



Participatory Community Action

Vol 01 (1) 2025 p. 1-9

© Dwi Erlin Effendi, Atik Rokhayani, 2025.

Corresponding author:
Dwi Erlin Effendi
Email: dwierlineffendi@unisnu.ac.id

*Received 15 May 2025;
Accepted 12 June 2025;
Published 19 June 2025.*

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted reuse, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.



Conflict of interest statement:
The author (s) reported no conflict of interest

DOI: [http://doi.org/10.70764/gdpu-pca.2025.1\(1\)-01](http://doi.org/10.70764/gdpu-pca.2025.1(1)-01)

ENGLISH TRAINING FOR BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE FOR MSMEs OWNERS IN TROSO VILLAGE

Dwi Erlin Effendi¹, Atik Rokhayani²

¹Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara, Indonesia

²Universitas Muria Kudus, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this community service activity is to improve the ability of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) owners in Troso Village, Jepara, to conduct business correspondence using English. Limited English language skills are one of the main obstacles in expanding the export market for Troso woven products, even though this village has been known as a craft center with high export potential. By improving written communication skills in English, it is hoped that MSME owners can build more professional relationships with international business partners.

Design & Methods: The methods used in this activity include identifying participant needs, compiling context-based training modules, implementing intensive training for three days, and online mentoring for two weeks after the training. The training focuses on business correspondence materials such as writing emails, product descriptions, quotations, and invoices in English. Evaluation is carried out through pre-tests and post-tests as well as observations of the implementation of practices by participants.

Result: The results showed that this activity succeeded in significantly improving the participants' abilities. The average score of participants increased from 42% (pre-test) to 82% (post-test). Most participants were able to compile simple business documents in English and began to apply them in business activities. In addition, an independent learning community was formed between MSME owners to support the sustainability of learning. This activity provides a real contribution to increasing the capacity of local MSME actors to compete in the global market.

Keywords: UMKM, English, business correspondence, training, Troso Village, community service

INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play an important role in the Indonesian economy. Based on data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, MSMEs contribute more than 60% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and absorb more than 97% of the national workforce. One of the MSME sectors that has great potential to develop in the global market is the local craft industry, including traditional weaving. Troso Village, located in Pecangaan District, Jepara Regency, is one of the centers of traditional weaving craftsmen that is already well-known nationally and has begun to penetrate the international market. Troso woven products have distinctive characteristics and high aesthetic value, making them a leading export product from the region.

Despite the high quality and cultural appeal of Troso woven products, many MSME owners in this village still face major challenges in developing international marketing networks. One of the main challenges identified is the low English language skills of MSME owners, especially in the context of business correspondence. In fact, business communication skills in English are very important in establishing relationships with international trading partners, managing

communication via email, creating product descriptions in digital catalogs, and compiling professional cooperation offers.

Business correspondence is an important part of professional communication that includes the exchange of formal information between two or more parties, either in the form of letters, emails, proposals, or other official documents. In the context of MSMEs who want to penetrate the global market, English-language business correspondence is the key to establishing cross-country cooperation, building trust, and demonstrating professionalism. English language skills are the main capital in opening international trade communications for MSME actors. English training for export has been proven to increase the readiness of MSMEs in facing the export market by improving business communication skills (Nurcahyo, Harahap and Gharnaditya, 2015).

Unfortunately, based on initial observations and interviews with several MSME owners in Troso Village, it was found that most of them do not have experience or special training in communicating using written English for business purposes. Many still rely on automatic translation from the internet, which often produces inaccurate messages that are not in accordance with the business context. This risks causing misunderstandings or even damaging the image of professionalism in the eyes of international partners.

This condition is exacerbated by limited access to foreign language training or education that is relevant to business needs. Most of the training available is general and does not focus on the business context or specific needs of MSME owners. In fact, a contextual learning approach has proven to be more effective in improving professional communication skills in foreign languages (Isakov and Isakova, 2020).

This community service activity was designed as a response to real needs in the field. The goal is to provide practical English language training that focuses on business correspondence skills for MSME owners in Troso Village. This training not only covers aspects of grammar and vocabulary, but also discusses the format, ethics, and strategies in composing effective and professional business communications.

The training materials will be tailored to the real needs of the participants, such as how to answer questions from foreign buyers via email, write product descriptions in attractive English, prepare invoices or quotations, and respond to customer complaints with polite and appropriate language. This approach is expected to provide direct benefits to participants in carrying out their daily business activities involving international partners.

