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Teaching: A Case Study at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang
Oktavia Erwinarti Indahtriyani**



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**EXPLORING THE COLLABORATIVE WRITING CHALLENGES OF STUDENTS
IN THE ACADEMIC WRITING CLASS****Fransiska Way Warti***Siska_mw@yahoo.com*

Politeknik Tonggak Equator Pontianak

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the challenges faced by fifth-semester students at Politeknik Tonggak Equator (Polteq) in implementing collaborative writing within their Academic Writing class. Although collaborative writing has been widely acknowledged as a powerful pedagogical strategy that enhances language learning, student engagement, and critical thinking, it often presents significant difficulties in practice. Based on Chisholm's framework, this research categorizes the main challenges into four themes: resistance, inexperience, friction, and fairness. A descriptive qualitative method was employed involving 16 student participants through interviews and questionnaires. The findings revealed that all four challenges were present, but fairness was the most dominant concern, as many students perceived unequal participation and grading in group work. Inexperience and interpersonal friction further complicated the collaborative process, while resistance was typically tied to students' preference for individual work and previous negative experiences. Despite these barriers, students recognized the potential benefits of collaborative writing when properly facilitated. The study concludes that successful collaborative writing in EFL settings requires structured preparation, role clarity, peer assessment, and instructor support. Practical recommendations are offered to help educators design more effective collaborative writing tasks that foster both language development and group accountability. This research contributes to the pedagogical discourse on collaborative writing and offers insights for improving group-based writing activities in tertiary education.

Keywords: *collaborative writing, academic writing, student challenges*

INTRODUCTION

Writing skills become an integral part of the learning process for English students. The teaching of English in the schools, however, does not offer a sufficient proportion of writing skills. Writing skills are taken less into account than the other skills in the teaching process. For instance, teacher often ask students to read certain texts and answer the question, rather than ask them to create an essay. In term of education, collaborative writing strategy was widely adopted to promote collaborative learning.

In general, collaborative writing involves two or more persons working together to produce a written text. In language teaching, collaborative writing activities have received increased attention in second language (L2) writing research in recent years fueled by their sound theoretical basis and a body of empirical research that supports their effectiveness at promoting writing development (Storch, 2021). From the perspective of sociocultural theory, collaborative writing tasks can assist students perform beyond their individual abilities through the guide of an expert who scaffolds their performance (Vygotsky, 1978).

In spite of these benefits of collaborative writing, instructors may be reluctant to implement collaborative writing tasks due to the fact that pairs require up to twice the amount of time to complete the same writing task compared to individuals (Storch, 2005). In many

writing courses, especially in tertiary educational settings, instructors simply do not have sufficient instructional hours to set aside class time for collaborative writing.

Another major problem with the use of collaborative writing tasks concerns the reliability, validity and fairness of group assessment (Kagan, 1995). In other words, it is difficult for instructors to decide how and how much each individual student contributed to a collaborative writing task (Johnston & Miles, 2004; Strauss & U, 2007). Previous research done by Abrams (2019) suggests that collaboratively oriented groups produced texts with more propositional content and better coherence than less-collaborative groups. Furthermore, another research done by Ikariya et al. (2023) revealed that the EFL teachers skillfully integrated face-to-face collaborative writing into the process approach to text development. Both teachers and students agreed to the substantial benefits of collaborative writing for writing and language skill improvement, enriching the learning process, and enhancing social and affective aspects of education. Besides the positive outcomes, the study also found challenges associated with collaborative writing, including group formation and individual preferences, which occasionally hindered the collaborative process. Out of this plethora of problems there are four problems which become the most troublesome for most collaborative writing groups suggested by Chisholm (1990): resistance, inexperience, friction, and fairness. As a lecturer teaching Academic Writing and EAP class at Politeknik Tonggak Equator, the researcher encountered a similar problem when applying collaborative writing for the class in semester five. In order to investigate the challenges that the students faced in doing the collaborative writing activities, a research on Exploring the Collaborative Writing Challenges of Students at Polteq in the Academic Writing Class will be conducted

LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic writing is a formal style of writing used in universities and scholarly publications, is arguably the most important skill in academic contexts, and it is also the most difficult skill for most students to master. Academic writing follows the same writing process as other types of texts, but it has specific conventions in terms of content, structure and style. Characteristics of academic writing include a formal tone, use of the third-person rather than first-person perspective, a clear focus on the research problem under investigation, and precise word choice.

Academic writing can be divided into two types: student academic writing, which is used as a form of assessment at university, as well as at schools as preparation for university study; and expert academic writing, which is writing that is intended for publication in an academic journal or book. Both types of academic writing (student and expert) are expected to adhere to the same standards, which can be difficult for students to master.

Gillett, A (2021) in his *Features of academic writing* mentioned the characteristics of academic writing which together distinguish it from other forms of writing. They are:

1. Structured

Academic writing should have a clear structure. The structure will often derive from the genre of writing. For example, a report will have an introduction (including the aim or aims), a method section, a discussion section and so on, while an essay will have an introduction (including a thesis statement), clear body paragraphs with topic sentences, and a conclusion. The writing should be coherent, with logical progression throughout, and cohesive, with the different parts of the writing clearly connected. Careful planning before writing is essential to ensure that the final product will be well structured, with a clear focus and logical progression of ideas.

2. Evidenced

Opinions and arguments in academic writing should be supported by evidence. Often the writing will be based on information from experts in the field, and as such, it will be important to reference the information appropriately, for example via the use of in-text citations and a reference section.

3. Critical

Academic writing does more than just describe. As an academic writer, you should not simply accept everything you read as fact. You need to analyse and evaluate the information you are writing about, in other words make judgements about it, before you decide whether and how to integrate it into your own writing. This is known as critical writing. Critical writing requires a great deal of research in order for the writer to develop a deep enough understanding of the topic to be truly critical about it.

4. Balanced

Academic writing should be balanced. This means giving consideration to all sides of the issue and avoiding bias. As noted above, all research, evidence and arguments can be challenged, and it is important for the academic writer to show their stance on a particular topic, in other words how strong their claims are. This can be done using *hedges*, for example phrases such as *the evidence suggests...* or *this could be caused by...*, or *boosters*, that is, phrases such as *clearly* or *the research indicates*.

5. Precise

Academic writing should use clear and precise language to ensure the reader understands the meaning. This includes the use of technical (i.e. subject-specific) vocabulary, which should be used when it conveys the meaning more precisely than a similar non-technical term. Sometimes such technical vocabulary may need defining, though only if the term is not commonly used by others in the same discipline and will therefore not be readily understood by the reader.

6. Objective

Academic writing is objective. In other words, the emphasis is placed on the arguments and information, rather than on the writer. As a result, academic writing tends to use nouns and noun phrases more than verbs and adverbs. It also tends to use more passive structures, rather than active voice, for example *The water was heated* rather than *I heated the water*.

7. Formal

Finally, academic writing is more formal than everyday writing. It tends to use longer words and more complex sentences, while avoiding contractions and colloquial or informal words or expressions that might be common in spoken English. There are words and collocations which are used in academic writing more frequently than in non-academic writing, and researchers have developed lists of these words and phrases to help students of academic English, such as the Academic Word List, the Academic Vocabulary List, and the Academic Collocation List.

Collaborative writing

Activities of collaborative writing involves more than just writing. Collaborative or team writing is the process of producing a written work as a group where all team members

contributed to the content and the decisions about how the group will function. Hunzer (2012) states that collaborative writing is the community for student writers. Not only that, but all the wonderful things related with creating a classroom community are invented into your classroom along with collaborative writing such as students interacting with one another in positive manner, allowing course materials to be examined and penetrate with influence, and students feeling that they are a part of the larger academy of learning.

Collaborative writing offers a real learning environment where students do not only develop their writing skills but also critical thinking and decision-making skills. The collaborative writing method was selected because it was believed to be able to stimulate the students to be more involved in the writing activities and to facilitate the students to comprehend the passages. Collaborative writing is a method to deal with the low linguistics level of exchanges as planning, negotiating meaning and reviewing which makes the task goal-directed and the students more reflective. Moreover, collaborative writing fosters the development of second language writing through increasing engagement, confidence, and responsibility on the parts of the learners.

Collaborative writing can be beneficial in the different language domains (Sajedi, 2014). Collaborative writing strategy is a teaching writing strategy in which students are asked to work together in pair or group in order to produce a good writing. This strategy facilitates students to write a certain text with their peers. In other words, the students will work together to produce a good writing.

Collaborative writing offers opportunities not only to practice literature review, academic reading, and writing, but also to stimulate reflection, knowledge sharing, and critical thinking (Sukirman, 2016). Dale in Utami (2012) also suggests that collaborative writing involves meaningful interaction and shared decision between group members in the writing of a shared document

From definitions above it can be conclude that collaborative writing is a social process that encourages students because it involves students' social interaction when they work together in a group.

Four Challenges in Collaborative Writing

Problems with collaboration in group writing is inevitable. However, educators can devise strategies to help students recognize them, accept them as normal and find ways for coping with them. There are four problems that stated in the research article "Coping with the Problems of Collaborative Writing" by Richard M. Chisholm in 1990 that will be the fundamental concepts in this study. The four problems are:

Problem 1: Resistance

Many students place a low priority on a collaborative project because they may be unwilling to invest the time and effort that a group project requires. Some of them simply refuse to participate in group work. Their issues may be reluctant, shy, disdainful, or lazy, but for one reason or another they do not commit themselves to full participation. This should not be surprised that collaborative projects do not always attract their immediate commitment.

Problem 2: Inexperience

In teaching collaborative writing, educators are trying to create learning environments in which newly-formed groups can move as quickly as possible to become mature, systematic, and habitual collaborative units. But most students have very little experience with collaborative writing. The group process must be taught because individuals can be configured into a circle does not mean that they will automatically become good communicators.

Our society affords students so little opportunity to practice collaboration that few of them know how to work productively in a group. Students might play on teams and they mix and mingle at parties and such, but rarely do they contribute to genuinely collaborative projects. They are uneasy and apprehensive. They work inefficiently and ineffectively and become discouraged.

