengthening the Pedagogical Competence of English Education Students through Information Gap Activities Design Training. <i>Bubungan Tinggi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat</i>, 8(2), 590-605.

INTRODUCTION

English proficiency has become an increasingly vital competence for individuals in the era of globalization and digitalization. Mastery of English enables broader access to global knowledge sources. This capability also supports engagement in cross-border and cross-cultural academic collaborations. Furthermore, English plays a role in enhancing competitiveness and professional mobility in the workforce. Consequently, English mastery has become an essential necessity rather than merely an additional skill. Within the context of Teacher Training Institutions, particularly English education study programs, this need carries a higher level of urgency. Students in these programs are prepared to become professional and competent English teachers. As pre-service educators, they are required to master linguistic theory and pedagogy while simultaneously demonstrating proficient English language skills. These capabilities are necessary to access international learning resources, keep pace with scientific advancements, and communicate effectively. Thus, proficient English mastery serves as the primary foundation for English education students in executing their roles as high-quality pre-service teachers.

The English Proficiency Index reports over the past three years indicate that the English proficiency level of the Indonesian population remains below several neighboring countries, such as Singapore, the Philippines, and Malaysia ([Hidayat, 2020](#)). One contributing factor to this condition is the practice of English learning in schools, which still tends to orient toward conventional methods and lacks opportunities for students to use the language communicatively ([Chang & Suparmi, 2024](#); [Sujinem, 2023](#)). This finding aligns with the results of initial observations in Microteaching courses within the English Education Study Program at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat. The observations revealed that most students still relied on teacher-centered learning through verbal explanations, emphasizing grammar and vocabulary mastery in isolation from the context of use, as well as controlled exercises that restricted interaction and collaboration among students. These practices indicate that communicative learning approaches have not been optimally applied within the learning activities they design. This condition implies that the prior learning experiences obtained by students have not fully equipped them with English teaching strategies that encourage meaningful and authentic language use in the classroom.

The impact of these non-communicative learning methods is low learning motivation; students tend to perceive English as a difficult, boring subject that does not contribute significantly to daily life ([Suryani & Widhiyanto, 2022](#)). In the long term, this situation implicates the low communicative competence of graduates. Many encounter difficulties using English functionally, both for pursuing higher education and entering the workforce, so the objectives of English learning policies in schools are not optimally achieved ([Ridwan et al., 2024](#)). Therefore, a learning approach is required that consciously positions communication as the primary goal of English learning, rather than mere grammatical mastery or memorization. A communicative approach that provides space for meaningful interaction and functional language use is essential to address the gap between learning objectives and graduates' communicative abilities.

One relevant approach to address these issues is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which places authentic interaction at the core of language learning. Within this approach, IGA functions as a primary technique to create a genuine need for communication through information exchange among students. Numerous studies indicate that IGA is proven capable of improving students' English communication skills ([Defrioka, 2017](#); [Lembang, 2021](#)). Observations in Microteaching classes, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, indicate that students still require strengthening in translating communicative language learning principles into learning activities that encourage more authentic English use through IGA. Based on these conditions, this Community Service

activity was executed in the form of training on the design and implementation of IGA for students of the English Education Study Program as partners. This activity aims to enhance the pedagogical competence of pre-service English teachers in organizing communicative, contextual learning aligned with 21st-century learning demands, while providing practical experience applicable to subsequent microteaching and teaching practice activities.

One of the fundamental issues driving the implementation of this community service program is the lack of effective CLT approach application. CLT has become a globally popular English learning approach. This approach emphasizes the practice of language use within contexts resembling real daily situations. One technique frequently utilized within the CLT framework is IGA, which is a communicative activity wherein an information gap exists between two or more communicating individuals, and this gap can only be closed through oral or written information exchange ([Harmer, 2007](#); [Littlewood, 1981](#); [Richards, 2006](#)). By utilizing IGA, students will be encouraged to communicate in English authentically and meaningfully.