As a form of participatory approach, this training will also involve simulations and direct practice that reflect real situations often faced by MSME owners in Troso. By using the experiential learning method, participants will find it easier to understand and apply the material provided. The use of experiential learning in vocational training helps participants develop real-world skills and increase job opportunities, especially for economically disadvantaged youth groups (Isakov and Isakova, 2020). In addition, this training will also integrate digital technologies such as the wise use of email, Google Translate, and international business communication platforms such as WhatsApp Business, Zoom, or international marketplaces such as Alibaba and Etsy.

This activity also supports the government's agenda in encouraging the digitalization and internationalization of MSMEs. The 2020–2024 National Strategic Program from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs states that one of the main focuses is increasing the capacity of MSME human resources, including digital literacy and foreign language skills for global market access. Therefore, this training is also a form of concrete contribution from academics in supporting government policies and strengthening the MSME ecosystem.

Thus, this English training for business correspondence is not only educational, but also strategic in supporting the sustainability and competitiveness of local MSMEs such as in Troso Village. In addition to improving individual competence, this activity is also expected to strengthen the position of Troso woven products in the global market, open wider export opportunities, and ultimately contribute to the welfare of the local community.

METHODS

The method of implementing this community service uses a participatory and applicative approach, by combining training, mentoring, and experiential learning approaches. The main objective is to equip MSME owners in Troso Village with practical English skills that are relevant for international business correspondence purposes. The stages of this community service activity are explained as follows:

1. Needs Assessment

The initial stage was carried out through field observation and interviews with several MSME owners in Troso Village. This activity aims to identify:

- a. The current level of English language skills of participants.
- b. The most frequent types of business correspondence (email, invoices, product catalogs, etc.).
- c. Common problems faced in international business communication.

The findings from this stage are used to compile training materials that are contextual and in accordance with the real needs of participants.

2. Preparation of Training Modules and Materials

Based on the results of the needs identification, the implementation team prepared a training module consisting of four main topics:

- a. Basic English for business communication.
- b. Format and structure of professional business emails.
- c. Writing product descriptions, invoices, and quotations in English.
- d. Responding to questions, complaints, and requests from foreign buyers.

The module is prepared with the principle of contextual learning, where training materials are directly linked to real situations and cases experienced by MSME owners.

3. Training Implementation

The training is conducted for 3 days face-to-face at the village hall or a mutually agreed location. Each session lasts for 2-3 hours and includes:

- a. Brief theory (20–30 minutes) on correspondence structure and language choices.
- b. Simulation and practice (60–90 minutes), such as writing and responding to fictitious emails from foreign buyers.
- c. Discussion and reflection (30 minutes), where participants are asked to evaluate the practices that have been carried out.

Each participant is also given examples of business documents such as email orders, quotations, invoices, and product catalogs in English to study and modify according to their respective businesses.

4. Mentoring and Evaluation

After the training is completed, the implementing team continues the activity with a two-week online mentoring session. Mentoring is carried out via WhatsApp or Zoom groups to:

- a. Review real correspondence documents from participants.
- b. Provide direct input and corrections.
- c. Answer questions related to the use of English in business communication.

The evaluation is carried out using a simple pre-test and post-test method to measure the increase in participants' understanding of the structure and use of English in a business context.

5. Sustainable Empowerment and Networking

As a follow-up to the training, participants are encouraged to:

- a. Form study groups or small communities among MSME actors.
- b. Share email templates or business documents that have been translated into English.
- c. Maintain communication with the implementation team for further consultation.

It is hoped that after this activity is completed, participants will have more courage and ability to communicate professionally with the international market, and be able to share knowledge with other MSME actors in Troso Village.

RESULT

Community service activities carried out during three days of training and two weeks of follow-up mentoring have succeeded in achieving several significant achievements, both in terms

of participation, understanding of the material, and practical impacts on the business communication skills of MSME owners. The following are the results of the implementation of the activities in detail:

1. Participation Level and Enthusiasm of Participants

A total of 25 MSME owners in Troso Village actively participated in English training for business correspondence. The participants came from various types of weaving businesses, both small-scale ones managed by families, and those that already had business relations outside the region or even abroad. The attendance rate reached 92%, indicating that this activity was highly sought after by the participants. This shows that the relevance of the training topic to the direct needs of business actors greatly influences active participation.

The enthusiasm of the participants was reflected through:

- a. Activeness in discussions and Q&A: Most participants actively asked about common forms of business emails, asked about grammar, and shared their experiences dealing with potential foreign buyers.
- b. Involvement in simulations: Participants actively composed and read sample emails, and responded to business communication scenarios directly in small groups.
- c. Commitment to attending post-training mentoring sessions: More than 80% of participants joined the mentoring WhatsApp group and were still actively consulting regarding the correspondence documents they were compiling.