Other students fear group work as an intrusion on privacy. Being inexperienced, they are not used to dealing with the intense intimacy that collaborative work demands. Before they build personal relationships with people in a collaborative group, they are unwilling to disclose private thoughts and feelings. Disclosure-even of their ideas makes them feel vulnerable, and until they develop trust, they hesitate to participate. When the power of restraint outpulls the power of candor, we need to help them conceal less and reveal more. The low level of skill at writing, analyzing writing, and talking about writing is another difficulty to deal with. Students with limited skills are afraid of critique. Yet students do learn from each other and thrive on companionship and improve their skills in "group critique."

Problem 3: Friction

Some friction in human interaction is unavoidable. Sometimes ordinary rivalries and clashes burst into quarrels. Especially when students are thrown together to produce a piece of work that is important to them, there are bound to be conflicts. Friction which brings about bad feelings is probably the stickiest problem that the groups need to deal with. The general strategy for coping with interpersonal friction is to encourage students to find solutions themselves. Instructor can help them take charge of problem situations, take responsibility for coping with them, choose their own procedures, work out the problems themselves, analyze them, and exercise control and choice.

Problem 4: Fairness

In many groups, some students will work hard and someone else will not which everyone know that is unfair. The biggest complaint lecturers used to get from students about group work was about the "hitchhiker," who *goes* along for the ride but doesn't contribute. Some students prefer to work alone and to receive individual credit for individual work because they do not want to be dragged down by a sluggard. Such attitudes are well founded.

Since grades are seen as rewards, it is impossible to reward the workers equally. The fairness problem becomes most acute when older or more highly motivated students are thrown together with immature students. The immature students are willing to have the go-getter do the work, but the older student soon learns to resent the load.

Grades are a primary motivation for students, so it is not surprising that a change in grading system-indeed of the whole basis of grading-should cause discomfort. Yet the main idea of collaborative learning is cooperation; one purpose is to develop a cooperative team spirit. The ideas are to replace competition and individual rewards with a system in which all will pitch in and share the load. In trying to convert competition into contribution, instructor must not forget the students rightly value their own individual work and expect to be credited for it.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the challenges experienced by students in collaborative writing. Qualitative research, as defined by John W. Creswell (2017), encompasses various approaches such as narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, and case studies, and is particularly suitable for understanding participants' perspectives and experiences. In this study, a descriptive qualitative method was applied to collect, analyze, and present data in order to provide a comprehensive account of the research problem.

The research was conducted at Politeknik Tonggak Equator during the 2022/2023 academic year. The participants consisted of 16 selected students out of a total of 24 fifth-semester students enrolled in the Business English and Professional Communication program. The sample included seven male and nine female students. Data were collected through observation and interviews. Initial observation was conducted to identify existing problems in collaborative writing activities. Subsequently, interviews were carried out using a set of guided questions designed by the researcher to obtain in-depth information related to the objectives of the study. Both individual and group interviews were conducted to capture diverse perspectives and experiences.

The data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman (1994), which consists of three interconnected processes: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involved selecting, simplifying, and transforming raw data into a more manageable form. Data display was carried out by organizing the data into tables and diagrams to facilitate pattern identification and interpretation. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification were conducted by interpreting the data and continuously reviewing the findings to ensure their validity and consistency.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are categorized according to the four key collaborative writing challenges as framed by Chisholm (1990): resistance, inexperience, friction, and fairness. The discussion part is intended to answer the research questions

1. *Why are the resistance, inexperience, friction and fairness pose as challenges in collaborative writing among the semester five students at Polteq?*

1. Resistance

Seven of students displayed initial hesitation or lack of motivation toward collaborative tasks. 10 participants admitted that they were more comfortable working individually due to preferences for autonomy, fear of dependence, or past negative experiences with group work. Problems identified are:

1. Reluctance to engage due to previous unproductive group work.
2. Lack of ownership of group tasks.
3. Passive participation from group members.

This resistance aligns with Chisholm's assertion that not all students are willing to participate fully in group projects. Cultural factors, personality traits (e.g., introversion), and previous negative experiences may influence students' unwillingness to participate. Lecturers need to foster a classroom culture that highlights the long-term value of collaboration and provides support structures to encourage full engagement.

2. Inexperience

The majority of students (12) reported limited prior exposure to structured collaborative writing. While they had some experience with group discussions or peer review, many had never jointly produced a single academic text.

Problems identified are:

1. Lack of understanding about task delegation and workflow management.
2. Difficulty articulating constructive feedback.
3. Fear of expressing ideas or being judged.

Inexperience in collaborative writing created obstacles in group dynamics. As Chisholm (1990) emphasized, collaboration does not occur naturally and must be explicitly taught.

Students lacked confidence in sharing drafts or critiquing peers' work due to underdeveloped academic writing and communication skills. These findings suggest the need for preliminary training in group dynamics and collaborative strategies before assigning joint writing projects.

3. Friction

Eight students encountered interpersonal tension, often resulting from differences in communication styles, work pace, and commitment levels.

Problems identified:

1. Disagreements on writing style or idea prioritization.
2. Uneven workload contributions.
3. Clashes in leadership or decision-making roles.

Friction is a natural aspect of any collaborative endeavor. The findings reflect how interpersonal conflict and lack of conflict-resolution mechanisms hindered productivity and group cohesion. Although friction can be productive if managed constructively, unaddressed conflict discouraged active participation and created resentment among members. Instructors should facilitate team-building and offer mediation when needed.

4. Fairness

Issues of fairness emerged as the most dominant (14 Students) and frequently cited challenge among all participants. The concern that some group members contributed less while receiving the same grade was strongly emphasized.

Problems identified:

1. "Hitchhiking" or free-riding group members.
2. Frustration among high-performing students.
3. Perception of unequal assessment.

Fairness is a persistent challenge in collaborative work, particularly in graded settings. The data support Chisholm's claim that collaborative grading can be perceived as unjust when contributions are imbalanced. This challenge could potentially discourage collaboration if not addressed with appropriate assessment tools, such as peer evaluations or individual reflection components.

2. *What are the most dominant challenges among the four aspects and why*

Among the four categories, Fairness was identified as the most dominant challenge, followed by Inexperience, Friction, and Resistance. Students were particularly concerned about how grades were allocated in group settings and expressed strong preferences for assessment systems that recognize individual input. The predominance of fairness-related concerns suggests a need to rethink evaluation in collaborative writing. Strategies such as peer evaluation rubrics, group contracts, and individual writing logs may help mitigate this concern. Instructors must ensure transparency in expectations and integrate fairness into the grading structure to foster trust in collaborative methods. While collaborative writing offers significant pedagogical benefits including improved language use, critical thinking, and peer learning the challenges highlighted in this study must be addressed through thoughtful instructional design. Key recommendations include:

1. Providing structured training on collaborative writing processes.
2. Establishing clear group roles and norms.

3. Incorporating peer and self-assessment into grading.
4. Offering instructor-mediated conflict resolution strategies.

The insights gained from this study underscore the importance of strategic planning in implementing collaborative writing. Teachers should not assume that students naturally know how to collaborate; instead, they must scaffold the process and assess both group and individual contributions. Proper intervention can transform collaborative writing from a frustrating exercise into a meaningful learning experience.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the challenges encountered by fifth-semester students at Politeknik Tonggak Equator (Polteq) in collaborative writing guided by Chisholm's framework. The findings revealed that resistance, inexperience, friction, and fairness significantly influenced students' experiences, with fairness identified as the most dominant issue, particularly in relation to unequal workload distribution and perceived inequity in assessment. Friction arose from differences in personality and communication styles, while resistance and inexperience reflected students' limited preparedness for collaborative learning. Regardless of these challenges, collaborative writing was perceived positively for its contribution to improving students' writing skills, confidence, and engagement. This indicates that collaborative writing remains a valuable instructional strategy when appropriately implemented. It is recommended that instructors provide explicit training on collaborative writing practices, assign structured and rotating roles within groups, and implement a balanced assessment system that integrates individual and group performance. Continuous instructor monitoring is also necessary to support group dynamics and minimize conflict. Future research should consider broader educational contexts and employ mixed-method approaches to gain more comprehensive insights into collaborative writing practices.

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**THE BENEFITS OF DUOLINGO APPLICATION USERS IN LEARNING ENGLISH****¹Ricky Wijaya, ²Gregorius Subanti, ³Yovita Angelina**¹ricky.wijaya72181@gmail.com, ²gregorius_subanti@polteq.ac.id, ³yovita_angelina@polteq.ac.id^{1,2,3}Politeknik Tonggak Equator Pontianak**ABSTRACT**

English is widely spoken across many countries due to how relatively easy it is to understand. However, learning English still has its challenges, as it requires consistent effort and appropriate learning methods. One useful tool that can be considered for learning English is Duolingo, a language learning app that offers various features to support English learners. This study explores two main questions: first, what are the benefits of Duolingo in facilitating the users' English learning? Second, how does Duolingo help its users improve their English language skills? The study aims to understand Duolingo users' experiences and how Duolingo contributes to their language development. Using a qualitative method, the writer conducted a semi-structured survey. From 61 total responses, the study focused on 20 individuals who used Duolingo specifically for learning English. Respondents had varied experiences some had used the app for weeks, others for months or years. Most users found Duolingo user-friendly, visually engaging, and more popular than similar apps. They reported learning new vocabulary, improving speaking skills, and gaining motivation through interactive features like exercises and reminders, which supported their English learning progress.

Keywords: *Language, English, Duolingo, Learning Application*

INTRODUCTION

English is the most widely spoken language in many countries worldwide. According to Crystal & Potter (2025), English is the first choice of foreign language in most other countries of the world, and it is that status that has given it the position of a global lingua franca. This means that the English language is a very important language that should be a must to master due to its importance and how widely it is applied in daily life. English provides an easier learning capacity for every learner who attempts to learn English. However, to reach the desired level of English language, many aspects and challenges must be mastered to have the necessary skills needed to use English in everyday activities. This causes the process of learning the language to become more challenging and overwhelming to those who intend to learn the language for themselves.

For some people, learning English can be a daunting task. Each person has their own way of learning English to achieve the level of skills they desire and are satisfied with. Because each person has their unique ways of learning the language, many solutions have emerged on the surface for English learners to help them in their learning journey ahead. Some choose the traditional approach by using books and paper to learn the language, while others exercise their English language skills by conversing with those who have mastered the language, hoping for feedback. Some even utilize music and movies to help them improve their English language skills. In this era, another solution has also emerged to the surface, serving as one of many options that can be considered as ways to improve English language skills for every English learner out there.