As previously stated in the introduction, it is known that most students in the English Education study program still apply traditional learning methods during microteaching practices. These learning methods are dominated by instructional activities that do not emphasize meaningful understanding or concept application in real contexts. This condition indicates that pre-service English teachers do not yet possess adequate skills in designing and implementing CLT-based learning, even though the approach had been introduced in previous coursework. One of the main techniques in CLT, namely IGA, was virtually unused in the learning scenarios practiced by students. Furthermore, the results of discussions with lecturers teaching English language teaching courses at Universitas Sari Mulia indicated that the execution of recognized microteaching courses in the current academic year provides a strategic opportunity to strengthen students' pedagogical competence.

This pedagogical competence is vital for students under Teacher Training Institutions. Therefore, they need to receive training regarding IGA because these skills will equip them with communicative learning methods proven capable of increasing student participation in real English use in class. In line with these needs, the Compulsory Lecturer Service Program (*Program Dosen Wajib Mengabdi/ PDWA*) Team from the ULM English Education Study Program in 2025 conducted training focusing on IGA. This program aims to provide LPTK students with a comprehensive understanding of the basic concepts, benefits, and methods of designing and implementing IGA in English language learning. Equipped with these skills, pre-service teachers are expected to be better prepared to create interactive, communicative, and student-centered English learning processes when they directly enter the education settings.

The execution of this activity provides direct benefits in the form of increased pedagogical competence in designing and applying ready-to-use IGA in microteaching practices and school instruction. In line with the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy, this activity supports learning that is contextual, applicable, and oriented toward strengthening the real competencies of students as pre-service educators. Additionally, this activity contributes to achieving the university's Main Performance Indicators through the active involvement of lecturers in mentoring and strengthening English learning practices within the partner environment. Furthermore, this activity contributes to strengthening the role of higher education institutions in preparing pre-service English teachers who are more ready to face instructional challenges in the field and capable of implementing communicative, student-centered instruction.

METHODS

This training on creating information gap-based learning materials was attended by students from the English Education Study Program at Universitas Sari Mulia and the Department of English Education at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat. A total of 23 students were involved in this activity, all of whom also served as respondents in data collection. The method employed was Participatory Action Research (PAR) ([Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005](#)). Through this approach, training activities were conducted collaboratively, commencing with the identification of needs, understanding, and skills in designing IGA-based materials. This was followed by training planning and execution. Subsequently, during the implementation phase, training and practical sessions were conducted. Finally, observations and reflections were carried out to evaluate the activity outcomes.

The service team conducted observations of students' microteaching practices and interviews with lecturers of English teaching courses at Universitas Sari Mulia during the needs identification phase. To measure the training's impact, a closed questionnaire instrument utilizing a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree - strongly disagree) was deployed. The questionnaire was designed to measure: (1) participants' understanding of the IGA concept, (2) participants' experiences with the practiced activity examples, and (3) participants' perceptions regarding the impact of IGA on motivation, confidence, and the honing of language sub-skills. The questionnaire's validity was content validity, referring to the theoretical concepts of CLT and IGA, and verified through expert review by lecturers of English teaching courses.

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics, presented as percentages and frequency distributions of respondents' answers ([Creswell & Creswell, 2017](#)). This analysis aimed to depict participants' response trends toward each statement in the questionnaire. In addition to quantitative data, supporting qualitative data were obtained through observations during training and activity documentation, which were utilized to enrich result interpretation and program implementation reflection. The analysis and reflection results were then used to evaluate training effectiveness and formulate improvement recommendations for developing similar activities in the future.

This service activity emphasized training and assistance, utilizing a direct approach with partners through knowledge transfer and field practice. Community service in the field of education requires meticulous planning and systematic implementation to deliver a significant and sustainable impact. Service execution involving the empowerment of teachers and students at schools through technology-based training programs and teaching quality enhancement can be carried out through five primary stages: socialization, training, technology implementation, mentoring and evaluation, and program sustainability. The following is a comprehensive description of the stages in the community service activities conducted by the PDWA Team.

