

Strengthening English Speaking Skills Through Reading Instructions for Employees of PT Capsugel Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

KEYWORDS

community service;
English language;
industrial employees;
instruction reading;
speaking skills

This community service program was conducted at PT Capsugel Indonesia to address the need for improving employees' English skills, particularly in reading technical instructions and orally conveying them. Such skills are essential for supporting customer service and preparing employees to meet global workplace challenges. The aim of this community service program is to improve English speaking skills through an instructional reading approach. The program adopted a Service Learning (SL) approach, integrating the roles of lecturers and students in assisting the community. Training was carried out over two days through lectures, discussions, practice, and simulations, covering activities such as reading aloud, understanding written instructions, guided conversations, and interview preparation. A total of 52 employees participated, with evaluation based on pretest–post-test and speaking practice. The results indicated significant improvement, with the average pretest score of 63.6 rising to 86.9 in the post-test, an increase of 23.3 points (from C+ to A). The paired conversation evaluation yielded an average score of 80.3 (A-), showing strength in fluency and pronunciation, but weaknesses in vocabulary, interaction, and confidence. Partner satisfaction questionnaires, completed by 52 respondents, revealed that 97.2% agreed the program was beneficial. Overall, this training successfully enhanced employees' reading and speaking skills in English while strengthening their preparedness for competitive workplace demands.

INTRODUCTION

PT Capsugel Indonesia, located at Jl. Raya Bogor KM 42.5, Cibinong, Bogor, West Java, represents a significant player in Indonesia's pharmaceutical manufacturing sector since its establishment in 1996. The company operates as part of Lonza Group's global network, a multinational corporation specializing in pharmaceutical and biotechnology products and services (Hu, 2016; Jeong, Song, Kim, & Shin, 2022; Philippidis, 2024; Rodrigues, 2020). Following its acquisition from Pfizer in 2011, Capsugel has evolved into one of the world's largest providers of hard capsules, serving pharmaceutical, nutrition, and healthcare industries across multiple continents with high-quality products and innovative solutions (Pfizer, 2001; Lonza, 2017). Operating within this extensive global supply chain necessitates adherence to rigorous international standards, including sophisticated cross-cultural and multilingual communication capabilities.

The contemporary pharmaceutical industry in Indonesia confronts substantial challenges stemming from rapid technological advancement, evolving regulatory frameworks, and

intensified global competition (Almeman, 2024; Jakovljević et al., 2021; Tjandrawinata & Budi, 2025; Yulianti & Fitriansyah, 2024). These dynamics have precipitated significant workforce restructuring, including organizational downsizing and strategic realignment of human resources (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2019). Under such circumstances, the imperative for continuous upskilling and reskilling of employees has become paramount, enabling workforce adaptation to evolving job requirements and positioning employees competitively within increasingly globalized labor markets. However, preliminary needs assessment conducted at PT Capsugel Indonesia revealed specific competency gaps that warranted targeted intervention (Faradiba, Satibi, & Lazuardi, 2023; Meilianti, Smith, Ernawati, Pratita, & Bates, 2021).

Specifically, internal company assessments and management consultations identified that approximately 65% of production floor employees demonstrated limited proficiency in reading and comprehending English-language technical documentation, standard operating procedures (SOPs), and safety instructions—materials that are predominantly provided in English due to international quality standards and global regulatory requirements. Furthermore, approximately 70% of employees reported low confidence levels when required to communicate verbally in English, whether in customer service interactions, technical briefings, or professional development contexts such as job interviews (Rajprasit & Hemchua, 2015). These empirical observations, documented through company HR records and supervisor reports, established the concrete operational need that this training program was designed to address.

The communication competency gap carries significant implications for both operational efficiency and employee career development. At the operational level, misinterpretation of English technical instructions can lead to procedural errors, quality control issues, and potential safety hazards—concerns of particular gravity in pharmaceutical manufacturing where precision and compliance are non-negotiable (Evans, 2012). At the individual level, limited English proficiency constrains employees' access to professional development opportunities, participation in international training programs, and career mobility within the multinational organizational structure (Peltokorpi, 2022; Pudelko & Tenzer, 2019).

In response to these identified needs, this community service program was developed with a distinctive pedagogical approach: English speaking skills training integrated with instructional reading methodology. This integrated approach differs fundamentally from conventional general-purpose English training in several critical aspects. First, rather than teaching decontextualized language skills, the program utilizes authentic workplace documents—actual technical instructions, SOPs, and procedural guides used in daily operations—as primary learning materials. This ensures immediate relevance and transferability of acquired skills to job performance (Nägele & Stalder, 2017). Second, the program explicitly connects receptive language skills (reading comprehension) with productive skills (oral communication), recognizing that in workplace contexts, employees must not only understand written instructions but also communicate that understanding verbally to colleagues, supervisors, and occasionally customers (Basturkmen, 2010; Qasserras, 2023). Third, the training emphasizes task-based and simulation-based learning, allowing participants to practice realistic workplace communication scenarios rather than abstract language exercises.