Learning the English language through language learning applications can be considered as one of many ways to improve one's English skills. Throughout the internet, many kinds of options for language learning applications can be chosen and used as stepping stones to accomplish one's desired skills, which might be satisfied with. With many options given to the learner, Duolingo can become

the learner's partner for accompanying them through their learning process. Duolingo not only provides quick and bite-sized lessons for more than forty languages to build vocabulary and grammar skills, but Duolingo is also easily accessible by everyone through their smartphone, as it is free.

Because of this problem, this research was conducted. The research was aimed at analysing the benefits of Duolingo application for users in learning English to find out whether the application can really be considered one of the solutions to the hardship and confusion on how to learn English effectively in order to improve the language skills even better.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning is something that a person does to add insight. In learning, of course, students experience difficulties, and the difficulty level of each subject is different for each student (Lodge et al., 2018 in Kurniawan et al., 2022). As students, we never stop learning everything that enriches our knowledge and skills for our future. There are many ways for us to learn and improve our skills more than before. Each student requires different kinds of learning methods and media that will help them thrive in their learning journeys. Each student has a unique way of studying and mastering the materials required to help them improve their skills, one of them is using the assistance of an online learning application. Mobile learning is one of the alternatives in learning media development (Kurniawan et al., 2022). In this era, mobile learning/online learning is more appealing than the traditional way as it can be accessed anywhere and anytime by students. Not only was it easily accessed, it also gave students a unique experience by providing videos and sounds that assisted students in their study. Developers can also be creative about their applications by adding unique gimmicks and features to make their applications different than other applications that exist throughout the internet.

Duolingo is an application that helps its users improve their foreign language skills, including English. Duolingo provides the exercises required to learn and improve the skills needed. According to Ambarwati (2022), Duolingo is a language learning or training tool in the form of an app the concept of Duolingo was first presented by Professor Luis Von Ahn and his post-graduate student, Severin Hacker of the Carnegie Mellon University. Duolingo was designed based on how video games nowadays are designed by adding a scoreboard, mission, reward system, and other game-like features to make the application more unique than other similar applications. Duolingo also utilizes the use of cute moving images and sound at the right amount to help its users be motivated while maintaining their focus on the learning itself. Duolingo also tracks the mistakes made by users so they can review and learn from their mistakes.

Many languages exist around the world. According to Robins & Crystal (2025), language is a system of conventional spoken, manual (signed), or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves. Language has many functions in our daily lives. Still, the most important function is to help humans interact with each other through communication by expressing their thoughts, ideas, reasonings, and emotions to make sure the other individual understands the messages conveyed by the other party to fulfill needs and desires.

With many languages existing in this world, each language requires different understanding and aspects to master a particular language to a satisfactory level. However, there are always some similarities in learning languages, such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, etc. Other than verbal national language, there are still many other varieties of languages that we can find around the world, such as native language that has been spoken for ages as a tribe existed, there are also sign language used by those who lose the ability to converse through sounds, etc. Vocabulary is an important part that forms a language. Payne (2024) stated that vocabulary is an inventory of words used by a particular person or group or the words in a particular language or field of knowledge. Vocabulary also differs into two types of vocabulary, which are active and passive forms. Active form is a form

that refers to a word that a person uses, is familiar with, and regularly uses for both writing and speaking. The passive form of Vocabulary refers to words that people recognise and understand when encountered, yet rarely use during communication.

Vocabulary acquisition is the process of learning the words of a language (Payne,2024). During the process of acquisition, three stages are needed to be conquered by language learners, those aspects are Pronunciation, Definition, and the uses of the word. A well-developed vocabulary during the acquisition process will help language learners to thrive in several areas in life. With a well-developed vocabulary, an individual can boost their quality in academic achievement, career opportunities, and communication ability. An individual's communication skills will be greatly enhanced with a diverse vocabulary during learning, granting more quality in their speech and writing.

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative approach will be applied in this research. This study's purpose was to analyse the benefits of Duolingo and how the Duolingo application benefits users in developing their English skills. The benefits the application gave to the users will be the main data in disclosing the study findings. The research was conducted in Pontianak as the base of the writer. The data collection process was carried out via a Google Form that was shared with the respondents. The time of data collection and thesis writing took place from March to June 2025. Based on the method used for this study, the writer focused on collecting data from Duolingo users as the main subject of study or the sample. A survey will be used in this research to collect the data needed for the observation. Google Forms will be treated as a tool of data collection, and the results was treated as the data that was used in the research. The research subject was the Duolingo application user at any point in time, which is reliable for the research conducted by the writer to perceive the Duolingo Application. The writer studied twenty participants as the subjects of the study. The main objective of this study is to examine how the Duolingo Application gives advantages to its users in developing their English skills

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Before the data collection process, the writer first designed the question and the Google form needed to gather the data. After everything was ready, the writer then shared the Google form with people around the writer to gather the data needed for the analysis process in the research. In the Google form, ten questions are included in the form that need to be answered. After some time collecting, coding, and reducing the data to the desired one, the data was finally ready to be displayed.

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
F.R	Pnk	C	Y	Y	3 M	English	Vocabulary, Grammar	Well-known and free	Learn a lot of vocabulary
C	Pnk	C	Y	Y	1-2 M	English, Mandarin	Vocabulary	Free	Learn many vocabulary
E.R	Pnk	C	Y	Y	0-1 W	English, Japanese	Speaking, Reading, Vocabulary, Grammar	Simple and easy to use and easy to use	Can learn many languages
G.W.T	Pnk	C	Y	Y	3 M	English	Vocabulary	Interactive and fun	Increased vocabulary
J.V	Pnk	C	Y	Y	1-2 M	English	Vocabulary, Grammar	The most popular	Better Grammar

J	Pnk	C	Y	Y	1-3 W	English	Vocabulary	language learning app	Increased vocabulary
J.S	Pnk	C	Y	Y	1 - 3 W	English, Japanese	Vocabulary, Grammar	Learning languages Free	Learn how to write in Japanese and English
J.LO	Pnk	C	Y	Y	0-1 W	English	Speaking, Reading, Vocabulary, Grammar	Crowd-pleasing appearance, easy to understand, and specific.	More motivated to learn
L.E	Pnk	SHS	Y	Y	1 - 3 W	English	Speaking, Vocabulary	Free	Learn basic English
L	Pnk	SHS	Y	Y	1 Y	English	Vocabulary, Grammar	Easier to use	Free but adds knowledge
N.A	Pnk	C	Y	Y	0 - 1 W	English	Reading, Vocabulary	Menarik	Mempelajari banyak kosakata
N.R.T	Pnk	C	Y	Y	1 - 2 M	English, Mandarin	Vocabulary	Advertisement	Increased vocabulary
Q.S.S	Pnk	SHS	Y	Y	> 1 Y	English	Speaking, Reading, Vocabulary, Grammar	Provides practice questions and reminder features.	More motivated
R.B	Pnk	SHS	Y	Y	1 - 3 W	English, German	Speaking, Vocabulary	Free	Increased vocabulary and speaking skills
R.S.N	Pnk	SHS	Y	Y	1 Y	English	Speaking, Reading	Helpful	More motivated
R.Y	Pnk	SHS	Y	Y	1 - 2 M	English, Japanese	Vocabulary	Interactive and free	Increased vocabulary
V	Pnk	C	Y	Y	1 - 2 M	English, Japanese	Speaking, Vocabulary	Easy to use	Increased vocabulary
V.V.E	Pnk	C	Y	Y	1 - 3 W	English, Japanese	Speaking, Vocabulary, Grammar	Popular	Increased speaking skills
W	Pnk	C	Y	Y	1 - 3 W	English, Mandarin, Spanish	Speaking, Grammar	Good	Easier to use
Y	Pnk	SHS	Y	Y	> 1 Y	English, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin	Reading, Vocabulary	Free	Increased vocabulary

The questions were directed to the respondents in a manner. The survey was split into two parts based on the respondent's experience with Duolingo. Those who have never used Duolingo before will only be directed to answer questions one to five, while those who have experienced the application will fill out the whole questionnaire. This method was used so that the writer could easily separate the answer to fulfill the desired data. Based on the previous chapter, the writer has gathered data by sharing questionnaires with many people as the respondents via Google Forms. Based on the data gathered, sixty-one respondents answered the questionnaires given by the writer. There are ten questions included in the questionnaire that will help the writer determine the benefits given by the Duolingo applications to the users in learning the English language. Below are the questions used by the writer:

- 3.6.1 What is your name?
- 3.6.2 In which city do you live?
- 3.6.3 What is your latest education?
- 3.6.4 Have you ever heard of Duolingo before?
- 3.6.5 Have you ever used Duolingo before?
- 3.6.6 How long have you used Duolingo before?
- 3.6.7 What language are you learning using Duolingo?
- 3.6.8 Which language skill are you going to improve using Duolingo?
- 3.6.9 Why did you choose Duolingo over other platforms?
- 3.6.10 What advantages have you gained from using Duolingo?

According to the writer's research aim and target, the writer will only select up to 20 respondents or more from Pontianak city who have ever used the Duolingo application before to learn English as the subject of the study. Of the sixty-one respondents, there are forty-six respondents who are from Pontianak city. Of the forty-six respondents, there are five who have never heard of Duolingo applications before, and the other forty-one respondents have heard of Duolingo applications before.

From the results of the data collected, thirty respondents have ever tried Duolingo before, regardless of the language they are learning at that time. To fulfill the desired data, the writer will further reduce the data to only those who have ever used Duolingo to learn English. After reducing the data, twenty respondents have ever learned English with Duolingo. Overall, most of the respondents have used Duolingo for weeks, and four respondents uses Duolingo for over one week, five of them uses Duolingo in the range of one to three weeks long, there are also three who have used Duolingo for over one to two months and same amount was present for those who have used Duolingo for three months. Two of the respondents use the application to learn English for a four-month to eight-month range, and the same number of respondents also use Duolingo for a year, and only one of the respondents used Duolingo for more than a year.