1. Socialization

Socialization constitutes an important initial phase to ensure all involved parties share a common understanding regarding the goals, benefits, and execution mechanisms of the service program. This activity aims to comprehensively introduce the program while building coordination and commitment between the service team and partners. In this stage, the PDWA Team held a meeting with the Head of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Sari Mulia as the primary partner on June 26, 2025. The meeting discussed the scope of activities, implementation mechanisms, schedule, and training location. Furthermore, both parties agreed upon their respective roles and responsibilities to support the smooth execution of the program. The results of the meeting were subsequently followed up by the Head of the Study Program through

disseminating information to the participating students. Thus, the socialization phase plays a crucial role in building mutual understanding and readiness among all parties before program execution.

2. Training

Training is the core activity within the service program designed to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to implement communicative English learning through the utilization of IGA. This activity was conducted on July 11, 2025, in the form of a workshop and instructional simulation. During the workshop session, participants acquired an understanding of CLT principles, IGA characteristics, and the role of such activities in encouraging meaningful English use. Various activity examples were also introduced alongside their pedagogical purposes and rationales for use in English instruction. Material delivery was conducted interactively through discussions linking theoretical concepts with real classroom learning situations. Subsequently, during the simulation session, participants worked in groups to design learning activities integrating IGA in accordance with established learning objectives. These designs were then implemented through peer teaching activities with other participants acting as students. Through this practice, participants gained firsthand experience in managing classroom interaction and facilitating communication among students. Thus, the training not only strengthened participants' pedagogical competence but also enhanced their ability to design student-centered, authentic English use-oriented instruction. These competencies are expected to support their readiness as pre-service English teachers capable of meeting learning demands in the global and digital era. At the conclusion of the training, participants were requested to complete the questionnaire. The training activities are shown in Figure 1.

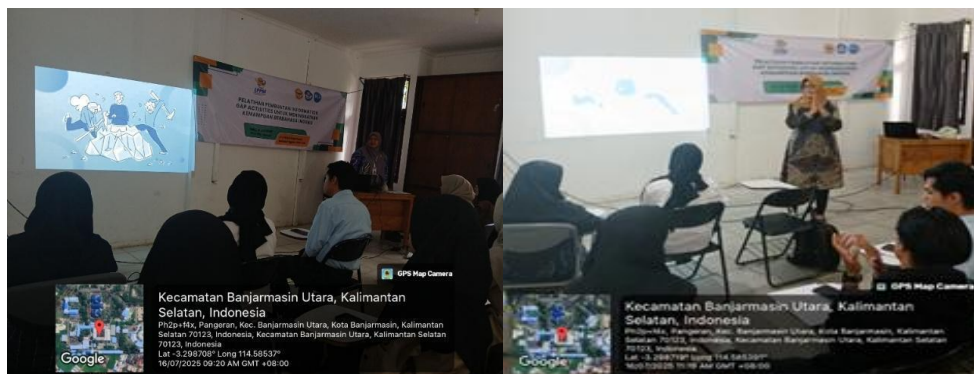


Figure 1 The training activity

3. Technology Implementation

This training program also introduced the utilization of digital technology to support the implementation of communicative English learning. The integration of technology aimed to enrich the learning experiences of training participants. The utilization of this technology encompassed the use of various digital platforms that not only facilitate collaboration but also encourage learning autonomy and expand access to learning materials. Platforms such as Canva and Google Slides were selected because they are low-cost, relatively easy to use, and feature attributes that support IGA design. Through these platforms, participants could develop various communicative learning activities, such as jigsaw reading, spot the difference, problem-solving, and information exchange tasks. Thus, the utilization of technology not only supported the implementation of the

CLT approach but also equipped them with digital skills relevant to instructional needs in the digital era.

4. Mentoring and Evaluation

The mentoring and evaluation phase represents an essential component to ensure that the competencies acquired during training can be effectively applied in accordance with the training objectives. Through this activity, participants obtained broader opportunities to design, implement, and evaluate learning that integrates IGA within real contexts. Mentoring also provided space for them to identify constraints arising during learning execution. Thus, this activity not only reinforced their understanding of CLT and IGA concepts but also enhanced their capability to apply the approach contextually and sustainably. The activities were carried out by each institution involved in the training program and integrated into the participants' school teaching practices from September to October 2025.