This instructional design aligns with established principles of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which emphasizes language teaching tailored to learners' professional contexts and communicative needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Rahman, 2015). The integration of reading technical instructions with oral communication practice reflects current understanding in applied linguistics that language skills are most effectively developed when taught in integrated, contextualized, and purposeful ways rather than as isolated competencies (Richards, 2015; Whyte, 2019).

Despite the recognized importance of workplace English training, a review of existing literature reveals a significant research gap regarding evidence-based interventions specifically targeting the integration of technical reading comprehension with oral communication skills in industrial settings. Previous studies have examined various dimensions of workplace English training, but comprehensive approaches integrating these competencies remain underexplored.

Louhiala-Salminen and Kankaanranta (2011) examined the concept of global communicative competence in international business contexts, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of effective professional communication in English as a lingua franca. Their research highlighted that successful workplace communication requires not only linguistic accuracy but also strategic competence, pragmatic awareness, and intercultural sensitivity. However, their study focused primarily on management-level professionals in corporate offices rather than production-floor employees in manufacturing settings, and did not specifically address the integration of technical reading with speaking skills.

Mackenzie (2013) investigated English as a lingua franca in multinational corporations, documenting the communicative strategies employed by non-native English speakers in international business interactions. While providing valuable insights into authentic workplace English use, this research emphasized naturally occurring communication patterns rather than pedagogical interventions or training program designs. Furthermore, the study context involved office-based business communication rather than technical instruction comprehension and communication in manufacturing environments.

More recently, Qasserras (2023) conducted a systematic review of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approaches and their implications for speaking pedagogy. The review affirmed that communicative, task-based approaches yield superior outcomes compared to traditional grammar-focused instruction. However, the reviewed studies predominantly examined general English language education contexts rather than specialized workplace training programs, and did not specifically address the unique challenges of pharmaceutical industry employees requiring technical English competence.

Rahman (2015) provided a holistic review of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), examining theoretical foundations, curriculum design principles, and pedagogical approaches across various professional domains. While acknowledging the importance of needs analysis and authentic materials in ESP instruction, the review did not present empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of specific integrated skills approaches (particularly reading-speaking integration) in industrial training contexts. Additionally, the review did not address the unique constraints and opportunities present in short-term intensive training programs for working adults in manufacturing settings.

These previous studies, while valuable, leave several critical gaps that the present community service program addresses. First, there exists limited empirical evidence regarding

the effectiveness of integrated reading-speaking training specifically designed for technical instruction comprehension in pharmaceutical manufacturing contexts. Second, previous research has not adequately examined how Service Learning approaches—involving university faculty and students—can be effectively implemented to address authentic workplace training needs in industrial settings. Third, the specific pedagogical strategies effective for short-term intensive training programs (as opposed to semester-long courses) targeting adult learners with limited prior English education remain underexplored. Finally, there is insufficient documentation of measurable learning outcomes from such interventions, particularly using multiple assessment modalities (knowledge tests, performance assessments, and satisfaction measures).

The present program addresses these gaps by implementing and systematically evaluating an integrated reading-speaking training intervention specifically designed for pharmaceutical industry employees, utilizing authentic technical materials, and employing the Service Learning framework to engage both faculty expertise and student resources in addressing community needs.

The scientific urgency of this research and community service intervention is underscored by converging trends in global pharmaceutical manufacturing, workforce development imperatives, and educational innovation. First, the accelerating internationalization of pharmaceutical supply chains and quality standards demands that employees at all organizational levels possess functional English proficiency to ensure compliance, safety, and operational excellence (Evans, 2012). Second, in the context of ongoing industry restructuring and employment volatility, enhanced English communication skills represent critical employability assets, enabling workers to access broader employment opportunities and career advancement pathways (ILO, 2019). Third, universities face increasing expectations to demonstrate societal impact through engagement with community and industry partners, addressing authentic needs through application of academic expertise (Furco, 1996; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). The convergence of these factors creates both an urgent need and a strategic opportunity for the type of intervention documented in this study.