Most of the respondents say that Duolingo is free and easy to use to learn English, has an interesting User Interface (UI), and is popular in their opinion. Based on the respondents' testimony of the application, they learned many vocabularies through the application, not only that, the application also provides many selections of language for them to learn, which provides a broad selection of language to learn. Some even have gained the ability to speak not only English but also other languages. There are even those who gain more motivation in learning English through the

application because of the interesting design of the application, which resembles a game, that keeps them motivated.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research conducted by the writer on twenty respondents, it can be concluded that Duolingo has given many advantages to English learners. The writer can understand that Duolingo has facilitated their users with everything that can boost their learning experiences even more. First, what are the benefits of Duolingo in facilitating users' English learning? Duolingo has facilitated users with an interesting appearance (User Interface) that is easily understood by the users and an engaging animation to keep them company in the long run. With an eye-pleasing appearance and easily understood control over the application, Duolingo aims to keep its users comfortable with the application without sacrificing a portion of its users' attention away from the learning itself. Second, how does Duolingo help its users improve their English language skills? Duolingo helps its users by providing exercises that are needed by the users to practice to improve their English skills. Not only providing exercises, but Duolingo also tries to give its users motivation through notifications that remind its users to keep on learning and using the application. This was to make sure that the users stay consistent with their learning hours to improve and gain the desired English language level. This research is far from perfect. Based on the results of the research that has been gathered, here are the suggestions that the writer could give to the research analysis entitled "The Benefits of Duolingo Application for Users in Learning English". For future researchers, the writer suggests that the scope of research should be more specific and clearer for future research. This could be a certain group of people from a company or an institute, to make sure that the data collection process is easier and not time-consuming. For Duolingo users, based on the findings, don't just rely on Duolingo for learning English. Duolingo might be great for learning English; however, Duolingo only provides basic English and mostly only provides vocabulary-focused exercises, and is still lacking in advanced materials. Instead of fully relying on Duolingo, try to learn from textbooks and real-time experiences, such as watching movies or

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AN ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIC COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH FOR TENUN IKAT ARTISANS IN UMIN JAYA VILLAGE

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Abstract

In the era of globalization, English language skills are important for local businesses, including ikat artisans in Umin Jaya Village. Their Tenun Ikat products are recognized internationally, but limitations in English proficiency pose a barrier to marketing their products on a broader scale. This study aims to analyse the strategic English language competence applied by the artisans and to examine the extent to which these competences are related to their ability to communicate with foreign consumers. This study employs a descriptive qualitative method with data collection techniques through semi-structured interviews of six ikat artisans who have interacted with foreign tourists or buyers. The focus of the study is on the application of five indicators of strategic competence: paraphrasing, asking for clarification, using communication strategies, circumlocution, and initiating conversation. The results indicate that most artisans have not fully mastered verbal communication strategies in English, often relying on body language, simple English phrases, and assistance from third parties. Use of translation tools remains minimal. Despite this, interest in English learning is high, though hampered by access to training and resources. The artisans' strategic competence remains limited but can be improved through contextual training, simple media use, and ongoing mentoring.

Keywords: *strategic competence, English language, artisans, communication, Umin Jaya*

INTRODUCTION

In the arts and crafts industry, especially traditional crafts, possesses great potential to compete in the global market. However, the Tenun Ikat artisans in Umin Jaya Village face communication challenges when dealing with international customers. Their limited English proficiency hinders product marketing and the establishment of cross-border collaborations. This highlights the importance of strategic competence in English, which helps artisans to overcome language barriers and opens up opportunities for market expansion. Umin Jaya Village, located in Sintang Regency, is home to many weaving artisans. The Tenun Ikat produced in this village has evolved into a micro, small, and medium enterprise and has become one of the community's primary sources of livelihood. Tenun Ikat from Umin Jaya carries historical and cultural value as a legacy passed down from generation to generation. Today, it is recognized both nationally and internationally.

According to the Head of the Culture Division of the Sintang Regency Education and Culture Office, Siti Musrikah, Tenun Ikat from Sintang has gained recognition in countries such as the United States, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and several other European nations. Many foreign buyers are passionate about this craft and often do not question the price, allowing the artisans to continue receiving orders (Yasyi, 2025). Despite the product's appeal, artisans still encounter difficulties in promoting their Tenun Ikat internationally. The primary challenge is their limited English proficiency, which is a crucial tool in global trade. English is not merely a communication medium but also a vital link between artisans and foreign buyers

or business partners. In this context, strategic competence in English becomes essential for effective communication and successful business transactions.

Previous research supports the importance of strategic competence in language use. For instance, Octaviana (2021) explored the relationship between strategic 12 competence and students' speaking performance at a senior high school in Garut. The study, which used a descriptive method and involved 14 students, found a positive correlation between strategic competence and speaking ability. Communication strategies such as borrowing (including literal translation and language mixing) were commonly used by students. Another study by Yonata and Saptani (2019) investigated communication strategies used by advanced Indonesian EFL learners in casual conversations. Using spoken discourse analysis from recorded conversations, the study revealed that fillers were the most frequently used strategy, followed by repetition, appeal for help, and self-repair. Although participants had sufficient linguistic knowledge, they struggled to verbalize thoughts due to lack of practice.

Miles (2007), in a six-month case study, examined the connection between second language (L2) use and strategic competence. Focusing on a French immigrant of Senegalese descent in a multilingual U.S. workplace, the study highlighted how strategic competence helped the participant navigate L2 identity and professional success through effective language strategies and identity negotiation. These studies emphasize that communication strategies, or strategic competence, are essential in overcoming language limitations. In the case of Umin Jaya's artisans, the lack of adequate English proficiency highlights the need for strategic communication competence to bridge language gaps. Therefore, this research aims to examine how these artisans apply strategic competence when communicating in English and to explore the relationship between strategic competence and their communication performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tenun Ikat

Examining the meaning of the word rajin is important because it is closely related to the concept of kerajinan, both in terms of language and practice. In the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), rajin is defined as an attitude that likes to work, is active and diligent in doing activities. Meanwhile, kerajinan refers to the result of a work process that is carried out continuously with diligence and certain skills. According to Kumparan (2023) diligence is not only related to the frequency of work, but also the quality of effort that produces something meaningful. In this case, kerajinan is a tangible manifestation of the spirit of hard work and perseverance. For example, in the process of making Tenun Ikat, the beauty and value of the products produced are the result of the diligence and consistency of the artisans, reflecting the true meaning of the word rajin. Thus, understanding the concept of rajin gives us a more in-depth view of kerajinan as a cultural product full of dedication and hard work.

Crafts are objects produced by hand skills that have complexity, technical skills, and require high diligence in the manufacturing process (Chotimah, 2022). Woven fabrics have functions in several aspects of the lives of the people who make them, both social, economic, religious, and aesthetic aspects. The weaving artisans were housewives. Weaving artisans are female workers who come from their own household members and some hire workers from neighbours near the house. The work of being a weaving craftsman is mostly undertaken by women because weaving requires high accuracy, tenacity, and perseverance so that women are more suitable for doing this work (Chotimah, 2022).

Communicative Competence

In language, proficiency competence and performance is the basic thing. Underlining this communicative competence is important to perform well the target language. Communicative competence is a combination of language knowledge and other aspects of language use with skill essential for communication (Canale & Swain, 1980 as cited in Alem, 2020). The aim of communicative language teaching is to improve the communicative competence of students (Meenakshi, 2015 as cited in Alem, 2020). So, in communicative competence there are four components which are grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. According to the widely accepted theory of Canale and Swain, communicative competence as a whole can be explained in terms of three component competencies, grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence.

Strategic Competence

Strategic competence is one type of communicative competence that has been postulated by Canale and Swain (1980 as cited in Alem, 2020). However, the most neglected component of communicative competence by course books and teachers is strategic competence. According to Canale and Swain, strategic competence refers to “verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that can be used to compensate for disruptions in communication caused by performance variables or inadequate competence”. In simpler terms, strategic competence refers to the ability to convey one's meaning successfully to a partner. There are different types of strategy competencies such as word coinage involves making up an entirely new word out of existing words, for example, if a learner did not know the word scissors, he or she might refer to ‘cutters’. Paraphrase or circumlocution: involves giving extensive descriptions as a substitute for unknown vocabulary items or describing or exemplifying the target object or action, for instance, if a learner did not know the word for calculator, he or she might say something like ‘a small machine that is used for mathematical calculations’ and ‘the thing you open wine bottles with’ for ‘corkscrew’, or ‘small fast military plane’ for ‘fighter’. Approximation: using a word which expresses the meaning of the intended lexical item as closely as possible, for example.... a big boat... for ‘ship’, ‘ship’ for ‘sailing boat’, or ‘fish’ for ‘carp’. Non-linguistic means: (e.g. We use pointing, gestures, drawing pictures, mime, gesture, or imitation). Borrowed or invented words: (e.g. ‘auto’ for ‘car’, or ‘house controller’ for ‘caretaker’).

METHOD

The approach used in this research was qualitative. According to Sugiyono (2021) qualitative research was sometimes defined as a method of inquiry that sought to understand human experiences, behaviours, and interactions by exploring them in-depth. A common distinguishing feature of qualitative research was that studies often aimed to explore and understand, rather than measure phenomena and behaviours. According to Hassan (2024), descriptive research design was a systematic methodology used to describe the characteristics of a population, event, or phenomenon. This research was conducted at the home of Umin Jaya Tenun Ikat artisans located in Umin Jaya Village, Dedai District, Sintang Regency, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. This research targeted Umin Jaya Tenun Ikat artisans who had interacted directly with tourists during regional exhibitions that brought in tourists from outside. This was chosen so that the writer could directly know and ensure the relevance of the data collected.