5. Program Sustainability

Program sustainability is a vital aspect to ensure that service outcomes yield long-term benefits. This encompasses the continuity of taught practices and the development of local capacity so that participants remain capable of continuously improving their skills to design and apply IGA after the program concludes. Moreover, this program opens opportunities for subsequent service activities, whether in the form of deeper training, intensive mentoring, or the development of new learning innovations. Consequently, this service activity does not merely generate a transient impact but also fosters ongoing collaboration between higher education institutions and partner schools in efforts to elevate educational quality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The five implementation stages of the service activity were socialization, training, technology implementation, mentoring and evaluation, and program sustainability in accordance with the designed method, followed by the presentation of the activity evaluation results. The results of the questionnaire distributed during the training phase indicated that training regarding IGA exerted a positive impact on participants' understanding and skills in designing communicative English learning. Generally, these findings support CLT theory, which emphasizes the importance of meaningful interaction and language use in real contexts ([Richards & Rodgers, 2014](#)). CLT views language not merely as a set of grammatical rules but as an active tool of communication; hence, instruction should encourage students to use English functionally and contextually. Below are the detailed questionnaire results divided into several sections: (1) participants' understanding of the IGA concept, (2) participants' experiences with several forms of IGA, and (3) participants' views on the impact of IGA on motivation, confidence, and the honing of language sub-skills.

Understanding of the IGA Concept

The questionnaire analysis results showed that most participants possessed a good understanding of the concept and function of IGA in English learning. Overall, the majority of participants provided positive responses across all measured indicators. On the first indicator, namely the understanding that IGA can expand students' opportunities to practice listening and speaking skills, most participants gave a positive response. A total of 54.5% of participants agreed, while the remainder fell into the strongly agree and neutral

categories. The absence of dominant negative responses indicates that participants understood that IGA does not merely function as a variation of learning activities, but as a vehicle enabling students to use English actively for real communication purposes. This understanding is critical because listening and speaking skills constitute the core of communicative competence, which is the primary objective of English language learning.

Furthermore, regarding the understanding that IGA helps students focus more on communication to obtain information, 56.5% of respondents strongly agreed and 34.8% agreed, while only 8.7% remained neutral. There were no disagreeing responses. This indicates that the training participants understood the primary essence of IGA as an activity oriented toward meaning and information exchange, rather than grammar drills detached from real contexts.

Participants' understanding of the IGA concept was also reflected in the statement that IGA encourages students to speak more in English. More than half of the respondents (56.5%) strongly agreed, followed by 30.4% who agreed. This understanding is important because it demonstrates that training participants realized the potential of IGA in increasing student talking time and reducing teacher dominance in the classroom.

The majority of participants also understood that IGA plays a role in fostering cooperation among students. A total of 52.2% of respondents strongly agreed and 39.1% agreed that IGA causes students to assist one another through information exchange and collaboration in completing tasks. This understanding demonstrates that training participants viewed IGA not only as a communication technique but also as a means for developing students' social and collaborative skills. Overall, these results indicate that the executed training successfully enhanced participants' pedagogical understanding regarding the concepts, objectives, and potential of IGA in communicative English learning.

Participants' Experiences with IGA Examples

Participants in the training did not only receive conceptual explanations regarding IGA but were also directly involved in several activity examples containing information gaps, such as Spot the Differences, Missing Schedule, and Jigsaw Reading. This direct involvement aimed to help participants comprehend the characteristics, flow, and implementation potential of IGA in English learning.

