



Bridging Youth to Global Education: Workshop on IELTS Awareness and Preparation at SMAN Jatinangor

Menjembatani Pelajar Menuju Pendidikan Global: Pelatihan Kesadaran dan Persiapan IELTS di SMAN Jatinangor

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Abstrak

Kurangnya kesadaran terhadap tes kemampuan bahasa Inggris internasional seperti IELTS masih menjadi hambatan bagi siswa sekolah menengah di daerah pinggiran untuk mengakses pendidikan global. Untuk mengatasi hal ini, sebuah lokakarya interaktif satu hari diselenggarakan di SMAN Jatinangor dengan pendekatan Participatory Learning and Action (PLA). Kegiatan ini memperkenalkan struktur, tujuan, dan strategi menghadapi IELTS melalui metode pembelajaran partisipatif. Survei sebelum dan sesudah kegiatan menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan: persentase siswa dalam kategori kesadaran tinggi meningkat dari 0% menjadi 70%, sementara kategori rendah hilang sepenuhnya. Hasil ini membuktikan efektivitas intervensi edukatif yang terarah dalam meningkatkan kesiapan siswa menghadapi tantangan global.

Kata Kunci: Kesadaran IELTS, kesiapan pendidikan global, lokakarya edukatif, Metode Kriteria Sturges, pembelajaran partisipatif.

Abstract

Many high school students in suburban areas lack awareness of international English proficiency tests like IELTS, limiting their access to global education opportunities. To address this, a one-day interactive workshop was held at SMAN Jatinangor using the Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) approach. The program introduced students to IELTS structure, objectives, and test strategies through engaging, student-centered activities. Pre- and post-surveys assessed the impact, with results showing a significant improvement: the percentage of students in the high awareness category increased from 0% to 70%, while the low category was completely eliminated. This demonstrates the effectiveness of targeted educational interventions in bridging global readiness gaps.

Keyword: Educational workshop, global education readiness, IELTS awareness, participatory learning, Sturges Criterion Method.

1. INTRODUCTION

The capacity to communicate in English has evolved from a linguistic advantage to a crucial talent that provides access to intercultural, professional, and educational opportunities in today's globalized world. English literacy is becoming a basic prerequisite for everyone looking to pursue higher education and work overseas as international mobility rises and the global labor market grows more competitive. Out of all the English proficiency tests that are accessible, the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is still one of the most regarded and well-known tests in academic and professional contexts around the world [1].

IELTS's significance extends beyond fulfilling admission requirements for foreign educational institutions. More generally, the test measures a student's ability to comprehend difficult materials, participate in scholarly discourse, and express ideas clearly verbally and in writing. IELTS results can predict academic success, especially in settings where English is the primary language of teaching [2]. Therefore, for students who have

goals beyond their local borders, it becomes essential to comprehend the test's structure, its components, and the tactics needed to face each segment.

Even with the increasing importance of English proficiency exams in Indonesia, many high school students still do not have access to trustworthy information or organized instructions on how to take these examinations, especially those who attend suburban and rural schools. This disparity produces an educational gap that can restrict students' worldwide ambitions, particularly if they are generally competent but lack sufficient knowledge. Disparities in the quality of language instruction among Indonesian schools frequently lead to students' unequal preparedness to engage in international academic opportunities [3]. Regional students are frequently left behind, while urban students may have better access to resources for test preparation.

The workshop held at SMAN Jatinangor deals with this specific problem. Many driven high school students who are excited about pursuing further education but are still largely ignorant of international language competency norms may be found in Jatinangor, a developing educational center in West Java. The school is home to highly motivated students who, despite being in a rapidly rising educational area, have limited access to the necessary information and learning resources to get ready for international tests like the IELTS. According to preliminary interviews conducted with the English teachers at the school, the majority of students are not familiar with the idea of IELTS and are not aware of its advantages for their future academic pursuits. This instance illustrates the information and guidance gap that exists between students in suburban settings and those attending large metropolitan schools. The framework of this workshop can be seen in figure 1.

