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ICARE Based Training: A Strategy to Empower Writing Skills in Classroom Action Research among Teachers in Tuban District, East Java, Indonesia

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Abstract

Many sources showed the low quality of education in Indonesia. One way to improve education quality is classroom action research (CAR). The core of CAR is evaluation in the learning process. In addition, Teachers can get credit points for promotions or certification through writing a scientific paper. The targeted community was teachers in the Tuban Regency under the auspices of Pusat Belajar Guru (PBG). This paper aims to improve comprehension and writing skills in CAR through Introduction, Connection, Application, Reflection, and Extension (ICARE) based training among teachers. The result showed increased teachers' comprehension after the training. In addition, it also indicated that the highest writing skill in the CAR was in learning innovation. Meanwhile, the lowest writing skill was in the literature study and reference. In conclusion, ICARE based training increases comprehension and writing skills in CAR among teachers. Further training should provide a deeper understanding of online and offline literature search and write it down in reference.

Keywords: Classroom Action Research; Training; ICARE; and Teachers

Abstrak

Banyak sumber menunjukkan rendahnya kualitas pendidikan di Indonesia. Salah satu cara untuk meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan adalah penelitian tindakan kelas (PTK). Inti PTK adalah evaluasi dalam proses pembelajaran. Selain itu, Guru bisa mendapatkan poin kredit untuk kenaikan pangkat atau sertifikasi melalui penulisan karya ilmiah. Masyarakat yang menjadi sasaran adalah para guru di Kabupaten Tuban yang berada di bawah naungan Pusat Belajar Guru (PBG). Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan pemahaman dan keterampilan menulis PTK melalui pelatihan berbasis Pengenalan, Koneksi, Aplikasi, Refleksi, dan Ekstensi (ICARE) di kalangan guru. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan peningkatan pemahaman guru setelah pelatihan. Selain itu, juga menunjukkan bahwa keterampilan menulis tertinggi pada PTK ada pada inovasi pembelajaran. Sedangkan keterampilan menulis yang paling rendah adalah pada studi kepustakaan dan referensi. Kesimpulannya, pelatihan berbasis ICARE meningkatkan pemahaman dan keterampilan menulis PTK di kalangan guru. Pelatihan lebih lanjut harus memberikan pemahaman yang lebih dalam tentang pencarian literatur online dan offline dan menuliskannya dalam referensi.

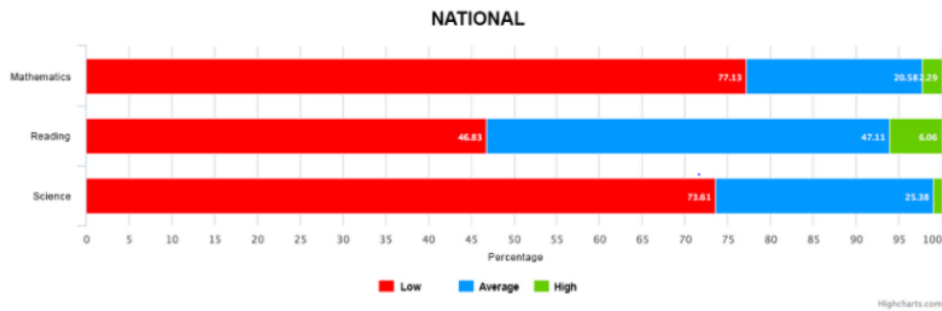
Kata kunci: Penelitian Tindakan Kelas; Pelatihan; AKU PEDULI; dan Guru

INTRODUCTION

According to Indonesia National Assessment Programme (INAP), the quality of Indonesian education was still low (See Figure 1) (Usman and Kumiasih, 2019). The latest news shocked the world of education that research results showed the low educational attainment of Indonesia, and even tend to decline. Various national-level analyses also mentioned how weak teacher competence and education policies are in the regions (See Figure 2) (Luhur, 2021).

One way to identify and improve education quality is through classroom action research (CAR). Classroom action research has a pivotal role in enhancing learning quality. It is a systematic procedure carried out by

teachers to collect information about how teachers plan, teach, and how students learn. Furthermore, teachers seek to improve the quality of learning (Cresswell, 2013).