The questionnaire results showed that the Spot the Differences activity received a relatively positive response. A total of 43.5% of participants agreed and 21.7% strongly agreed that this activity contributed significantly to improving communication skills, resulting in a total of 65.2% of participants showing a positive attitude toward this activity. Meanwhile, 34.8% of participants were in the neutral category. This finding indicates that although the Spot the Differences activity was quite well-liked, not all participants experienced the same level of engagement or benefit. This activity tends to be appealing because it is visual, simple, and interactive, making it easy to comprehend. Additionally, participants assessed that this activity has the potential to practice descriptive skills and enrich vocabulary related to the observed objects and differences. Spot the differences shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2 Spot the differences

Responses to the Missing Schedule activity showed a more diverse variation of opinions. A total of 21.7% of respondents strongly agreed, and 38.1% agreed, meaning 59.8% of respondents provided a positive response. However, 34.8% of respondents chose neutral and 4.4% disagreed. This variation in response indicates that although the majority of participants saw the pedagogical value of the Missing Schedule activity, some participants had not fully experienced its benefits. This could be caused by the difficulty level of the activity, the presentation method, or the perception that the activity was less relevant to certain learning contexts. The missing schedule is shown in Figure 3.

Missing Schedules

Student A

Time	Activity
8:00 AM	Math Class
9:00 AM	? (ask Student B)
10:00 AM	Science Project
11:00 AM	? (ask Student B)

Student B

Time	Activity
8:00 AM	? (ask Student A)
9:00 AM	English Class
10:00 AM	? (ask Student A)
11:00 AM	Music Practice

Figure 3 Missing schedule

Jigsaw Reading received the most positive response among the three practiced activities. A total of 47.8% of respondents agreed and 34.8% strongly agreed, while only 13% of respondents were in the neutral category and 4.3% disagreed. This finding shows that the majority of participants rated Jigsaw Reading as an interesting, interactive, and beneficial activity. Participants understood that this activity clearly represents IGA principles because it requires each individual to share information with one another so that text comprehension can be fully formed. Jigsaw reading is shown in Figure 4.

Overall, these results indicate that direct experience through practicing several IGA examples helped training participants differentiate the characteristics of each activity and comprehend their potential and challenges in English learning. This finding confirms the importance of practical sessions in community service training so that participants do not only understand the IGA concept theoretically but also possess concrete experiences that can be reflected upon and adapted in different learning contexts.

Summary Chart

Instructions: Read the text you get, and then answer the questions. After you complete your row, complete the other rows by moving around the class and asking your friends' answers.

Name	Where did he/she go?	What did he/she do?	Who was he/she with?
Alex			
Bella			
Carlos			
Dina			



Figure 4 Jigsaw reading

IGA and Increased Communication Motivation

Participants in the training were asked to provide their views regarding the role of IGA in increasing motivation to communicate in English. The questionnaire results showed that the majority of participants possessed a positive perception toward the motivational function of IGA in language learning. IGA was understood as an activity that provides a clear reason for students to speak. A total of 56.5% of respondents agreed and 34.8% strongly agreed, while only 8.7% were in the neutral category and there were no respondents expressing disagreement. This finding indicates that training participants viewed IGA as a motivational trigger that encourages students to express their ideas and information through English.

Furthermore, 47.8% of respondents strongly agreed, and 39.1% agreed that IGA keeps students engaged in thinking during the learning process, while 13% of respondents were in the neutral category. There were no respondents who disagreed. This finding shows that participants understood IGA not only as a means to practice speaking skills but also as an activity that demands cognitive engagement, such as critical thinking, organizing ideas, and conveying information strategically so that communication proceeds effectively.

A positive view was also evident in participants' understanding of the function of IGA in creating authentic communication. A total of 56.5% of respondents strongly agreed, and 30.4% agreed, meaning nearly 87% of respondents agreed that IGA represents real communication practice. Meanwhile, the 13% of respondents who chose neutral indicated that some participants still required further experience to fully realize the benefits of this activity. However, the absence of negative responses reinforces the conclusion that, generally, participants viewed IGA as effective in building contextual, relevant, and experience-based communication.