The selection of Umin Jaya Tenun Ikat artisans was deliberate, taking into account several factors such as the latest education, artisans who used social media or mobile phones in marketing products and artisans who had interacted directly with foreign tourists using

English. The research focused on six artisans aged 25-45 years. According to Sugiyono (2021) Primary data was a data source that directly provided data to data collectors. Primary data sources were obtained through interview activities with research subjects. In this case the writer obtained data directly either individually or in groups, oral or written. Primary data sources in this study were in the form of words, sentences, expressions, atmosphere, and conversations obtained from interviews with artisans in Umin Jaya village. Data collection instruments, writers used semi-structured interview methods. According to Sugiyono (2021), this type of interview is included in the in-depth interview category. Its implementation was freer than structured interviews. The purpose of this type of interview was to find problems more openly. The writer interviewed six weaving artisans and was assisted by a notebook. The writer's data collection instrument consisted of 15 main interview questions to the artisans. The writer interviewed the artisans within 15 minutes to answer questions based on their experiences. The data analysis technique used in this research is descriptive qualitative, following the interactive model proposed by Sugiyono (2021). This method consists of four main stages: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

At the time of this research the writer could only interview six Tenun Ikat artisans from Umin Jaya Village. All of the participants were women, with ages ranging from 25 to 45 years old. In terms of educational background, one respondent had completed elementary school, another had finished junior high school, and the remaining four had graduated from high school. Regarding their experience in weaving, one artisan had been involved in the craft for less than five years, four had between five to ten years of experience, and one had been weaving for over ten years. Six respondents had direct experience communicating with foreign tourists or customers. Tenun Ikat from Umin Jaya has distinctive motifs and high artistic value, but still faces challenges in expanding the market, especially to the international level. One of the main obstacles is the lack of strategic competence in English to communicate with foreign consumers, promote products, and participate in international exhibitions. The artisans generally work independently or in small family groups, with varying levels of education and limited access to language training. At the time of conducting the interview, the writer faced several obstacles in collecting data, including the road access to the village of Umin Jaya which was damaged, getting several rejections from the interviewees when they wanted to be interviewed and short answers from the interviewees.

The findings indicate that the implementation of strategic competence among Tenun Ikat artisans in Umin Jaya is limited but practical. The artisans rely on simple, frequently used English expressions such as “sir,” “handmade,” “one-ten,” and “morning.” These phrases are often accompanied by non-verbal elements like hand gestures, body movements, and smiling to support the message they are trying to convey. All six informants reported using gestures and product demonstration to help explain when verbal explanation was insufficient. Moreover, they rarely attempted to paraphrase or use alternate English expressions when they forgot a word or did not understand a question. Most informants admitted to simply smiling or calling an officer to assist, rather than clarifying or asking the foreign customer to repeat themselves. Only one informant (Devi) said she used a translation tool (Google Translate) to help in communication, showing an early adoption of external support. This is consistent with Miles (2007), who noted that strategic competence is shaped by context, identity, and necessity. While the artisans are not fluent English speakers, their strategic use of gestures and limited vocabulary allows them to participate meaningfully in multicultural communication. Their behaviour reflects adaptive communication, which is central to strategic competence in low-proficiency speakers.

Strategic competence is shown to have a direct influence on the artisans' communication performance. Although their English skills are basic, they are able to maintain interaction with foreign buyers during exhibitions through the use of compensatory strategies such as using body language, visual aids (showing the product), and key vocabulary. These strategies allow them to overcome linguistic limitations and still deliver essential information about their products, such as price, process (handmade), and dye types. This relationship mirrors the findings of Octaviana (2021), whose study on high school students showed that strategic competence positively influences speaking performance. While Octaviana's participants used to borrow and code-mixing, the artisans relied more on physical demonstration and simple memorized phrases. Despite the difference in strategy type, the purpose and outcome are the same: strategic competence allows individuals with limited language knowledge to communicate effectively.

Furthermore, similar to the study by Yonata and Saptani (2019), which revealed the frequent use of fillers and appeals for help among EFL learners in conversations, the Umin Jaya artisans use non-verbal "appeals for help" (like calling staff or shaking their heads). Their communicative performance may not be fluent, but it is functional and goal-oriented, which supports the notion that strategic competence contributes to communication success even in low-proficiency contexts. Overall, the artisans' ability to engage with international customers, though limited in language, reflects the practical value of strategic competence in enhancing communicative effectiveness. It allows them to participate in exhibitions, respond to basic inquiries, and represent their cultural products on a global stage. This research focused on five aspects of strategic competence in English: paraphrasing, asking for clarification, using communication strategies, circumlocution, and initiating conversation.

The following is an analysis based on interviews with six Tenun Ikat artisans from Umin Jaya Village: Paraphrasing: Only one respondent was able to explain a concept in English using different words. When asked if they had ever explained something using another English word or description, all six informants answered "never." Asking for Clarification: Five out of six respondents did not understand how to ask someone to repeat or clarify something. They usually responded with a smile, shook their heads, and called an officer for help. Only one artisan, Devi, said she responded with, "Sorry sir, I don't know." Using Communication Strategies: All six respondents demonstrated the use of gestures or showing direct objects to communicate. For example, Poni and Selvi mentioned using "hand gestures." Rosmini added, "smile and hand gestures," while Rantika and Susi mentioned "shaking head and gestures." Devi said she "most often uses gestures." Circumlocution: The use of circumlocution was very rare. One or two respondents showed this tendency, but in general, the artisans relied on gestures or direct object references rather than verbal explanations. Initiating Conversation: Artisans who had interacted with tourists used simple phrases like "Hello" or "Morning, sir." Phrases like "handmade," "colour," or stating prices with hand movements were common. For example, Rosmini and Selvi said, "I say 'sir' while moving my hands... handmade." Susi said, "Good morning, sir... mention the type of colour."

Conclusion

Based on the results of interviews conducted by the writer regarding Strategic Competence in English for Tenun Ikat Artisans in Umin Jaya Village, several important points can be concluded as follows: The artisans had limited formal education in English and no understanding of strategic competence, but they demonstrated the use of several competence strategies when interacting with foreign tourists or consumers who communicated using English. Only one artisan demonstrated the ability to paraphrase or reformulate sentences in English, indicating very limited capacity in this area. In terms of asking for clarification, the majority of respondents (five out of six) did not understand basic phrases such as "Can you

repeat that?”, which highlights a gap in interactive listening strategies. However, all artisans demonstrated the use of communication strategies, especially through non-verbal means such as gestures or by showing physical objects, which can effectively help with their limited vocabulary. Circumlocution, or explaining unknown words by using explanations, was rarely seen, with only one or two respondents showing signs of this ability. Meanwhile, starting a conversation is practiced by those who have already interacted with tourists, usually using simple English phrases such as “Hello” or “Good morning, sir.” In addition, artisans often rely on external assistance such as Google Translate or help from the organizers.

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THE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING SKILLS OF RECEPTIONISTS AT GOLDEN TULIP HOTEL PONTIANAK

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ABSTRACT

English is an essential communication tool in global industries such as hospitality, where staff frequently interact with international guests. This study focuses on the English-speaking skills of receptionists at Golden Tulip Hotel Pontianak, a four-star hotel in Indonesia. It was conducted in response to observed challenges in English communication between receptionists and foreign guests. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the study assessed the proficiency levels of four front office staff through direct observation, interviews, and speaking tests. Findings revealed varied speaking proficiency: two participants (TM and MD) were at Level 1 – Very Basic, one (YD) at Level 2 – Basic Work-Related Proficiency, and one (AF) at Level 3 – Intermediate Professional Proficiency. Common difficulties included limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, frequent grammar errors, and low comprehension. These results highlight the need for structured English language training, especially for those with lower proficiency. Improving verbal communication among front office staff is crucial to enhancing guest satisfaction and overall service quality. Further research could involve larger-scale studies in destinations with high international English-speaking tourist traffic to explore overall English-speaking proficiency. This would help identify common challenges across roles and support development of targeted language training programs tailored to specific needs.

Keywords: *English, Speaking Skills, Hospitality, Receptionists*

INTRODUCTION

English has become a vital tool for international communication in today's globalized world, particularly in service-oriented industries such as hospitality. As one of the most widely spoken languages, English is key in connecting hotel staff with international guests, facilitating smooth and professional interactions. According to Ethnologue (2020), English ranks as the language with the highest number of speakers globally, with over 1.6 billion individuals using it as a primary or secondary language. In Indonesia, English is taught from elementary to high school as a foreign language, to equip students with competencies in grammar, speaking, listening, and text comprehension (Sneddon, 2003). However, despite this formal education, Indonesia remains in the "Low Proficiency" category on the English Proficiency Index, ranking 80th out of 116 countries (Education First, 2024).

English proficiency especially in speaking is a crucial competency in the hospitality industry, where face-to-face interactions are frequent and essential. Hotel communication encompasses more than simple greetings; it involves managing bookings, explaining services, resolving complaints, and personalizing guest experiences. The ability to communicate fluently in English directly impacts customer satisfaction, as evidenced by studies showing that poor English-speaking skills among staff can lead to miscommunication, guest frustration, and diminished trust (Detik Finance, 2019; Dewantara, 2019).

Front office employees, particularly receptionists, are critical in shaping first impressions and ensuring guest satisfaction. According to Ninez Andromeda (2023), who studied the English language needs of front office staff, speaking skills are of primary importance due to the nature of direct verbal interaction. Miscommunication can have real consequences, as exemplified by an incident at the Golden Tulip Hotel Pontianak, where a misunderstanding due to poor English-speaking ability led to guest dissatisfaction. This illustrates a larger issue within the hospitality industry—namely, the gap between the expected level of communication and the actual language skills of receptionists.

To address this gap, language training and assessment of speaking skills are necessary. Brown's (2004) speaking assessment criteria, which include grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, comprehension, and fluency, serve as a comprehensive framework to evaluate English-speaking proficiency. These five components not only reflect linguistic competence but also influence how effectively hotel staff can engage in different types of spoken communication, such as interactional talk (maintaining social relationships), transactional talk (delivering information), and performance talk (public speaking). Given the importance of English-speaking skills for front-line hospitality staff, especially receptionists who serve as the face of a hotel, this study aims to evaluate the English-speaking proficiency of the receptionists at Golden Tulip Hotel Pontianak. The research focuses on identifying their speaking level in interactions with international guests. It aims to provide insights that can guide future training and development efforts within the hotel and beyond.