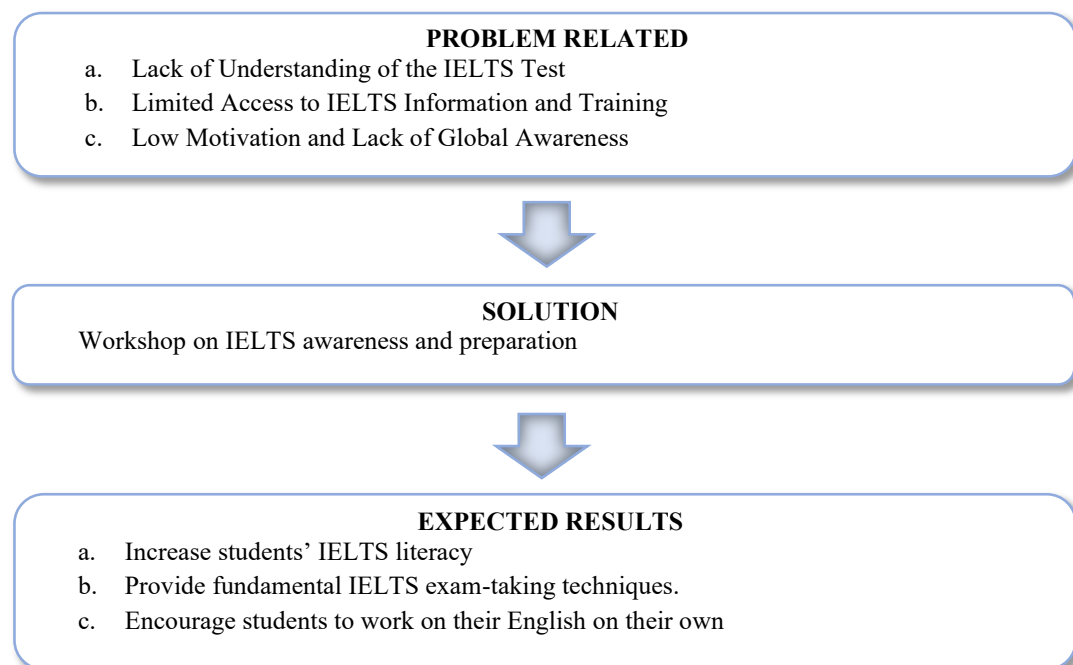


Figure 1. Workshop Framework

It is intended that students who are motivated by this activity will eventually look into more extensive options for their further education, such as studying overseas. This is in line with the multicultural ideals that are promoted in Indonesian English language schools, where learning a foreign language opens doors to a world of diversity [3]. As a result, our workshop effort not only meets students' practical needs for IELTS-related material, but also acts as a platform for encouraging them to have bigger dreams and take more calculated risks when deciding on their academic and professional pathways. It is a modest but important step in creating an educational ecosystem that is more inclusive and equitable.

2. MATERIALS AND METHOD

Four main stages comprised this IELTS introductory workshop, which was held at SMAN Jatinangor: preparation and needs analysis, material design and development, workshop implementation and student engagement, and reflection and reinforcement. The program as a whole was made to be accessible, inclusive, and pertinent to the students' objectives and prior knowledge. The Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) technique was used in this session to address the current gaps in IELTS awareness and access to global education. PLA places a strong emphasis on students actively participating in the learning process, which encourages them to critically evaluate and assess their own learning needs in addition to absorbing material

[4]. The workshop's design and delivery were influenced by PLA, which made sure that students were actively participating as co-participants rather than passive information consumers. The whole structure of the one-day interactive session, which introduced students to the IELTS test—its goals, structure, and test-taking techniques—was based on this participatory methodology. Figure 2 shows the PLA framework that the software uses.