There were variations in participants' views regarding the potential of IGA in providing balanced learning opportunities for students with diverse abilities. A total of 47.8% of respondents agreed and 34.8% strongly agreed that IGA supports learning in mixed-ability classrooms, while 17.4% of respondents were in the neutral category. This variation in response indicates participants' awareness that the effectiveness of IGA can be influenced by the classroom context. In highly heterogeneous classrooms, for instance, lower-ability students might require additional support, while more proficient students have the potential to feel the activity is too simple. This finding shows that training participants not only received IGA positively but also began to be reflective toward its implementation challenges.

IGA and Increased Communication Confidence

This training also explored participants' views regarding the link between IGA and the increase in students' confidence in communicating using English, in addition to increasing motivation. The questionnaire results showed a positive response trend toward the role of IGA in creating learning conditions that are more supportive of oral participation. A total of 43.5% of respondents agreed, and 26.1% strongly agreed that students feel more confident and less intimidated when involved in IGA compared to speaking in front of the entire class. Meanwhile, 30.4% of respondents were in the neutral category, and there were no respondents expressing disagreement. This finding shows that training participants understood that IGA provides space for students to communicate in small groups or pairs, thereby reducing pressure and anxiety.

A similar view was also reflected in participants' perceptions of the learning atmosphere created through IGA. A total of 52.2% of respondents agreed, and 17.4% strongly agreed that IGA is capable of creating a relaxed, friendly, and non-threatening learning atmosphere. Although 28.3% of respondents were in a neutral position and 2.1% strongly disagreed, the dominance of positive responses shows that the majority of participants viewed IGA as a strategy with the potential to lower language anxiety. This comfortable classroom atmosphere is considered important because it directly influences student engagement in language learning.

The majority of respondents also perceived that IGA provides a freer interaction space among students. A total of 43.5% of respondents agreed and 39.1% strongly agreed, while 13% were in the neutral category and 4.4% strongly disagreed. This result indicates that training participants understood IGA as an activity that allows students to speak more freely, exchange information, and build collaboration without formal pressure. This finding aligns with CLT principles that place real interaction at the core of language learning. These overall results show that through the practice of IGAs in training, participants not only understood the communicative function of the activity but also realized its potential in supporting students' affective aspects, particularly in building confidence to communicate in English.

Honing of Language Sub-Skills

The questionnaire results showed that IGA was perceived to contribute positively toward the development of students' various language sub-skills. Related to the development of communication strategies to ensure message comprehension, as many as 47.8% of participants agreed, and 34.8% strongly agreed, while 13% were in the neutral category and only 4.4% strongly disagreed. This finding indicates a strong trend that IGA encourages students to repeat, re-explain, or request clarification when comprehension gaps occur. This process aligns with the concept of negotiation of meaning, where interaction functions as the primary vehicle to build mutual understanding in language learning.

A positive view was also evident in the honing of paraphrasing skills. A total of 43.5% of participants agreed, and 26.1% strongly agreed, meaning nearly 70% of participants assessed that IGA is effective in training students to re-convey messages in a different way so that they are more easily understood by the interlocutor. Meanwhile, 26.1% of respondents chose neutral, and 4% disagreed. This shows that although the majority of participants felt the benefit, not all were automatically capable of utilizing the paraphrasing opportunities that arose in information gap-based activities. Nevertheless, this skill is important to maintain communication fluency when vocabulary limitations become a barrier.

The majority of respondents (totaling 73.9%) agreed that IGA is effective in training negotiation of meaning skills. Through this activity, students become accustomed to asking for clarification, re-confirming information, or seeking alternative expressions when misunderstandings occur in communication. However, the presence of 26.1% of respondents who were neutral indicates that some participants might not have fully realized the function of this exercise or were not accustomed to using meaning negotiation strategies in classroom interactions.

IGA was also viewed as contributing toward the development of problem-solving skills in addition to the communication aspect. A total of 52.2% of participants agreed, and 34.8% strongly agreed, meaning around 87% of participants believed that this activity helps students think critically, collaborate with pairs or groups, and design effective communication strategies to complete tasks. Meanwhile, the 8.7% of neutral respondents and 4.3% who strongly disagreed were likely influenced by differences in learning experiences, for instance, participants who felt the activity emphasized language use more than the problem-solving itself.