In line with this, speaking skills play a vital role in supporting the daily responsibilities of a receptionist, particularly in serving international guests. Therefore, the writer conducted a study entitled "The Analysis of English-Speaking Skills of Receptionists at Golden Tulip Hotel Pontianak" to examine their level of proficiency. Speaking is a fundamental aspect of human communication, and its definitions have been explored from various perspectives in linguistics and education. According to Brown (2001), speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode, which involves conveying thoughts, ideas, and emotions through spoken language. This definition emphasizes the active role of the speaker in generating language and the importance of clarity and coherence in communication. Furthermore, Thornbury (2005) highlights that speaking is not merely about producing sounds or words; it encompasses the ability to engage in meaningful interactions, requiring both linguistic competence and pragmatic awareness. In the context of language learning, Harmer (2007) posits that speaking involves a range

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of sub-skills, including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency, which collectively contribute to effective communication.

In the same perspective, Nunan (1991) also points out that speaking is a social activity in specific contexts, influenced by cultural norms and interlocutors' relationships. This multifaceted nature of speaking underscores its significance in personal and professional settings, as practical speaking skills are essential for building relationships, expressing ideas, and achieving goals. Overall, the definitions of speaking reflect its complexity as a skill that integrates linguistic knowledge, social interaction, and contextual understanding.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Aspects of Speaking refer to the various components that contribute to effective oral communication. These elements are essential for mastering the skill of speaking, as they influence how accurately and fluently one can convey ideas and engage in conversations. Five key elements of language significantly influence one's speaking ability: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency, as outlined by Brown (2004).

Pronunciation is a critical aspect of speaking that significantly influences effective communication and comprehension in language use. According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), pronunciation encompasses the production of sounds, stress, intonation, and rhythm, all of which contribute to the intelligibility of spoken language. The authors argue that clear pronunciation is essential for successful interaction, as it affects how well speakers are understood by their listeners. Furthermore, Derwing and Munro (2005) emphasize the importance of teaching pronunciation in language education, noting that learners with strong pronunciation skills are likelier to be perceived as fluent and competent speakers. They also highlight that pronunciation errors can lead to misunderstandings, hindering communication and affecting the speaker's confidence. In addition, Jenkins (2000) introduces the "Lingua Franca Core" concept, which identifies key pronunciation features crucial for mutual intelligibility among speakers of different first languages. This perspective underscores the need to focus on pronunciation in language teaching, particularly in increasingly multicultural and multilingual contexts. Overall, pronunciation is not merely a technical skill but a vital component of effective speaking that enhances clarity, fosters understanding, and facilitates successful communication in diverse settings.

Grammar is a fundamental aspect of language that governs the structure of phrases, clauses, and sentences, enabling effective communication. Definitions of grammar vary depending on the perspective. For example, Crystal (2008) describes grammar as a system of rules that facilitates communication. Chomsky's (1957) theory of generative grammar emphasizes innate structures that allow the generation of an infinite number of sentences. On the other hand, Halliday (1985) introduces functional grammar, which focuses on the meaning of language within

social contexts, offering a more integrated view of grammar that connects it with semantics and pragmatics. Grammatical linguistics structures consist of segmental and suprasegmental elements that form the foundation of language. Geoffrey Leech (1982) defines grammar as the structural rules that govern the composition of clauses, phrases, and words in any natural language. Grammar is the science that studies how language functions to facilitate communication.

Vocabulary is a fundamental element of language that enables communication by providing a collection of words, each carrying specific meanings. Various experts have different perspectives on the definition of vocabulary. According to Tarigan (1986), vocabulary is a collection of words that make up the lexicon of a language. Similarly, Nurgiantoro (2001) defines vocabulary as the set of words owned by a language. The *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI, 2003) takes a broader view, describing vocabulary as the totality of words in a language. Kridalaksana (1982) expands on this, seeing vocabulary as a component of language that encompasses all information about the meaning and usage of words and the wealth of words possessed by a speaker or writer, often presented in dictionaries with concise explanations. Soedtejo (1992) further elaborates on vocabulary by noting that it includes not only all the words in a language but also words used in specific fields of knowledge and the wealth of words owned by individual speakers.

From these various perspectives, it can be concluded that vocabulary refers to a language's entire set of words, encompassing those with meaning or significance. Keraf (1990) adds that vocabulary includes words whose meanings can be easily recognized when heard again, even if they are rarely or no longer used in conversation or writing. This view is reinforced by Keraf (1994), who emphasizes that a language's vocabulary consists of all the words it contains.

Experts have proposed various theories to define comprehension. Arthur (1989, as cited in Putra, 2017) describes comprehension as the ability to grasp both the ideas and the intent behind communication during speaking. On the other hand, Richards, Platt, and Weber (1985, as cited in Maulidar et al., 2019) define comprehension as a process in which an individual interprets the meaning of both written and spoken language. Similarly, Khaira (2019) views comprehension as the process through which an individual understands the meaning of language in communication between two or more people. In addition to these perspectives, comprehension can be seen as a dynamic and interactive process where listeners or readers actively construct meaning based on context, prior knowledge, and linguistic cues. This highlights the multifaceted nature of comprehension, which goes beyond mere recognition of words to understanding the broader context and underlying intentions of communication.

Fluency refers to how smoothly someone can use the target language in spoken form. It involves speaking at a relatively fast pace with minimal pauses. Different experts have defined fluency in various ways. According to Hartmann and Stork (1976, as cited in Yang, 2014), fluency is speaking naturally to convey information. Filmore (1979, as cited in Yazdeli et al., 2016) offers a different perspective, describing it as the ability to talk smoothly without hesitation or disruptive pauses. Similarly, Harmer (2015, as cited in Shahini & Shahamirian,

2017) defines fluency as focusing on speech content to achieve effective communication. Lennon (1990, as cited in van Os et al., 2020), however, takes a more nuanced approach, providing two interpretations: in the broad sense, fluency involves speaking with correct grammar, a rich vocabulary, and pronunciation akin to that of a native speaker.

A number of linguists have tried to classify the purposes of speaking. The functions of speaking are classified into three categories: talk as interaction, talk as transaction, and talk as performance (Brown & Yule, 1983, as cited in Richards, 2010). These speaking activities all have very different forms and purposes, necessitating various teaching strategies. The following explains the purposes of speaking. Proficiency in a language is crucial for effective interaction. A significant portion of our daily communication is interactional. This pertains to the conventional understanding of "conversation." The principal objective of conversation as interaction is to preserve social relationships. This form of speaking refers to situations where the focus is on the content of the speech or action. The main goal is to convey the message clearly and precisely, prioritizing the information over social interactions. In the hospitality industry, for example, hotel staff may focus on giving clear instructions about hotel services, check-in procedures, or emergency protocols, ensuring guests receive the necessary information without unnecessary small talk.

This refers to conversation in public or public speaking, which involves conveying information to an audience, including morning announcements, guest briefings, and speeches. Discourse as performance typically manifests as a monologue rather than a dialogue. It typically adheres to a discernible structure and resembles written language more than spoken language. Likewise, it is frequently assessed based on its efficacy or influence on the listener, a scenario that is improbable with dialogue as engagement or transaction. Instances of conversation as performance in a hotel environment encompass delivering a welcome address at the check-in counter, presenting information regarding hotel services during a guest orientation, or announcing special activities during a conference.

The assessment of speaking is a component of assessing someone's proficiency. The speaking assessment evaluates someone's proficiency in five dimensions: grammar, comprehension, pronunciation, and fluency (Brown, 2003).

Table 1 Speaking Assessment by Brown (2003)

Score	Pronunciation	Grammar	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Fluency
1	Errors in pronunciation are frequent but can be understood by a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners	Errors in grammar are frequent, but speaker can be understood by a	Speaking vocabulary is inadequate to express anything but the most elementary needs	Within the scope of his very limited language experience, can understand simple questions and statements if delivered with slowed speech,	(No specific fluency description. Refer to other four languages)

	attempting to speak his language.	native speaker used to dealing with foreigners attempting to speak his language.		repetition, or paraphrase	e areas for implied level of fluency .)
2	Accent is intelligible though often quite faulty	Can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately but does not have thorough or confident control of the grammar	Has speaking vocabulary sufficient to express himself simply with some circumlocutions.	Can get the gist of most conversations of non-technical subjects (i.e., topics that require no specialized knowledge).	Can handle with confidence but not with facility most social situations, including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information.
3	Errors never interfere with understanding	Control of grammar is good.	Able to speak the language	Comprehension is quite complete	Can discuss particul

	and rarely disturb the native speaker. Accent may be obviously foreign.	Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.	with sufficient vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Vocabulary is broad enough that he rarely has to grope for a word.	at a normal rate of speech.	are interests of competence with reasonable ease. Rarely has to grope for words.
4	Errors in pronunciation are quite rare.	Able to use the language accurately on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Errors in grammar are quite rare.	Can understand and participate in any conversation within the range of his experience with a high degree of precision of vocabulary.	Can understand any conversation within the range of his experience.	Able to use the language fluently on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Can participate in any conversation within the range of this experience.

					nce with a high degree of fluency .
5	Equivalent to and fully accepted by educated native speakers.	Equivalent to that of an educated native speaker.	Speech on all levels is fully accepted by educated native speakers in all its features including breadth of vocabulary and idioms, colloquialisms, and pertinent cultural references	Equivalent to that of an educated native speaker	Has complete fluency in the language such that his speech is fully accepted by educated native speakers

Front office is a term commonly used in hotels to refer to a department or section that faces customers and is related to the provision of reservation services, guest registration, room allocation, customer information, billing, and payment (Sambodo, 2020). In small hotels, front office functions can be performed by one person in the reception area, including answering incoming calls, accepting room reservations, welcoming and registering guests, billing and payment processing, and other related tasks. In large hotels, there may be separate departments or sections that divide responsibilities in detail, including:

- a) Telephone Operator: Receiving and directing incoming calls.
- b) Reservations: Accepting room reservations.
- c) Receptionist (Front Desk): Welcoming and registering guests.
- d) Concierge/Inquiries: Answering guests' and visitors' questions, handling mail and keys, managing car rentals, tour bookings, and entertainment ticket purchases for guests.
- e) Billing Office: Preparing guest accounts and bills.
- f) Cashier: Receiving guest payments and processing other financial transactions (such as foreign currency exchange).
- g) Guest Relations: Handling guest complaints and dealing with VIP guests and guests with special needs.

- h) Uniformed Staff: Bellboys, elevator attendants, doorkeepers, room attendants, garage or valet parking attendants, and others.