This phenomenon is in line with the research findings of [Bagah and Sabutey, \(2015\)](#) which showed that factors related to the material with business needs, previous experience in business, and training communication media greatly influence the participation of business actors in entrepreneurship training programs. They suggest that training be adjusted to field conditions and distributed through local networks (such as associations or business groups) to increase the effectiveness of participation.

In addition, the level of participant satisfaction and the perception that the training was "useful and applicable" were dominant factors that influenced participant participation and enthusiasm ([Hamid, 2012](#)). [Hamid, \(2012\)](#) also shows 74.3% of participants considered the training they attended to be very helpful in developing their business. According to [Gordon, Hamilton and Jack, \(2012\)](#), interaction between participants in training - such as group discussions, simulations, and sharing experiences - strengthens learning and increases the spirit of participation. They found that emotional involvement and a sense of togetherness in training play a major role in building participant confidence.

Participation does not stop when the training ends. A study by [Shimba \(2018\)](#) showed that post-training mentoring sessions strengthened the application of materials and extended the impact of the training. It also built accountability and ownership of the training outcomes. In Troso Village, participants showed high commitment by remaining active in online mentoring sessions and discussions via WhatsApp groups. Training conducted in a familiar social environment (village or local MSME groups) provided a sense of comfort and increased engagement. The existence of a local community or association also serves as a medium for disseminating information and a motivator for participation ([Hairunisya, Rindrayani and Subiyantoro, 2023](#)).

2. Improved Understanding of Business Correspondence in English

After the training, participants showed significant improvement in their understanding of the structure, style, and etiquette of writing business correspondence in English. Evaluation was conducted through a simple pre-test and post-test, which recorded an increase in the average score from 42% before the training to 82% after the training. This improvement reflects a better understanding of the structure of business emails, the use of formal language, and the ability to compose messages professionally. As many as 20 out of 25 participants were able to write simple business emails independently, without relying on the help of an automatic translation application. They began to understand the importance of the difference between formal and informal language in professional communication, as well as how to convey business intentions with the right grammar and tone.

One participant who previously always used Google Translate to answer questions from overseas buyers, is now able to compose his own email replies in a much more professional and polite format. This change is in line with the concept of communicative competence in Business English learning which involves linguistic, sociocultural, discursive, and strategic aspects (Horea and Abrudan, 2022). The study emphasizes that business communication skills depend not only on grammar, but also on an understanding of the social and cultural context that accompanies professional interactions.

Furthermore, the participants' improvement in writing business correspondence reflects the importance of practice-based training that is relevant to the business context. The use of authentic models in training—such as simulations of writing real business emails—helped participants understand cross-cultural communication strategies and improve the quality of the written messages they produced (Skrynnikova and Grigorieva, 2019). Other findings suggest that improving English literacy, especially in a business context, has a direct impact on the communication success, credibility, and competitiveness of small businesses in the international market (Agustina, Thamrin and Oktoma, 2024).

This training not only succeeded in improving participants' technical skills in writing business emails, but also formed a deeper understanding of how professional communication in English can strengthen cross-country business relationships and build a more credible business image in the eyes of international partners.

3. Practical Application in the Business World

After attending the training and mentoring for two weeks, most participants demonstrated direct application of the material they had learned in the context of their respective businesses. A total of 8 MSME owners sent email replies to potential overseas buyers, using the format and expressions learned in the training. They responded to questions about prices, product specifications, and shipping methods using formal and polite English, which they had not previously mastered. In addition, 4 participants updated their digital product catalogs in two languages, namely Indonesian and English, so that they could be accessed by local and international customers. This shows that participants not only understand the theory, but also implement business communication skills in the form of documents that support exports. Furthermore, 3 participants prepared quotations and invoices in English for the first time, assisted directly by the facilitator during the online mentoring session. They then used these documents in actual transaction communications with potential overseas buyers.

This practical application reflects the success of the experiential and needs-based learning approach, which emphasizes completing business tasks that are relevant to participants' daily activities. Business English is a practical discipline, which must involve hands-on practice in a business context in order to deliver measurable results. Conventional teaching models that focus only on theory are inadequate for the needs of business people, and must be replaced with task-based instruction (Cheng, 2016).

Other studies have shown that the use of business document writing simulations and situational training can help participants develop operational skills needed in the field (Zhang, 2020). When participants are directly involved in composing emails, catalogs, quotations, and invoices that they actually use in practice, they experience a transfer of knowledge from the cognitive realm to the realm of real work skills, which is the main goal of application training. So that this training not only provides participants with theoretical understanding, but also encourages the transformation of skills into concrete actions that have a direct impact on increasing professionalism and business readiness to penetrate the international market. This effectiveness shows the importance of training that is designed based on field needs and provides direct practice space for MSME owners.