Lastly, the questionnaire results also showed a highly positive response toward the affective aspect of learning. A total of 52.2% of participants strongly agreed, and 34.8% agreed that IGA makes the process of gathering information fun and not boring, while 13% were in a neutral position and no respondents expressed rejection. This finding indicates that IGA not only functions as a communication exercise but also as a strategy to increase learning motivation. Elements of interaction, curiosity, and collaboration make students more active, courageous in using the target language, and less afraid of making communication errors.

The analysis results of the questionnaire data mentioned above indicate that the majority of participants viewed IGA as effective in developing students' opportunities to use English actively, particularly in listening and speaking skills. This finding reinforces the view that information gap-based activities encourage authentic interaction, where language is used as a tool to obtain and convey information, rather than merely as an object of learning ([Littlewood, 2004](#)). This shift in understanding is important because it shows a reorientation of partners from learning focused on language forms toward learning focused on language functions and use in real contexts.

Participants' responses toward examples of IGA activities also showed variations in engagement levels, with Jigsaw Reading receiving the most positive response. This activity was viewed as capable of increasing participation because it demands collaboration and interdependence among students to build complete text comprehension. This finding indicates that text-based collaborative activities not only support speaking skills but also deep reading, thereby aligning with an integrated skills learning approach ([Brown & Lee, 2015](#)). This understanding is important for participants because it expands their pedagogical insights that IGA can be designed not only for oral skills but also to integrate several language skills simultaneously.

The questionnaire analysis results showed that IGA was perceived to be capable of increasing students' motivation and learning engagement in addition to the skills aspect. More than 90% of participants stated that IGA provides a clear reason to speak and keeps students thinking actively during the communication process. This shows that IGA creates a dynamic, challenging, and enjoyable learning atmosphere. A learning atmosphere like this can foster students' intrinsic motivation ([Deci & Ryan, 1985](#); [Putri, 2025](#); [Santri, 2022](#); [Singh & Chan, 2022](#)). Thus, changes in partners did not only occur in the understanding of CLT and IGA concepts and methods, but also in the awareness that the design of communicative activities plays an important role in maintaining language learning motivation.

Data analysis also showed that IGA contributes to the development of 21st-century skills, particularly communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. The majority of participants stated that IGA helps students develop meaning negotiation skills through clarification, repetition, and paraphrasing, which are the core of effective communication ([Li, 2025](#); [Long, 1996](#)). Collaboration develops because students work in pairs or small groups and depend on each other to complete information, in line with collaborative learning principles that emphasize shared responsibility in achieving learning goals ([Johnson & Johnson, 2009](#)). In addition, critical thinking skills and creativity emerge when students must analyze communication barriers and find alternative strategies to convey messages, especially when facing vocabulary limitations. This change is important for participants because it shows that IGA does not only function as a language practice technique but also as a vehicle for developing competencies relevant to learning demands in the global era.

The affective aspect also underwent positive changes. The questionnaire results showed that most training participants felt students would be more confident when participating in IGA compared to speaking in front of the class. Interaction in small groups creates a more relaxed and minimal-pressure atmosphere, thereby helping to lower speaking anxiety. This finding aligns with the view that a supportive and non-threatening learning environment can reduce language anxiety and increase student participation ([Meilasari et al., 2023](#); [Horwitz et al., 1986](#)). This reduction in anxiety is important because it provides a safe space for students to experiment with language without fear of making mistakes. When confidence increases, they tend to be more courageous in trying and practicing, which ultimately has a positive impact on the development of communicative competence.

Overall, these results indicate that IGA training tends to bring about changes in participants, especially in pedagogical understanding, motivation, engagement, and awareness of the importance of affective aspects in English learning. Although not supported by pre-test and post-test data, these changes are reflected in participants' perceptions after the training and demonstrate the potential of IGA as a relevant communicative learning strategy to be applied in microteaching practices as well as school learning.