Results of the 2016 Indonesia National Assessment Programme (INAP) held by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC). The MoEC's Educational Evaluation Center (Puspendik)/Research and Development Unit (Balitbang).

Figure 1. Percentage of Science, Reading, and Mathematics Ability in Indonesian Students

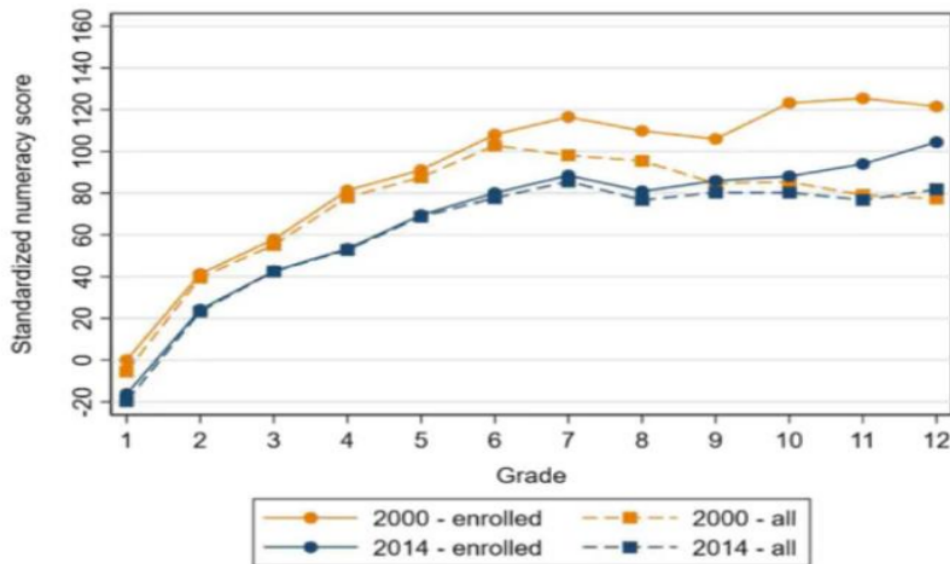


Figure 2. The comparison of student achievement on each grade from 2000 to 2014

Recent evidence showed that teachers had low writing skills in classroom action research (Pambudi, 2018; Mahfud, 2019). On the other hand, the teachers are one component of learning that holds a strategic position in improving the quality of education. They are essential in implementing quality learning (Mudlofir, 2012). The task of a teacher is not only as a transmitter of knowledge but also as a learning designer. Teachers must design productive, effective, efficient, and innovative learning processes (Abdullah Sani, 2013). In addition, teachers must carry out their duties professionally (Suyanto and Jihad, 2014). Professionals are people who can carry out their responsibilities by always upholding professional ethics (Koehn, 2000).

The development of teacher professionalism is closely related to scientific paper writing. Teachers can get credit points for promotions or certification through writing a scientific paper (Sujana and Laksamana, 2001). In addition, it helps improve the quality of learning services, classroom management and increases the professionalism of teachers. So, it impacts student learning outcomes. However, writing an article, especially a scientific paper, is not easy (Mahfud, 2019). This paper aims to improve comprehension and writing skills in CAR through Introduction, Connection, Application, Reflection, and Extension (ICARE) based training among teachers in Tuban District, East Java, Indonesia.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMUNITY, PROBLEMS, AND TARGET SOLUTIONS