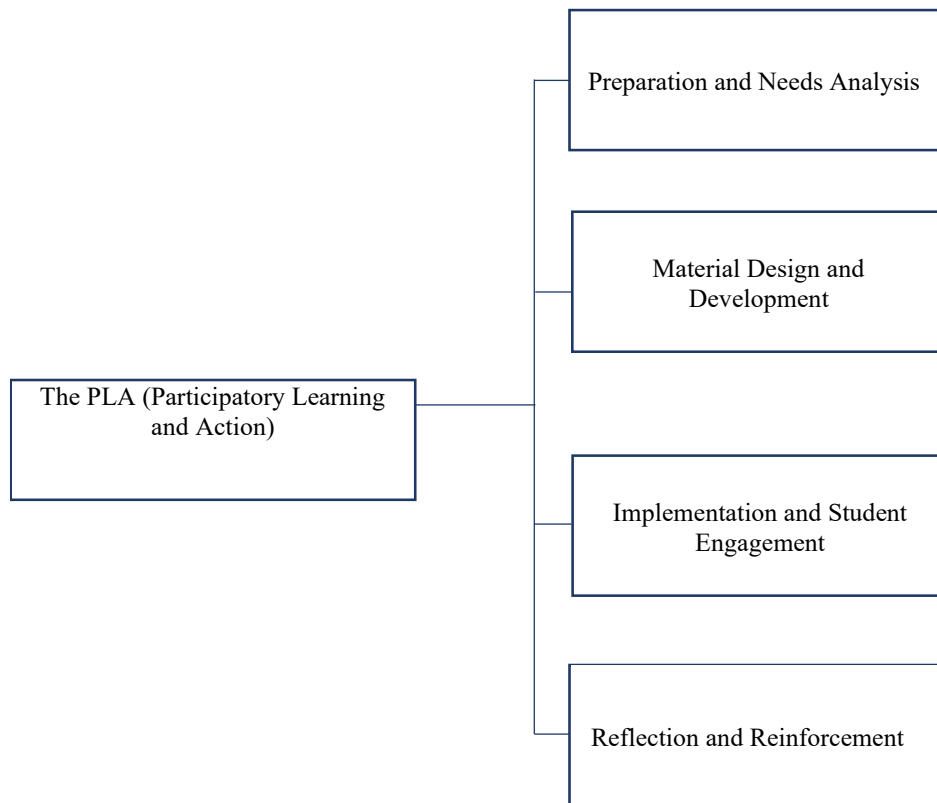


Figure 2. PLA Structure

2.1 Preparation and Need Analysis

During the program's first phase, English teachers and a few chosen student representatives from SMAN Jatinangor participated in an informal needs analysis. Evaluating students' initial knowledge of IELTS, their exposure to international academic standards, and the obstacles they encounter when trying to access possibilities for global education were the main objectives. This stage is essential for creating educational materials that are also pertinent to the cognitive and motivational levels of the pupils. To guarantee that program objectives and participants' real circumstances are in line, needs analysis is crucial in community-based education initiatives [5]. Most students have never heard of the phrase IELTS, much less its structure or purpose, according to the report, which underscores how urgent it is to put this fundamental awareness program into place.

2.2 Material Design and Development

Based on the results of the needs analysis, the implementation team created a learning module that covered three main topics: (1) the goal of the IELTS and its international recognition; (2) the structure of the test, which includes the four main components (speaking, listening, reading, and writing); and (3) fundamental techniques for addressing each section of the test. The materials were made accessible to students with different levels of English proficiency by simplifying them without sacrificing important content. A printed booklet called IELTS Starter Guide, brief infographics, visual presentations, and brief video snippets from real IELTS tests were all included in the learning materials. These tools were created to support the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning modes that are highly significant in enhancing comprehension and retention in non-formal education settings [6]. Additionally, content was delivered in both English and Indonesian to ensure clarity and accessibility.

2.3 Implementation and Student Engagement

In order to carry out the program, eleventh grade students voluntarily registered through their English teachers for a one-day interactive workshop at SMAN Jatinangor. The topics covered in the lessons included an overview of IELTS, an explanation of each component of the test, and test-taking techniques. The delivery of each section combined interactive lectures, Q&A sessions, video analysis, and group discussions in a participative manner. Active questioning, opinion sharing, and reflection on the material's relevance to individual academic objectives were all encouraged by the facilitators. Especially in knowledge-based training, active learning engagement improves understanding and intrinsic motivation [7].