The front desk staff at a hotel has various terms or titles. Some refer to it as Front Desk Agent, Front Desk Clerk, Guest Service Agent, Guest Room Service, or Receptionist (Wiguna & Marini, 2012). According to Sugiarto, the receptionist or front desk department is an operational part of a hotel whose primary task is to welcome guests. The receptionist is an employee responsible for providing services to guests, such as greeting, assisting, and delivering messages to customers or guests in line with the objectives they aim to achieve (Yoeliastuti & Cahyani, 2021).

Receptionists are part of the front office responsible for welcoming guests, selling hotel rooms and other facilities, and serving guests from the room booking process until they leave the hotel. Here are some of the tasks and responsibilities of receptionists in hotels (Saputro et al., 2014):

1. Welcoming guests warmly: Receptionists should greet arriving guests at the front desk with a smile and a greeting, as well as offer assistance to create a positive impression.
2. Creating guest registration: Receptionists prepare registration forms by requesting guests' identification cards such as ID cards, driver's licenses, or passports to record guest data.
3. Handling the check-in process: Receiving guests who arrive to stay is one of the receptionist's duties, known as the check-in process.
4. Handling the check-out process: Receptionists are also responsible for processing guest check-outs.
5. Providing information about room types: Receptionists must master information about all types of rooms and facilities available in the hotel.
6. Serving currency exchange: Hotels must provide currency exchange services to facilitate guests, especially foreign tourists, in conducting transactions.
7. Creating daily guest reports: After guests check in, receptionists must compile daily reports to calculate the number of guests staying, known as occupancy.

In the global world today, English is considered an international language and is used worldwide. Therefore, receptionists with good English-speaking skills will have a competitive advantage in the job market. The importance of English-speaking skills for receptionists lies in their ability to communicate clearly and effectively (Arifin, 2018). With good English-speaking skills, receptionists can explain information accurately to customers and ensure the message is well understood. Additionally, English-speaking skills also allow receptionists to understand customers better. They can listen carefully and respond quickly and accurately to customer questions or issues. As a result, receptionists can provide satisfactory service and increase customer satisfaction. The importance of English-speaking skills for receptionists also relates to the company's image. Receptionists who can communicate well in English will give customers a professional and competent impression. This can increase customer trust in the company and strengthen business relationships.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to explore the English-speaking skills of hotel receptionists in a natural setting. A qualitative approach was selected to enable a comprehensive and contextual understanding of the phenomena under investigation without manipulating variables or environments. As Hammersley (2013, as cited in Cohen et al., 2018) emphasized, qualitative research is characterized by its adaptability, focus on raw data and participant-centered analysis. This method allowed the researcher to capture detailed and meaningful insights into the communication experiences of hotel receptionists with English-speaking guests.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The writer conducted an observation of the receptionist staff at Golden Tulip Hotel Pontianak on 27 April 2025 which is done in 30 April 2025.

1. Pronunciation

Receptionist Staff's name: Mr. TM

Based on the observation conducted, the pronunciation skills of Mr. TM revealed several areas that require improvement, particularly in the context of serving international guests. Mr. TM's pronunciation was often unclear, especially when he spoke quickly. His intonation was mostly flat, which made his speech sound monotonous. He also frequently used filler sounds like "eee" and "emm," which disrupted the clarity of his words. Despite these issues, the general meaning of his speech was still understandable, although it required more effort from the listener. Below is an excerpt from Mr. TM that shows unclear pronunciation and filler use.

Receptionist Staff's name: Ms. MD

Regarding the pronunciation of Ms. MD while assisting foreign guests at the front desk, several challenges were noted. Ms. MD made an effort to speak in English; however, many of her words were not clearly articulated. Her speech rhythm was uneven, and she frequently used filler sounds such as "eee" and "uhm," which affected the clarity of her pronunciation. Additionally, her tendency to switch between English and Bahasa Indonesia made her speech less consistent. Despite these difficulties, the guests were still able to understand her after some clarification.

Receptionist Staff's name: Mr. YD

The observation of Mr. YD's pronunciation highlighted several areas where improvement is needed, particularly in ensuring clear communication with guests. This evaluation focused on the clarity of his pronunciation, his use of stress, intonation, and rhythm, as well as his ability to adjust pronunciation based on the language proficiency of international guests.

Mr. YD's pronunciation was not always clear and easy to understand. At times, especially when responding quickly or using limited vocabulary, his speech became unclear. This lack of clarity could potentially hinder effective communication, particularly in a busy hotel environment where precise information exchange is critical. Additionally, Mr. YD tended to provide shorter answers, which may have further contributed to the unclear pronunciation in some cases.

Receptionist Staff's name: Mr. AF

The observation of Mr. AF's pronunciation revealed that his overall pronunciation is generally clear and understandable, with only minor areas for improvement. His pronunciation was largely effective in conveying messages, though certain nuances in speech could be enhanced to further improve clarity.

Mr. AF's pronunciation is clear for the most part, allowing for easy comprehension during the conversation. However, there were occasional instances where certain words were mispronounced or spoken too quickly, which could potentially confuse listeners, especially in a fast-paced or noisy environment. These minor mispronunciations do not significantly hinder communication but could be refined to ensure more consistent clarity.

In terms of stress, intonation, and rhythm, Mr. AF generally displayed appropriate usage. He demonstrated an understanding of the need for proper emphasis on key words and maintained a steady rhythm in his speech. However, the flow of his speech was occasionally disrupted by pauses or incomplete sentences, which slightly affected the natural rhythm of his communication. By reducing these pauses and completing sentences more fluidly, the overall clarity and smoothness of his speech could be improved.

2. Grammar

Receptionist Staff's name: Mr. TM

The grammar used by Mr. TM during the observation was found to be inconsistent and demonstrated several areas of concern. The evaluation focused on three main aspects: subject-verb agreement, the appropriate use of verb tenses, and the maintenance of sentence structure in relation to context. During the observation, Mr. TM's grammar usage was found to be inconsistent, with several errors in basic sentence structure, subject-verb agreement, and verb tenses. His sentences often lacked clarity due to these grammatical mistakes, which disrupted the flow of conversation. Notably, there were frequent issues with subject-verb agreement, such as "it is double bed" instead of "it is a double bed," and improper verb tense usage like "may I know the time you would check in" instead of "may I know the time you will check in." These errors affected the overall comprehensibility of his speech, although the core message could still be understood with effort.

Receptionist Staff's name: Ms. MD

The observation of Ms. MD's grammar usage during communication in English revealed several challenges, particularly in constructing clear and grammatically correct sentences. The analysis focused on her use of subject-verb agreement, correct verb tenses, and overall sentence structure appropriate to the context.

Ms. MD struggled with subject-verb agreement and constructing grammatically correct sentences. Her responses were often incomplete or fragmented, and she occasionally mixed English and Bahasa Indonesia, which made it difficult to assess her grammatical accuracy. For instance, she said, "You stay how many days?" instead of "How many days will you stay?" and "I check-in you now" instead of "I will check you in now." These issues, particularly with verb tenses and sentence structure, led to unclear communication at times. Although the

core message was generally understood, her grammatical inconsistencies impacted the overall clarity of her responses.

Receptionist Staff's name: Mr. YD

The observation of Mr. YD's grammar usage during communication revealed several areas requiring improvement. During the observation of Mr. YD's grammar usage, several issues were identified related to subject-verb agreement, sentence structure, and verb tense consistency. There were instances where the sentence structure was incomplete, and verb tenses were not used consistently, which made the communication less clear. For instance, in the sentence "I check housekeeping," the verb "check" should be in the future tense ("I will check housekeeping") to reflect the intended action. Similarly, the phrase "Maybe... can fix" is incomplete and lacks a subject. A more accurate version would be "Maybe they can fix it" or "The technician can fix it." Additionally, sentences such as "I can help" and "I check new room for you" need restructuring for clarity and grammatical correctness. In this case, "I check new room for you" should be revised to "I will check a new room for you" to follow proper sentence structure and ensure clarity.

Receptionist Staff's name: Mr. AF

The observation of Mr. AF's grammar revealed several areas where improvement is needed, particularly regarding subject-verb agreement, verb tense usage, and sentence structure. These aspects are crucial in ensuring clear and professional communication in the hospitality industry. One of the most frequent issues observed was with subject-verb agreement. During the observation of Mr. AF's grammar usage, several key areas for improvement were identified, especially concerning subject-verb agreement, verb tense usage, and sentence structure. These issues occasionally impacted the clarity of his communication, though he generally managed to communicate effectively. Subject-verb agreement: In the snippet, Mr. AF says, "You say, it's... not working, right?" The phrase "You say" should be "You said," as he is referring to something the guest already mentioned in the past. Using the correct past tense here would make the sentence grammatically correct. Verb tense: In the sentence, "I will contact engineering, and they can fix it quickly," the future tense "will contact" is correct, but it would sound more natural if he said, "I will contact engineering, and they will fix it quickly." The repetition of "will" helps clarify the future intention of both actions. Sentence structure: The phrase "Please wait for a moment while I check the availability of the room" is grammatically fine, but the sentence could be made clearer with a slight restructuring for smoother communication. For example, "Please wait a moment while I check room availability" could be more direct.

3. Vocabulary

Receptionist Staff's name: Mr. TM

During the observation, Mr. TM demonstrated a basic understanding of vocabulary relevant to hotel operations. While he was able to use key terms such as "check-in," "check-out," "reservation," and "complaint handling," his overall vocabulary range appeared limited, particularly when responding to more complex or unexpected questions in English. During the observation, Mr. TM demonstrated a basic understanding of vocabulary relevant to hotel operations. However, his

overall vocabulary range appeared limited, particularly when responding to more complex or unexpected guest requests. For example, in his conversation about room types, Mr. TM said, "Okay our hotel actually has five types of room, eee the first one is a superior, ee deluxe and executive ee junior and disabled room." Here, the term "types of room" is too vague, and his description of room categories was unclear, especially when listing them without proper punctuation or correct terminology. Additionally, the use of the phrase "disabled room" could be considered insensitive, as the more appropriate term would be "accessible room" or "room for disabled guests." In another instance, when addressing a guest's inquiry during check-out, Mr. TM said, "Eee do you have problem while staying sir?" This phrasing was awkward, and a more appropriate form would be, "Did you experience any problems during your stay, sir?" Such examples show how limited vocabulary can affect the clarity of communication, even though the core message was still conveyed. Expanding his vocabulary and using more precise, industry-specific language would improve Mr. TM's ability to communicate more effectively with guests.