General Description

Tuban Regency is one of the 38 regencies and cities in the administrative area of East Java Province. The Tuban Regency area is located on the northern coast of Java Island. In addition, its area is 1,904,700 kilometers, and the length of the beach reaches 65 kilometers. Its population is about 1 million people. Tuban is called the City of *Wali* because Tuban is one of the cities in Java that became the center of the spread of Islamic teachings. Still, some people nickname the city of *tuak* and *legen*, beverages from *siwalan*. Some of the attractions in Tuban that many tourists visit are the Tombs of the *wali*, for example, tombs of *Sunan Bonang*, *Sheikh Maulana Ibrahim Asmaraqandi*, *Sunan Bejagung*, etc. Furthermore, Tuban is known as the City of a Thousand Caves because of its location in the North Limestone Mountains. Even some caves in Tuban have stalactites and stalagmites. The famous caves in Tuban are Akbar Cave, Putri Asih Cave, etc. Tuban is located on the coast of the northern part of the island of Java, with regional boundaries: North of the Java sea, east of Lamongan, south of Bojonegoro, and west of Rembang and Blora, Central Java (*Profil Kabupaten Tuban*, 2018).

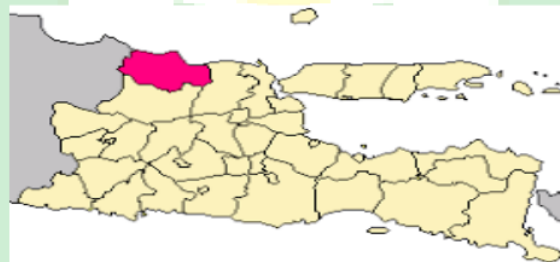


Figure 2. Location Map of Tuban Regency

PETA ADMINISTRASI KABUPATEN TUBAN



Figure 3. Administrative Map of Tuban Regency

The *Pusat Belajar Guru* (PBG) is a place to increase professionalism for the community of teachers, school principals, and supervisors formed by the Putera Sampoerna Foundation in collaboration with Exxon Mobil

Cepu Limited and the Tuban Regency Education and Youth Sports Office, and the Tuban Regency Ministry of Religion (*Pusat Belajar Guru Tuban*, 2021).



Figure 4. The office of *Pusat Belajar Guru*, Tuban Regency

Problem

The problem experienced by the teachers was low writing skills in CAR. Thus, it impacts weak evaluation of learning in the classroom because of the teacher's lack of understanding in evaluating and reflecting. So they could not develop innovative learning strategies even though they had innovative learning models. In addition, the sustainability of their careers also correlates with writing skills in CAR.

Target solution

By preparing the action research classroom, the assisted teachers can compile simple articles as a concrete form of reflective practice in daily learning and present the research results in seminars, a form of a scientific forum. In addition, articles in journals and seminars in this program also aim to help teachers to speed up getting credit scores for certification

Wali (n): saints of Islam in Indonesia, especially on Java, because of their historic role in the Spread of Islam in Indonesia.

Tuak (n): a traditional alcoholic drink made from the fermentation of *siwalan*

Legen (n): a drink that is tapped from the tip of a *siwalan* tree

Siwalan (n): a type of palm tree that grows in many coastal regions in a hot and dry area with the sea breeze is blowing a little stronger.

Sunan (n): the shorter version of "*Susuhunan*", both used as honorific in Java Indonesia.

Sheikh (n): chief of a tribe or a royal family member in Arabian countries, in some countries, it is also given to those of excellent knowledge in religious affairs as a surname by a prestigious spiritual leader from a chain of Sufi scholars.

METHOD

Demographic Characteristics of the Target Community

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the target community by institution and field of study

	Frequency (Percentage)	Gender	
		Male	Female
Institution			
SMAN Sooko	25 (33.33%)	7	18
SMPN 1 Palang	19 (25.33%)	11	8
SMKN 1 Palang	5 (6.67%)	2	3
SMP Islam Bina Anak Soleh	8 (10.66%)	0	8
SMPN 2 Palang	10 (13.33%)	1	9
MTs Al-Mustofawiyah Palang	8 (10.66%)	3	5
Field of Study			
Exact Science	20 (26.66%)	6	14
Social Science	17 (22.66%)	4	13
Language Science	18 (24%)	6	12
Islamic Science	6 (8%)	5	1
Uncategorized	14 (18.67%)	9	5

ICARE Based Training

This training was based on the Introduction, Connection, Application, Reflection, and Extension (ICARE) model. The ICARE model provides opportunities for participants to have the chance to apply what they experience in learning. The stages of ICARE Based Training were:

- 1) Introduction. At this stage, the trainers imparted an understanding of CAR to the teachers. This section explained the training objectives and the output in every meeting.
- 2) Connections. The trainers tried to connect new knowledge with the teacher's understanding based on the previous learning experience. The trainers conducted demonstrations, questions, and answers. For example, trainers asked the teacher to tell what they remembered from the last meeting.
- 3) Applications. This stage was the essential stage of the training activity. After teachers acquired new knowledge or skills through the connection stage, they needed to practice or apply them. The application stage should take a long time in the training process. Teachers must carry out experimental activities or use their knowledge in teaching.
- 4) Reflection. This section summarized the training. Teachers had the opportunity to reflect on what they had learned. The trainers assessed the extent of the objectives. Reflection or summary activities could involve group discussions, independent writing activities to summarize the training results, or a short quiz. Trainers could ask questions based on the training materials. In addition, they also needed to provide opportunities for teachers to express what they have learned.
- 5) Extensions. The trainers provided activities that the teachers could do after the lesson ended to strengthen and broaden the teacher's understanding. In school, extension activities are usually called homework. The extension activity in this training was compiling a CAR report.

Schedule and Material

The workshop material consisted of 15 training materials (See Table 2). The training materials were delivered in 12 meetings from February 2018 to February 2019. Each session was held once a month every weekend.

Table 2. Training Materials

Chapter	Material
1	Classroom Action Research (CAR) concept
2	Problem identification in CAR
3	Thinking framework and hypothesis in CAR
4	The stages in CAR
5	Initial design in CAR
6	Research method in CAR
7	Drafting a proposal
8	Preparation of research instruments
9	Analysis of the CAR results
10	Analysis of achievement indicators from CAR
11	Quantitative descriptive analysis of CAR
12	Preparation of reports
13	Preparation of presentation
14	Preparation of article
15	Presentation

Evaluation

The evaluation was carried out before and after the meeting to evaluate teachers' understanding of the training materials, using a scale of 10-100. In addition, the measurement was also based on the writing skills in the classroom action research report.

Table 3. The writing skills in the CAR report

Num.	Component
1	Problem identification in classroom action research
2	Literature study
3	Research instrument
4	Learning innovation
5	Analysis of the CAR results
6	Analysis of achievement indicators from CAR
7	References

SMAN (n): Public High School

SMPN (n): Public Middle School

SMKN (n): Public Vocational Secondary Schools

SMP (n): Junior high school

MTs (n): Junior high school characterized by the Islamic religion

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

ICARE was first introduced in 1997 by Bob Hoffman and Donn Ritchie at San Diego State University. Initially, this ICARE learning model was designed for online learning at San Diego State University. Still, over time this learning model has grown so that it is possible to apply it in schools. In Indonesia, in 2006, the Decentralized Basic Education (DBE) program began to introduce and use ICARE's pedagogic framework in teacher training and the learning process in schools.

Previous research concluded that the ICARE learning model was more effective than expository learning in improving mathematical connection ability in students (Astuti and Mariani, 2021). ICARE learning strategy could also be an alternative way to solve problems in the classroom, especially for writing skills (Setiawan and Latifa, 2021). In addition, the implementation of learning using the ICARE approach improved students' ability

to collaborate (Siahaan, Dewi, and Suhendi, 2020). ICARE was influential not only for students but also for teachers. The ICARE approach was very effective in helping the teachers improve their knowledge in creating an assessment instrument of creative thinking skills in science (Jusuf *et al.*, 2019). The uniqueness of the ICARE method was the cooperation between all participants in doing the CAR report. The teachers were divided into small groups to discuss the material and solve the problems during the activity.

