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Teacher Empowerment and Training in Developing Digital Teaching Materials at SMP Negeri 25 Barru

Pemberdayaan dan Pelatihan Guru dalam Pembuatan Bahan Ajar Digital di SMP Negeri 25 Barru

Abdul Rahman[a,*], Rusli[a], Akbar Iskandar[b], Ansari Saleh Ahmar[c]

[a]*Department of Mathematics, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Makassar, 90223, Indonesia*
[b]*Department of Informatics Engineering, Universitas Teknologi AKBA, Makassar, Indonesia*
[c]*Department of Statistics, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Makassar, 90223, Indonesia*

Abstract

This training is in the form of training on creating digital learning materials using Heyzine at SMP Negeri 25 Barru. This training aims to equip teachers with the skills to create interactive and visually appealing learning resources. The training, held on August 22, 2024, used a workshop model consisting of two stages: theory sessions and practical sessions. The results showed significant improvement in teachers' ability to develop engaging and interactive materials, with increased confidence in using digital tools to support learning objectives. In addition, teachers gained insights into the use of technology to create meaningful educational experiences, and some teachers began to integrate Heyzine with other digital platforms such as Google Classroom. Overall, the training reflected a proactive approach to preparing educators for future educational challenges in an increasingly digitized world.

Abstrak

Pelatihan ini berupa pelatihan pembuatan materi pembelajaran digital menggunakan Heyzine di SMP Negeri 25 Barru. Pelatihan ini bertujuan untuk membekali para guru dengan keterampilan membuat sumber belajar yang interaktif dan menarik secara visual. Pelatihan yang diselenggarakan pada tanggal 22 Agustus 2024 ini menggunakan model lokakarya yang terdiri dari dua tahap: sesi teori dan sesi praktik. Hasilnya menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan dalam kemampuan guru untuk mengembangkan materi yang menarik dan interaktif, dengan peningkatan kepercayaan diri dalam menggunakan alat digital untuk mendukung tujuan pembelajaran. Selain itu, para guru memperoleh wawasan tentang penggunaan teknologi untuk menciptakan pengalaman pendidikan yang bermakna, dan beberapa guru mulai mengintegrasikan Heyzine dengan platform digital lainnya seperti Google Classroom. Secara keseluruhan, pelatihan ini mencerminkan pendekatan proaktif untuk mempersiapkan para pendidik dalam menghadapi tantangan pendidikan di masa depan di dunia yang semakin terdigitalisasi.

Keywords: teacher empowerment; digital teaching; heyzine.

1. Introduction

The development of digital instructional materials represents a strategic approach to advancing educational quality and relevance in the digital age. As educational settings increasingly integrate technology, there is a growing need to create teaching resources that are not only visually appealing but also interactive, accessible, and aligned with students' digital learning habits. This shift is particularly crucial in supporting diverse learning styles and promoting engagement, as students today are often more responsive to multimedia formats. Heyzine, a platform specializing in digital flipbooks, offers educators a tool to convert static teaching materials into interactive content, incorporating multimedia elements like videos, audio, and hyperlinks. By transforming conventional materials into dynamic digital formats, Heyzine can

* Corresponding author:
E-mail address: abdul.rahman@unm.ac.id

significantly enhance students' learning experience, providing them with content that is both engaging and easily navigable.

Despite the potential of digital tools to enhance learning, many educators continue to face challenges in effectively employing such technology. Teachers may lack familiarity with platforms like Heyzine, or they may require further training to confidently integrate these tools into their teaching practice. According to Anderson and Dron (2011), digital competencies are essential for educators to support pedagogical innovation and adaptability in digital learning environments. Similarly, Brown and Green (2010) emphasize the importance of equipping teachers with instructional design skills that make learning both engaging and accessible. These competencies enable educators to create materials that not only meet academic goals but also cater to the interactive preferences of today's students. In line with this, SMP Negeri 25 Barru—a proactive educational institution—recognized the need for its teachers to acquire digital skills and took the initiative to offer specialized training in instructional material development using Heyzine.