The novelty of this community service program lies in several distinctive features that differentiate it from conventional English training approaches. First, the program employs an innovative pedagogical integration: rather than teaching reading and speaking as separate skills, the curriculum systematically connects comprehension of written technical instructions with oral communication of that content, reflecting authentic workplace communication demands. Second, the program utilizes the Service Learning framework, engaging university students as co-facilitators in the training process—an approach that simultaneously addresses community needs while providing valuable experiential learning opportunities for students. Third, the training design incorporates authentic workplace materials (actual SOPs and technical instructions from PT Capsugel Indonesia) rather than generic textbook content, ensuring maximum relevance and immediate applicability. Fourth, the program employs a comprehensive evaluation framework incorporating multiple assessment modalities—cognitive learning (pre-test/post-test), performance competence (speaking evaluations), and stakeholder satisfaction—providing robust evidence of program effectiveness. Finally, the intensive two-day format with embedded practice, feedback, and simulation cycles represents

an evidence-based approach to adult professional development that respects the time constraints of working professionals while maximizing learning impact.

The main goal of this activity is to strengthen two core skills, namely the ability to read English instructions fluently and the skill of speaking clearly, confidently, and according to the context. These skills not only support work effectiveness but also become important capital for employees to compete in an increasingly competitive global work environment (Richards, 2015). Thus, this program is expected to provide sustainable benefits for employees and companies.

METHOD

This service activity used the Service Learning (SL) approach, which integrates learning into community service activities (Suwendi, Lestari, & Maulida, 2022). Service Learning emphasizes practical experience as the main source of learning (Kolb, 1984). Thus, the service activities not only provided English skills training but also connected theory with real practice in the field.

For students, Service Learning offered an active learning model that increased social involvement and a sense of responsibility to society. Bringle and Hatcher (1996) found that Service Learning helps students develop both academic understanding and social awareness. Students supported community activities by helping to find solutions to real problems, contributing not only theoretical knowledge but also practical assistance.

For lecturers, Service Learning provided opportunities to identify problems relevant to their fields and find solutions. This model also strengthened university–community partnerships and supported public need-based research (Furco, 1996). Therefore, the service activities benefited participants and enriched the academic experience for lecturers.

The two-day training materials for participants included a pretest, practice reading aloud, practice understanding written instructions, practice using English expressions, guided public conversation practice, tips for interviews and career development, practice guided interview conversations, and a post-test.

The activity used lectures and question-and-answer methods to deliver material. Mentoring for practical and simulation activities continued throughout the training, enabling employees to explore ideas from reading and express them in conversational practice. Speaking assessments covered fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, interaction, and confidence. The assessment used a quality scale from A (excellent) to E (fail).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The output of this service activity from each participant is in the form of: (1) knowledge and cognitive experience of understanding and reading aloud; (2) practical experience of speaking from the results of reading instructions, and (3) understanding the tricks of conducting an interview. For the service team, 1) Training Modules, 2) Service news in the mass media, 3) videos of the results of service implementation, 4) articles for service journals.

The implementation of training to strengthen English speaking skills through reading instructions for PT Capsugel Indonesia employees was held in Cibinong on May 14-15, 2025, involving 52 employees. This training is in line with the principles of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which emphasizes language teaching based on the professional needs of

participants (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Basturkmen, 2010). Focusing on reading technical instructions and converting them to oral form supports the improvement of workplace English competence (Evans, 2012).

Training Stages

The training was held for 2 days (May 14-15, 2025) for PT Capsugel employees with their respective descriptions:

First day: before the event starts, time is used to prepare facilities and infrastructure such as infocus, laptops, banner installation, banner installation, and filling out the participant attendance list and distributing training kits. The training stages include pretests, reading aloud practices, the use of English expressions, guided general conversations, tricks for facing interviews, and guided interview conversations. Evaluation was carried out through pre-test and speaking assessment based on six aspects: fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, interaction, and confidence (Luoma, 2004).



Figure 1. Resource Person Delivering Training Materials

The second day: is the last day of training. Participants carried out guided interview practices. During the guided interview practice session, the service team carried out mentoring, providing direction and correction for improvements in the aspects of fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, interaction and confidence. The next session, the implementation of Interview Practice Simulation by the trainees in pairs. The interview process is graded by lecturers assigned as evaluators. The second day of the activity ended with the giving of a posttest by the training participants.

Evaluation Stages

Evaluation is carried out through pretest and posttest to measure the extent to which the material can be absorbed and understood, while in the delivery of the material, evaluation is given in the form of conversation practice conditioned in pairs, to find out whether the participant is able to convey the reading message orally to his interlocutor. The following are the results of the average achievement of pretest and posttest results.



Figure 2. Guided interview practice

Table 2. Average Pretest and Posttest Results

Number of Participants	Average pretest results	Average posttest results
52	63.6	86.9

Referring to the results of the average pretest and posttest, in general, it can be said that the results of the evaluation show a significant increase: the average pretest score of 63.6 increased to 86.9 in the posttest, an increase of 23.3 points. This improvement demonstrates the effectiveness of practice-based and simulation-based training, in line with Rahman's (2015) research which emphasizes the importance of contextual training in improving the English language skills of industrial employees. This means that trainees can improve the quality of pretest results from C+ (More than Enough) to A (very special) in the posttest results. The results of the evaluation of English conversations in pairs can be shown as follows.