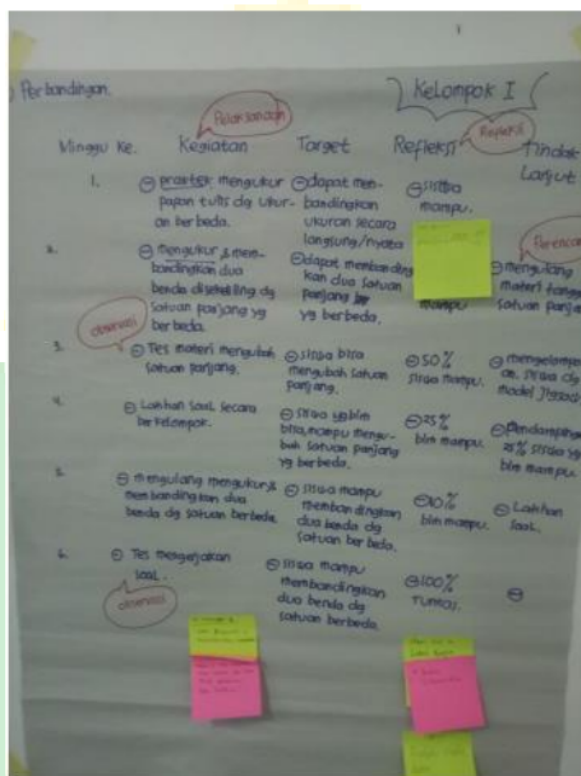


Figure 5. Documentation of group work among participants in ICARE Based Training
 ICARE method strongly supported the improvement of writing skills among teachers in CAR. The results showed increased comprehension at each meeting session after the training (See Table 4). In addition, Table 5 describes the writing skill in the CAR report.

Table 4. The teachers' comprehension in ICARE based training

Meeting	Training Material	The mean pre-test score	The mean post-test score	Description
1	Classroom Action Research (CAR) concept	70	83	Increased Score
2	Problem identification in CAR	75	79	Increased Score
3	Thinking framework and hypothesis in CAR	64	76	Increased Score
	The stages in CAR	66	78	Increased Score
	Initial design in CAR	71	86	Increased Score
	Research method in CAR	75	80	Increased Score
4	Drafting a proposal	78	85	Increased Score
5	Preparation of research instruments	75	80	Increased Score

6	Analysis of the CAR results	70	80	Increased Score
7	Analysis of achievement indicators from CAR	70	80	Increased Score
8	Quantitative descriptive analysis of CAR	70	80	Increased Score
9	Preparation of reports	65	75	Increased Score
10	Preparation of presentation	75	85	Increased Score
11	Preparation of article	65	75	Increased Score
12	Presentation	80	85	Increased Score

Table 4 shows increased mean scores in the post-test. The most significantly improved score was in the first meeting. The training material in the first meeting was Classroom Action Research (CAR) concept. Previously, the teachers did not comprehend the CAR concept well. Many misunderstandings occurred, especially in understanding the implementation of cycles 1 and 2. Many teachers thought that the implementation of cycle 1 was a pre-cycle stage, or teachers had not implemented learning innovations.

Table 5. The writing skills in CAR report after ICARE based training

Num.	Components	Mean Score
1	Problem identification in classroom action research	75
2	Literature study	65
3	Research instrument	75
4	Learning innovation	89
5	Analysis of the CAR results	77
6	Analysis of achievement indicators from CAR	77
7	References	64

Table 5 shows that the highest writing skill in the CAR is in learning innovation. Teachers did not understand their potential in designing learning innovation before training. However, they finally opened their minds to develop learning innovation in teaching after ICARE based training. Meanwhile, the lowest writing skill was in the literature study and reference. Many teachers were still tricky in finding supporting literature for their research and writing it in reference.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In conclusion, ICARE based training increases comprehension and writing skills in CAR among teachers. Further training should provide a deeper understanding of online and offline literature search and write it down in reference. So, it can support teacher professionalism and increase teacher insight.

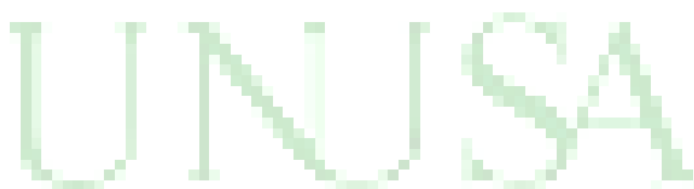
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