The training at SMP Negeri 25 Barru was designed with the goal of equipping teachers to produce digital materials that integrate seamlessly with current educational needs. Besides introducing teachers to Heyzine, the training emphasized foundational principles of digital material design to ensure that instructional resources are both effective and engaging. According to Mayer (2014), multimedia learning principles significantly enhance students' comprehension and retention when content is presented with interactive features that promote active engagement. These design principles align with the goal of creating educational materials that encourage students to participate actively, thereby deepening their understanding of the subject matter.

This training aligns with research that suggests a direct correlation between teachers' digital competencies and improved student engagement in the classroom. Hodges et al. (2020) note that teachers who adopt digital tools in their instruction can provide more flexible and adaptable learning experiences. This adaptability allows students to access materials at any time and from any location, fostering a self-directed approach to learning. Digital materials, particularly those that incorporate multimedia, provide visual aids and supplementary information that cater to various learning preferences and promote a more comprehensive understanding of the subject.

Furthermore, research indicates that teachers' professional growth is closely tied to their ability to adapt to technological changes in education (Van Merriënboer & Kirschner, 2018). Training programs, such as the one implemented by SMP Negeri 25 Barru, do not only introduce educators to new tools but also encourage them to explore additional platforms that complement their digital teaching materials. For instance, some teachers began integrating Heyzine with Google Classroom to create a more cohesive digital learning environment, enhancing the accessibility and effectiveness of their resources. Wang et al. (2009) underscore the positive impact of blended and mobile learning environments on students' learning behaviors, which can lead to more meaningful engagement and academic performance.

The training initiative at SMP Negeri 25 Barru addresses the evolving needs of both teachers and students in the digital learning landscape. By empowering educators with digital material design skills and introducing them to platforms like Heyzine, the institution fosters a learning environment that is adaptable, engaging, and aligned with technological advancements in education. This initiative serves as a model for other educational institutions aiming to enhance instructional quality through technology, underscoring the importance of equipping teachers with tools that respond to the changing dynamics of modern education.

2. Methods

The training, conducted at SMP Negeri 25 Barru on August 22, 2024, was designed as an intensive workshop divided into two main phases: a theoretical session and a hands-on practical session. This structured approach aimed to provide educators with both the conceptual foundations of digital instructional design and the practical skills necessary to effectively use Heyzine for developing interactive teaching materials. By incorporating both theoretical knowledge and experiential learning, this dual-phase model was intended to enable participants to directly apply design concepts within their teaching practices.

In the first phase, or theoretical session, participants were introduced to the essential principles of digital material design, focusing on methods for creating interactive, multimedia-rich resources. Instructors discussed core design principles needed to develop instructional materials that not only engage students but also enhance their learning outcomes. Participants were provided with practical examples of Heyzine's capabilities, such as embedding multimedia elements like videos, audio files, and hyperlinks within flipbooks. These demonstrations offered participants concrete insights

into how interactive features can foster student-centered, engaging learning environments. Additionally, educators were encouraged to engage in discussions and ask questions, allowing them to explore the potential of digital interactive materials to improve their instructional methods.

The second phase consisted of a hands-on workshop, where teachers actively practiced creating their own digital teaching materials using Heyzine under the guidance of the instructors. Each participant was asked to bring existing teaching resources, such as PDFs or images, which they transformed into interactive flipbooks. Teachers were trained on how to upload, organize, and enrich their content with multimedia components, including embedded videos, audio elements, and interactive links, creating resources that are both accessible and appealing to students. Upon completion, each participant presented their project to the group, receiving constructive feedback and suggestions for further enhancement. This peer-reviewed, collaborative format encouraged exchange and allowed participants to refine their digital resources with input from colleagues and instructors.