2.4 Reflection and Reinforcement

A reflection and reinforcement session was the last phase of implementation. Students were invited to write or speak on the most important lessons they learned from the program and how it changed the way they thought about learning English and studying overseas. A crucial component of the PLA approach, this reflective process helps students develop their understanding and motivates them to create their own academic and professional objectives. Reflection is an essential teaching tool that links knowledge with real-life circumstances [8] pointed out. Students were given reinforcement tools in addition to verbal exercises, including a follow-up guide with connections to free IELTS practice materials, instructional YouTube channels, and scholarship information that depends on IELTS scores. Surveys measuring changes in student awareness were administered before and after the workshop in order to assess impact in a simple yet significant manner. Multiple-choice and short-answer questions intended to evaluate both subjective perceptions and factual comprehension were included in these surveys. Informal evaluations such as these are very useful for assessing the effects of awareness- or attitude-based educational initiatives [9].

Furthermore, Reed and Koliba [10] contended that, especially when the learning outcomes are emotive or motivating in nature, it is frequently more effective to measure them using instruments for perception and reflection than with formal tests in community education. This light-touch evaluation methodology in conjunction with PLA enabled the implementation team to record students' individual experiences during the learning process as well as the knowledge they acquired. The Sturges Criterion Method was used to better interpret the survey results. This approach was first created to arrange frequency distributions, but it has since been frequently modified to classify ordinal data in educational contexts. Instead of depending on arbitrary cutoffs, this statistical method allowed for the grouping of student awareness levels into meaningful and consistent groups (e.g., low, medium, and high). This made it possible to interpret the data in a more methodical and trustworthy manner. Sturges' method guarantees a balance between clarity and detail, avoiding both over-generalization and over-segmentation [11]. Further demonstrating the usefulness of this approach in educational assessments—where consistent classification is crucial for assessing student understanding—are Utts and Heckard [12].

By combining light-touch evaluation with the Sturges Criterion Method, the team was able to record students' personal development as well as their cognitive results, providing a comprehensive assessment of the workshop's efficacy.



Figure 3. Opening the workshop by the speaker

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The "Bridging Youth to Global Education: Workshop on IELTS Awareness and Preparation" session took place at SMAN Jatinangor on May 20, 2025. Twenty-four students in the eleventh grade took part in the program. The speaker officially began the program, signaling the start of a day devoted to improving students'

comprehension of the IELTS exam and getting them ready for chances in international education in the future (see figure 3).

A standardized questionnaire with ten items testing students' awareness and understanding of IELTS was used both before and after the program to gauge its effectiveness. A 3-point ordinal scale was used to rate each item:

- Know very well = 5 (High)
- Somewhat know = 3 (Moderate)
- Don't know at all = 1 (Low)

According to this scoring method, each respondent might receive a minimum score of 10 and a maximum score of 50. This study used the Sturges Criterion Method to divide the awareness scores into three different levels in order to interpret the findings in a consistent and understandable way. An interval width of roughly 13 points was determined by dividing the range between the maximum and minimum scores ($50 - 10 = 40$) by three. The awareness categories that emerged from this is illustrated in figure 4.

Category	Score Range
High	37 – 50
Moderate	24 – 36
Low	11 - 23

Figure 4. Scoring categories based on the Sturges criterion

The works of Utts and Heckard [12] and Newbold, Carlson, and Thorne [11], which highlight the Sturges Criterion Method's efficacy in simplifying and interpreting ordinal-scale data, especially in educational and social research contexts, provided support for the choice to use this method. The study used a statistically supported approach to categorize students' IELTS awareness levels in order to guarantee a methodical and reliable assessment of the session. This method improved the findings' overall validity by offering precise, well-organized categories that appropriately represented the comprehension and readiness levels of the participants.



Figure 5. implementing the workshop by the speaker

After providing a theoretical overview of IELTS awareness and preparation, the speaker went on to show some sample questions that might be asked on the test. In order to create an interesting and dynamic learning environment, these instances were discussed cooperatively with the attendees. An open forum at the end of the session allowed students to express questions and seek clarification regarding the material in order to increase understanding.