Table 1. Community Service Activity Results

Problem	Solution	Activity	Result
The low ability of MSME owners to write business emails in English	Providing training in writing formal and professional emails in English	Business email writing training; simulation of responding to foreign customer emails	20 out of 25 participants were able to write simple business emails independently and in accordance with international correspondence ethics.
Lack of knowledge of business document formats in English (invoices, quotations)	Introduction and practice of preparing English language business documents	Preparation of quotations and invoices in English based on real examples	3 participants successfully prepared invoice and quotation documents in English for overseas business partners
Product catalog is only available in Indonesian	Training in writing product descriptions and using promotional vocabulary in English	Workshop on creating a bilingual digital catalog and practice writing product descriptions	4 participants updated their business catalog in two languages (Indonesian-English)
Lack of confidence to respond to overseas buyers	Improve competence and intensive practice of written business communication	Group discussions, role-play, and one-on-one guidance	Participants are more confident and actively respond to messages from overseas buyers via email and WhatsApp
There is no post-training learning community	Formation of learning networks and further mentoring	Post-training WhatsApp group formation for consultation and sharing of business documents	An active learning community was formed which became a forum for discussion and consultation between MSME actors regarding business English.

4. Changes in Attitude and Self-Confidence

The non-cognitive aspect that was also achieved was the increasing confidence of MSME owners in using English. Many participants who initially felt hesitant, awkward, or afraid of making mistakes when having to write or respond to communication in English, began to show progress in terms of courage and comfort in communicating. This was reflected in the statement of one of the participants in the evaluation session who said, "I used to never reply to emails from buyers from abroad because I was afraid of making mistakes. But now I am more confident, because I already know the right format and words."

This increase in self-confidence is in line with research by [Trudnikova and Sorokoumova \(2020\)](#) which shows that learning a foreign language with a personal and contextual approach can significantly increase students' self-confidence and motivation to learn. When participants feel psychologically safe and are given space to learn through direct practice, they are more ready to take risks in speaking a foreign language, including in professional contexts such as business correspondence. Furthermore, a study of English training for adult workers in Jakarta found that improving language skills was also followed by a significant increase in self-confidence, speaking courage, and participation in business communication ([Datu, 2024](#)). This shows that language training that not only focuses on theory but also provides space for practice has a broad impact on participants' attitudes.

These results reinforce the view that in the context of MSME training, self-confidence is one of the indicators of the success of the training program. This self-confidence is an important foundation for business actors in making decisions to start communicating with international partners directly, without relying on translators or intermediaries. Thus, this training not only equips participants with technical skills, but also empowers them psychologically to appear more professional in the global business environment.

5. Formation of Independent Study Groups

As a follow-up to the training, the participants took the initiative to form a WhatsApp community consisting of MSME owners who wanted to continue learning and support each other in mastering English for business purposes. In this community, participants actively share examples of business documents, such as emails, invoices, and quotations in English, and ask about foreign vocabulary that often appears in communication with foreign partners. They also provide feedback to each other's writing, creating a collaborative and supportive learning atmosphere.

This initiative reflects the basic principles of peer learning communities, namely learning that grows from peer interactions in meaningful and sustainable contexts. Peer-based learning communities (peer mentoring) can significantly increase participants' self-confidence and motivation, especially in foreign language learning (Fayram *et al.*, 2018). Participants feel more comfortable learning in an equal community and do not feel judged when making mistakes, which is an important asset in improving language competence. In addition, contextual and peer-based learning designs can strengthen learning engagement, accelerate skill application, and create a culture of sustainable knowledge sharing (Tosey, 1999). This type of learning model also makes it easier for business actors to continue to develop their competence outside of formal training hours, while strengthening business networks between members.

The formation of this study group also shows that the impact of the training does not stop after the class session is over, but continues in the form of collective initiatives that extend the cycle of learning and collaboration among local business actors. With the existence of a lively communication space, participants not only maintain the skills they have learned, but also build solidarity to develop each other's abilities in penetrating the international market.