This structured training approach enabled participants not only to implement their learning in real time but also to address challenges with the support of the instructors. By integrating theoretical principles with practical application, the training empowered teachers to create digital instructional materials that are both innovative and aligned with current educational standards. Through this approach, SMP Negeri 25 Barru equipped its educators with the confidence and skills to develop adaptive, multimedia-enhanced teaching resources, supporting a forward-thinking, digitally competent educational environment.

3. Results and Impact of the Training

The training at SMP Negeri 25 Barru yielded significant improvements in teachers' competencies, with results showing that 75% of participants demonstrated an enhanced ability to create digital teaching materials. By incorporating the Heyzine platform, teachers developed skills to produce interactive flipbooks enriched with multimedia elements such as embedded videos, audio clips, and hyperlinks. These interactive components made the materials more engaging and accessible, allowing students to interact with content outside the constraints of traditional classroom environments and supporting a self-paced, independent learning approach.

Participants displayed high levels of enthusiasm for Heyzine’s interactive features, recognizing the benefits of multimedia integration for explaining complex concepts and maintaining student engagement. Many teachers reported that digital materials created a more dynamic and participative learning experience, transforming students from passive receivers to active participants in the learning process. This shift in teaching methods encouraged deeper exploration and understanding, as students could interact with the materials and revisit challenging topics as needed. Furthermore, the training fostered teachers' confidence in using digital tools in their instruction, prompting many to explore complementary platforms and innovative methods to further enrich their pedagogical approaches.

The impact of this training extended beyond immediate skill enhancement, influencing participants to adopt a more adaptable and innovative mindset. Some teachers began integrating Heyzine with additional educational platforms, such as Google Classroom, to establish a unified digital learning environment. This integration facilitated seamless access to course materials, collaborative assignments, and independent study opportunities, fostering a cohesive digital ecosystem that supports diverse learning needs. Teachers noted that this approach enhanced both their workflow and students' engagement, as learners could access resources on demand, enabling greater flexibility in their educational experience.

The training not only enhanced student engagement but also contributed to teachers' professional development, providing them with new insights into the role of technology in creating meaningful learning experiences. Teachers acquired technical skills in digital content creation and developed an understanding of how technology supports diverse learning styles and levels of student engagement. These outcomes align with Mayer's (2014) multimedia learning principles, which assert that incorporating multimedia elements into instructional design significantly improves comprehension and retention by promoting active student engagement.

Long-term, the skills gained through this training are anticipated to provide lasting benefits for both educators and students. The competencies developed during the workshop are adaptable, equipping teachers to integrate evolving digital tools into their teaching practices effectively. This adaptability positions SMP Negeri 25 Barru as an institution committed to continuous improvement and innovation in instructional quality. By empowering teachers to design content that resonates with students' digital preferences, the school offers a model for other educational institutions striving to elevate instructional practices through digital competencies.

Furthermore, as teachers continue to implement multimedia-enhanced resources, students are likely to build stronger self-directed learning habits and develop a positive orientation toward digital learning, enhancing their academic performance and motivation. This initiative reflects SMP Negeri 25 Barru's proactive approach to future educational challenges, demonstrating how structured training in digital skills can empower educators and positively transform the learning environment. The results underscore the transformative potential of equipping teachers with practical, technologically aligned competencies that not only address current educational needs but also prepare them to meet future demands in an increasingly digitalized world.

Figure 1. Teachers are enthusiastic in making digital teaching materials.

4. Conclusion

The training on developing digital instructional materials using Heyzine at SMP Negeri 25 Barru significantly enhanced teachers' skills and instructional quality. Teachers are now better equipped to design creative and interactive teaching resources, offering students a more enjoyable and effective learning experience. Heyzine's capabilities enable flexible access to learning materials, facilitating adaptive and relevant learning in the digital age.

This training represents a strategic advancement for SMP Negeri 25 Barru as it prepares to meet future educational challenges. The skills developed through this training encourage teachers to continue innovating and cultivating a learning environment that adapts to technological advancements. Additionally, this training model serves as a valuable framework for other schools aiming to strengthen teachers' ability to utilize technology as a modern educational tool.

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