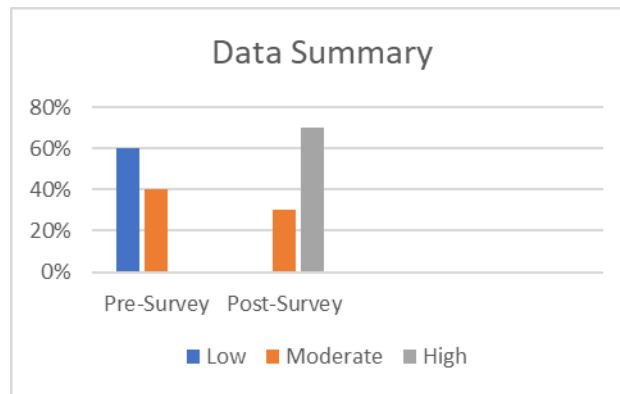


Figure 6. Data summary

After the course, students' awareness and knowledge of the IELTS test showed a notable and positive rising trend, according to the data. A significant 60% of participants were classified as having poor awareness prior to the session, indicating a lack of familiarity with the format, goal, and applicability of the IELTS test. At this early stage, no kid showed high awareness, while the remaining 40% fell into the moderate awareness category.

The results of the post-survey, however, revealed a noteworthy change. 70% of the students advanced into the high awareness category following the one-day interactive course, demonstrating a solid command of the exam format and an enhanced comprehension of the role that IELTS plays in international academic and career possibilities. While the low awareness group was completely removed, the percentage of pupils in the moderate level dropped marginally to 30%. This elimination of the lowest level indicates that all participants made some improvement and none of them remained at their starting point with very little comprehension.

The alterations highlight how well the session worked to increase awareness while also improving students' ability to interact with global standards. The change from low to high awareness in a single intervention shows that targeted educational outreach may produce quantifiable results, even in a short period of time, if it is made engaging, useful, and approachable. According to the results, these seminars can be an effective means of closing educational gaps, especially in situations when access to international testing and study options is restricted.

To maintain and expand the impact of the IELTS Awareness and Preparation Workshop conducted at SMAN Jatinangor, a series of follow-up programs and strategies are proposed. These initiatives aim to reinforce learning, build institutional capacity, and empower students to pursue global educational opportunities beyond the one-day event.

1. Ongoing Mentoring Program (IELTS Mentoring Club)

Create an IELTS Mentoring Club at your place of education that is led by university students (particularly those from FKIP) or former students who have taken the test. Monthly or bimonthly meetings are possible. to offer ongoing direction, respond to inquiries, and establish a nurturing learning atmosphere. promotes long-term student involvement in improving their English skills and peer learning.

2. Online or Hybrid IELTS Preparation Classes

Using programs like Google Classroom or Moodle, create an online learning environment where students may access IELTS-specific video courses, practice exams, and downloadable resources. to accommodate students with different schedules or learning speeds by offering adaptable, on-demand learning materials. encourages self-paced learning across school semesters and lessens reliance on one-time events.

3. Training for English Teachers

Plan brief training sessions or seminars on IELTS format, scoring standards, and preparation techniques for English teachers in the area. to give educators the resources they need to include IELTS-style exercises into their normal English classes. enhances the school's internal ability to continue IELTS-related instruction without the need for outside instructors.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the Sturges Criterion Method scoring methodology, the IELTS awareness and preparation course at SMAN Jatinangor produced a statistically significant improvement in student understanding. 40% of pupils were categorized as having moderate knowledge and 60% as having low awareness in the pre-survey; no students initially showed high awareness. The low awareness category was completely eliminated after the one-day intervention, as 70% of individuals moved into the high awareness category and the remaining 30%

into the moderate category. The success of the session in raising each participant's IELTS proficiency to significant levels is demonstrated by this change.

These results demonstrate the vital role that focused educational workshops play in bridging the gaps in local youths' academic preparedness for the global economy. The program effectively addressed early awareness gaps and gave students a better basis for seeking global possibilities by fusing participatory learning activities with transparent, data-driven evaluation. This methodology could be expanded upon in future seminars to better assist students' academic goals and English competence.



Figure 6. Presentation of speaker certificates from the principal of Jatinangor State High School

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