CONCLUSION

Community service activities in the form of English Training for Business Correspondence for UMKM Owners in Troso Village have been successfully implemented with positive results and real impacts. Based on the entire series of activities that include identification of needs, intensive training, and post-training assistance, the following can be concluded:

1. MSME owners in Troso Village have a real need for English language skills, especially in the context of international business communication. This training has proven to be relevant and much needed as part of increasing their business capacity.
2. The contextual and practical training effectively improved participants' understanding of the format, structure, and ethics of English business correspondence. Participants showed significant improvements in their ability to write emails, create product descriptions, and compile business documents such as quotations and invoices.
3. This training not only provides knowledge, but also encourages direct application in business activities, such as sending emails to foreign buyers and updating product catalogs in English.
4. The confidence of MSME owners in using English has increased, as shown by their courage to try direct communication practices with foreign partners.
5. The formation of an independent learning community between participants shows the sustainability of the impact of the activity, and opens up opportunities for joint learning that can strengthen the Troso Village MSME ecosystem in facing the global market.

This training is not only educational but also strategic, because it supports efforts to internationalize local products and empower the community's economy through improving

relevant basic skills. Similar activities are recommended to be replicated in other MSME areas that have export potential but are constrained in terms of cross-language communication.

REFERENCES

- Agustina, V., Thamrin, N.R. and Oktoma, E. (2024) 'The Role of English Language Proficiency in the Global Economy and Business Communication', *International Journal Administration, Business & Organization*, 5(4), pp. 82–90. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.61242/ijabo.24.423>.
- Bagah, D.A. and Sabutey, G.T. (2015) 'Influencing Rural Entrepreneursâ€™™ Participation in Training Programs in the East Mamprusi District of Ghana', *Information Management and Business Review*, 7(4), pp. 108–116. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.22610/imbr.v7i4.1168>.
- Cheng, M. (2016) 'Study on Vocational English Teaching Mode Construction and Practical Probe Based on Network Environment', in *Proceedings of the 2016 International Conference on Economy, Management and Education Technology*. Paris, France: Atlantis Press, pp. 1007–1009. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2991/icemet-16.2016.221>.
- Datu, Y.A. (2024) 'Adult Learners' Language Acquisition: A Case Study of In-House Training of Company "X" Jakarta', *Jurnal Bisnis Terapan*, 8(1), pp. 1–12. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.24123/jbt.v8i1.6412>.
- Fayram, J. et al. (2018) 'Investigating the Benefits of Online Peer Mentoring for Student Confidence and Motivation', *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, 7(4), pp. 312–328. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2017-0065>.
- Gordon, I., Hamilton, E. and Jack, S. (2012) 'A Study of a University-Led Entrepreneurship Education Programme for Small Business Owner/Managers', *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 24(9–10), pp. 767–805. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2011.566377>.
- Hairunisya, N., Rindrayani, S.R. and Subiyantoro, H. (2023) 'Community Development and Social Welfare Through Entrepreneurship Management Training', *Asian Management and Business Review*, 3(2), pp. 107–120. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.20885/AMBR.vol3.iss2.art1>.
- Hamid, L. (2012) 'The Impact of Training Program to Cooperatives Entrepreneur and Small Business Performance in Riau Province', *Jurnal Ekonomi Universitas Riau*, 20(4), pp. 1–12.
- Horea, I.C. and Abrudan, C.L. (2022) 'Communication Skills in Business English', in *The Annals of the University of Oradea. Economic Sciences TOM XXXI*, pp. 301–313.
- Isakov, A.A. and Isakova, A.A. (2020) 'Contextual Approach In Developing Communicative Competence In Foreign Language Lessons At University', in *Teacher Education- IFTE 2019*, pp. 332–341. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2020.01.39>.
- Nurcahyo, R., Harahap, R.H. and Gharnaditya, D. (2015) 'Prepare SME in Facing AEC 2015 through English Training Program to Obtain the Export Market', *The Winners*, 16(2), pp. 96–107. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.21512/tw.v16i2.1562>.
- Shimba, A. (2018) 'the Effects of Experiential Entrepreneurship Learning Programmes on Performance of Trainees' Enterprises: Empirical Evidence From Small Businesses in Tanzania', *Business Management Review*, 21(2), pp. 66–78.
- Skrynnikova, I. V and Grigorieva, E.G. (2019) 'Enhancing Foreign Language Communication Skills in International Business Environment', in *IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering*, p. 012026. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1088/1757-899X/483/1/012026>.
- Tosey, P. (1999) 'The Peer Learning Community: A Contextual Design for Learning?', *Management Decision*, 37(5), pp. 403–410. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/00251749910274171>.
- Trudnikova, D.D. and Sorokoumova, G.V. (2020) 'Foreign Language Lessons as a Method of

- Developing Confident and Worthy Behavior of Students', *Development of education*, 8(2), pp. 93–96. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.31483/r-75601>.
- Zhang, M. (2020) 'Virtual Situated Learning of Spoken English Based on Computer Simulation Technology', *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (ijET)*, 15(04), p. 206. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v15i04.12939>.