Table 3. Average Conversation Evaluation Results

Number of Participants	Conversation Results Score Average
52	80.30

The evaluation of paired conversations resulted in an average score of 80.3 (A-), with strengths in fluency and pronunciation, but weaknesses were found in vocabulary, interaction, and confidence. This is in line with the findings of Shumin (2002), that speaking skills in foreign languages are often hampered by limited vocabulary and anxiety of speaking in front of others.



Figure 3. Conversation Evaluation Process

Table 4. Conversation Findings

No	Component	Average Score
1	Fluency	(Smooth, pause is still reasonable)
2	Pronunciation	(Some words are hard to understand)
3	Grammar	(There are some minor errors)
4	Vocabulary	(Vocabulary is enough, sometimes repeated)
5	Interaction	(Passive response, the conversation often stalls.)
6	Confidence	(Quite confident, sometimes hesitant)

The evaluation component in the conversation process as written in Table 4 above is found to be weak in (1) vocabulary mastery, (2) in interaction when carrying out conversations with interlocutors, and (3) confidence in conveying ideas, responses or responses.

Partner Satisfaction Questionnaire Results

At the end of the training activity, participants were asked to fill out a satisfaction questionnaire and give an impression about the benefits of the training. The questionnaire contains 10 items with three choices: Yes, Doubt, No and has been filled in by 54 respondents. Answer Yes with results: 97.2%, respondents answered Doubtful: 2.2%; respondents answered No: 0.6%. In the opinion of most respondents, all the things asked on the questionnaire were in line with what was experienced in the process and the results of the service activities. The results of the satisfaction questionnaire showed that 97.2% of respondents stated that this activity was beneficial. This positive response reinforces the view that real needs-based training encourages increased motivation and skills (Carter, 2013). The company's partners also emphasized the importance of English skills as a key competency in the era of work globalization. If visualized, then the result is like figure 4 below.

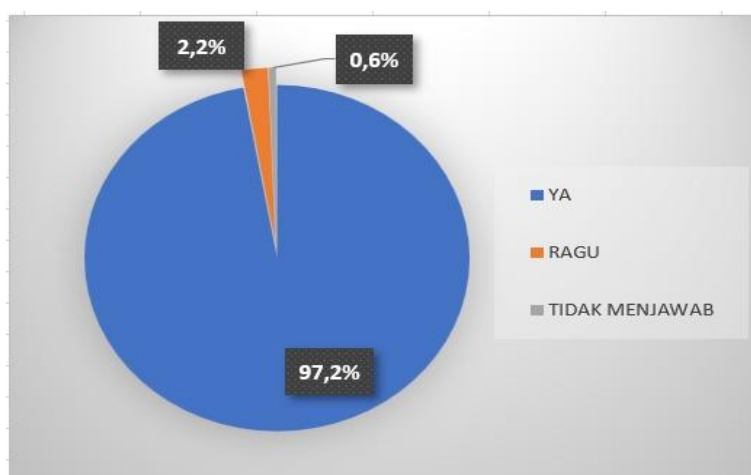


Figure 4. Satisfaction of Service Partners

Overall, these activities succeeded in improving employees' instructional reading and English speaking skills, while preparing them for the demands of an increasingly competitive global job market.

The Benefits of Community Service Activities

Based on the activities that have been carried out and referring to the results of the partner satisfaction questionnaire, it can be said that the partners are very satisfied with the results that have been achieved from the activity. This is as expressed by Mrs. Miera Hanita Budiani, Associate Director of Human Resources of PT Capsugel for the Southeast Asia and Oceania region. He expressed his appreciation for PNJ's initiative, and emphasized that English proficiency is a key skill in employee career development, especially in a global work environment. This collaboration can be continued through the continuous training required by the Company.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of English speaking skills training at PT Capsugel Indonesia was smooth, thanks to full leadership support and enthusiastic participant engagement, demonstrated by high attendance and active involvement. Participants generally succeeded in conversational tasks based on reading written instructions, though challenges remained in vocabulary mastery, conversational interaction, and confidence in expressing ideas. The training included paired conversation practice focused on preparing employees for job interviews within the company's hiring process. Key areas for improvement identified were expanding vocabulary and boosting confidence to enable more fluid and active communication in interviews and other interactions. Leadership recognized the program's value, aligning it with their broader efforts to prepare employees for transitions, including those moving to other companies. Future research could explore targeted interventions to enhance vocabulary acquisition and confidence-building strategies in workplace English training, measuring their long-term impact on employee performance and career mobility.

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