The evaluation of program implementation and program sustainability in the field after activities are completed constitutes an important step to measure the effectiveness, impact, and success of the community service that has been carried out. A comprehensive evaluation does not only cover short-term outcome aspects but also examines long-term impacts, resilience to implemented changes, and the readiness of related parties to continue the program independently. The evaluation and program sustainability stages must cover several aspects, ranging from assessing the processes that have been run, gathering feedback from various parties, to drafting recommendations for future improvements.

Evaluation of Program Implementation

The evaluation of program implementation was conducted to assess the feasibility of training activities in accordance with planned stages. Generally, the entire series of activities could be implemented well, ranging from the delivery of conceptual material, IGA practice, to reflection sessions and completing questionnaires. Participants actively participated in activities and showed high engagement, particularly in the practical and discussion sessions. Evaluation was also conducted through questionnaires and observations during the activities to identify the level of understanding, responses, and constraints faced by participants. The evaluation results showed that most participants felt the activities were relevant to classroom learning needs and easy to adapt. The constraints

that emerged were primarily related to limited practice time and variations in participants' classroom contexts, which require further adjustment in IGA implementation.

Program Sustainability

The sustainability of this service program is directed toward the partners' ability to continue the application of IGA as part of routine English learning practices in the classroom. Based on the training results, participants already possess conceptual understanding and practical experience in designing and executing IGA, so this method has the potential to be integrated independently in routine learning activities without dependence on external mentors. Sustainability is also supported by the increase in participants' capacity through a learning-by-doing approach during the training. Participants were not only introduced to CLT concepts but also directly practiced several activity examples that can be adjusted to various classroom contexts. Thus, they possess an initial foundation to modify and develop variations of IGA according to students' needs.

Reflection and Recommendations for Improvement

Reflection on program implementation shows that a training approach combining conceptual explanations and direct practice of IGA exerts a positive impact on participants' pedagogical understanding. Participants' involvement in trying several activity examples directly helped them comprehend the characteristics, objectives, and implementation potential of IGA in English learning. This is reflected in the dominance of positive responses toward the role of IGA in increasing students' motivation, confidence, and communication skills.

The questionnaire results also showed a proportion of respondents who were in the neutral category on several aspects, especially related to the level of engagement and suitability of activities with diverse classroom contexts. This finding indicates that some participants still require further assistance in adjusting difficulty levels, instructions, and forms of activities to match the characteristics of their respective students and classroom conditions. In addition, limited training time caused the exploration of IGA variations not to be carried out in depth.

Based on these reflections, recommendations for future program improvement include the need for follow-up training sessions that focus more on the adaptation and development of IGA variations according to real learning contexts. Continuous mentoring, such as implementation in English classrooms in schools, is also recommended to support the process of reflection and sharing implementation experiences. Thus, the service program not only contributes to increasing the conceptual understanding of pre-service teacher students but also encourages continuous changes in learning practices in schools.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of IGA training successfully enhanced the understanding and skills of pre-service teacher students in designing and implementing English learning that is more communicative and student-centered. The evaluation results indicated that the majority of participants viewed IGA as an effective strategy to expand speaking practice opportunities, increase motivation, and create a comfortable and collaborative learning atmosphere. This activity also trains critical skills such as meaning clarification, paraphrasing, negotiation, and decision-making when communication encounters barriers.

This program also contributes to bridging the gap between theory and practice of English language learning in schools, in addition to providing a positive impact on training participants. With continuous application, IGA can become a solution to increase students' communicative competence while meeting 21st-century learning demands that emphasize

communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity through continuous mentoring and the development of a collection of ready-to-use materials. Therefore, the sustainability of the program through forming student communities as well as further training is highly necessary so that the generated impact can continue to grow and provide long-term benefits for elevating the quality of English learning in Indonesia.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Concept, SK and NT; Methodology, EA and ME; Analysis, NT and EA; Draft Writing, ZA, MRKD and ME.

AI DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

During the preparation of this work, the authors used ChatGPT 5 to improve language clarity. Following the generation of this content, the authors thoroughly reviewed, verified, and edited the material as necessary. The authors accept full intellectual responsibility for the accuracy, validity, and originality of the final text.

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