Receptionist Staff's name: Ms. MD

During the observation, Mr. MD demonstrated a basic understanding of vocabulary relevant to his role as a receptionist. He was able to use appropriate hotel-related terms such as "check-in," "guest complaints," "communication with guests," and "hotel administration," indicating foundational knowledge of key industry terminology. However, she also showed difficulty expressing herself fully in English, particularly when responding to more complex guest inquiries.

Similarly, Ms. MD exhibited a limited range of vocabulary related to front office operations. While she could use essential terms such as "room," "check-in," and "passport," her vocabulary was often overly simplistic and repetitive. For example, in an interaction with international guests, she repeatedly used the word "room" without adding specific details such as "standard room," "available room," or "room type." In one instance, she said, "You want room? eee wait ya... eee available yes, room is... standard room, ya," which lacked fluency and professionalism. Additionally, phrases like "I write in system first" reflected a direct translation from Bahasa Indonesia ("saya tulis dulu di sistem"), rather than proper English usage.

Receptionist Staff's name: Mr. YD

The observation of Mr. YD's vocabulary revealed that he generally uses terms relevant to his role as a receptionist. He demonstrated familiarity with basic hospitality-related vocabulary, such as "check-in," "check-out," and "booking," which allowed him to communicate essential information to guests. The assessment focused on the appropriateness of his word choices, variety of vocabulary, and the tone used in different guest interactions.

However, Mr. YD's vocabulary range was found to be limited, and some expressions were awkward or grammatically incorrect. For instance, in the question, "Do you have already booking?", the word order and structure are incorrect. A more natural phrasing would be, "Do you already have a booking?" or "Have you made a reservation?"

Similarly, expressions like “wait little moment” reflect direct translations from Bahasa Indonesia (“tunggu sebentar”) rather than idiomatic English. A more appropriate and professional alternative would be, “Please wait a moment” or “Just a moment, please.”

Receptionist Staff’s name: Mr. AF

The observation of Mr. AF's use of vocabulary revealed a strong command of language, particularly in the context of his role as a receptionist. His ability to utilize a wide range of vocabulary suited for the hotel environment was evident and contributed positively to his communication. During the observation, Mr. AF demonstrated a generally strong use of vocabulary relevant to his front office role. He effectively used terms like “availability,” “engineering,” and “inconvenience,” which reflect an appropriate and professional register in hospitality communication. However, there were still minor instances that showed a need for refinement in word choice. For example, in the phrase “You say, it’s... not working, right?”, the use of “You say” is a direct and somewhat awkward construction in English. A more natural alternative would be “You said it’s not working?” or “Did you say it’s not working?” — both of which reflect better control over conversational tone and structure.

Additionally, although he correctly used the word “engineering” to refer to maintenance staff, the phrase “I will contact engineering” could be more naturally expressed as “I’ll call the maintenance team” or “I’ll inform our engineering staff.” These adjustments would improve clarity and align better with common English usage in hotel settings.

4. Comprehension

Receptionist Staff’s name: Mr. TM

The observation of Mr. TM’s comprehension skills revealed several areas for improvement in understanding and responding to guest inquiries effectively. The analysis focused on three aspects: the ability to understand questions or requests immediately, the use of clarification strategies when needed, and the level of confidence shown when responding to guests.

Mr. TM did not consistently demonstrate immediate understanding of guests' questions or requests. In several cases, he appeared to struggle with grasping the meaning of certain queries, particularly when they were expressed in English or involved abstract or unfamiliar topics. One notable example occurred during a check-out situation, where a guest from Singapore asked to retrieve his deposit. Mr. TM initially responded with polite greetings, but his follow-up questions suggested partial misunderstanding of the guest's intent.

For instance, when the guest had already clearly stated he was checking out and retrieving his deposit, Mr. TM asked, “Do you have problem while staying, sir?”—a question that was not relevant to the guest’s original statement and indicated a lack of full understanding. Moreover, Mr. TM repeated phrases like “do you still... do you still have a deposit slip?” with noticeable hesitation, suggesting that he was unsure of how to proceed or did not completely catch what the guest had asked. The pauses and filler sound such as “eee” and “emm” further disrupted

the flow of conversation and showed that he needed more time to process the guest's statements.

These moments illustrate that Mr. TM did not consistently comprehend guest inquiries on the first attempt and often had to rely on guesswork or clarification strategies. While the interaction was eventually completed, the lack of immediate understanding impacted the efficiency and professionalism of the service provided.

Receptionist Staff's name: Ms. MD

The observation of Ms. MS's comprehension skills revealed several challenges in understanding and responding to guest inquiries, particularly in English. The evaluation focused on her ability to grasp guest questions immediately, her strategy for seeking clarification, and her overall confidence in responding to various types of requests.

Ms. MS did not consistently demonstrate immediate comprehension of guest questions or requests. Her responses were often delayed, likely due to a strong reliance on Bahasa Indonesia, which appeared to hinder her ability to process and respond quickly in English—especially during more complex interactions.

During one observed interaction with a couple from Australia, for example, Ms. MS struggled to respond promptly when asked whether the hotel had any rooms available that night. Rather than giving a direct answer, she hesitated and said, "You want room? Wait ya..."—an indication that she had not fully understood the structure or intent of the question.

In another instance, when asked, "Do you have any non-smoking rooms?" Ms. MS again hesitated, responding with, "Room, ya... standard room..." before shifting the topic by asking, "You want... how many day stay?" This response suggested a lack of understanding regarding the specific preference expressed by the guest.

Additionally, when faced with more complex or unfamiliar phrases, Ms. MS often relied on translation tools. In one case, she typed a sentence into Google Translate and showed it to the guest rather than replying verbally, which disrupted the natural flow of communication and reduced the interaction's professionalism.

Receptionist Staff's name: Mr. YD

The observation of Mr. YD's comprehension skills highlighted both strengths and areas for improvement in his ability to understand and respond to guests' questions or requests. This evaluation focused on his immediate understanding of queries, his approach to asking for clarification when needed, and his confidence in delivering responses. During the observed interaction with a guest who reported an issue with the air conditioner, Mr. YD displayed partial comprehension of the guest's request. When the guest clearly explained that the air conditioning in the room was not functioning and asked whether it could be fixed or if a room change was possible, Mr. YD initially responded with, "I check... housekeeping. Maybe... can fix." This indicated a misunderstanding, as the issue should have been directed to engineering or maintenance—not housekeeping.

This misdirection suggested that Mr. YD did not fully comprehend the nature of the guest's complaint or the appropriate department to handle it. While he eventually offered a room change as an alternative, his delayed and hesitant

responses—filled with “eee,” “uhm,” and broken phrasing—showed a lack of immediate understanding and confidence.

Receptionist Staff’s name: Mr. AF

The observation of Mr. AF’s comprehension revealed that he generally demonstrates a strong understanding of guest questions and requests. His ability to grasp most queries was evident, and he handled any potential misunderstandings with confidence and clarity.

Mr. AF appeared to understand most of the questions posed to him without delay, responding appropriately to the majority of the inquiries. However, there were moments where Mr. AF showed slight hesitation in fully grasping the urgency or intent behind a guest’s request. For example, when a guest clearly stated that the hot water in his room was not working and that he had an important meeting soon, Mr. AF responded with, “You say, it’s... not working, right?”—repeating the statement instead of immediately acknowledging the issue and offering a solution. This brief pause and need for confirmation, while not critical, reflected a delay in immediate comprehension, particularly in situations requiring quick action.

5. Fluency

Receptionist Staff’s name: Mr. TM

The observation of Mr. TM’s spoken fluency revealed several challenges that affect the smoothness and coherence of his communication in English. This evaluation was based on the receptionist’s ability to speak without frequent pauses or hesitation, the maintenance of a natural conversational flow, and the consistency of pacing and tone throughout interactions.

The observation of Mr. TM’s spoken fluency revealed several challenges that affected the smoothness and coherence of his communication in English. Throughout his interaction with a guest over the phone, Mr. TM frequently paused mid-sentence, used filler words such as “eee”, “eem”, and “uhm”, and often repeated phrases before completing his point. These disruptions created a fragmented flow of conversation, making it difficult for the guest to follow along comfortably.

For example, in one instance, Mr. TM said:

“Eee hello sir, may I help you? Have you made a reservation before? Okay our hotel actually has five types of room, eee the first one is a superior, ee deluxe and executive ee junior and disabled room.” This sentence shows how his frequent hesitation and inconsistent rhythm impacted the delivery of basic information.

Receptionist Staff’s name: Ms. MD

The observation of Ms. MS’s fluency revealed several challenges that affected the smoothness and coherence of her communication, particularly in English. This evaluation focused on her ability to speak without unnecessary pauses or hesitation, maintain a natural flow of conversation, and use appropriate pacing and tone in her interactions with guests.

Ms. MS frequently hesitated during conversations, especially in English. These pauses were often prolonged, disrupting the flow of her speech. When responding to more complex questions, she appeared uncertain and took longer to organize her thoughts. A significant portion of the conversation was conducted in

Bahasa Indonesia, particularly when the questions became more challenging, further interrupting the fluency of her English communication.

For example, when a guest asked about room availability, Ms. MS replied, "You want room? eee wait ya... eee available yes, room is... standard room, ya." The response was marked by several pauses, filler sounds like "eee" and "uhm," and repeated basic words, making it sound disjointed and unclear.

Moreover, when she struggled to find the right words, Ms. MS often switched to Bahasa Indonesia or used Google Translate, further disrupting the conversational flow. This not only affected the communication but also impacted the guest's experience, making the interaction feel slow and fragmented. While she was able to complete the check-in process, these fluency issues indicated a lack of confidence and spontaneity, particularly when under pressure or dealing with more complex inquiries.

Receptionist Staff's name: Mr. YD

The evaluation focused on his ability to speak smoothly, his capacity to maintain a natural flow of conversation, and the appropriateness of his pacing and tone during interactions with guests. The observation of Mr. YD's fluency in communication highlighted a few noticeable challenges that impacted the natural flow of his conversation with guests. While he demonstrated good understanding and politeness, his speech was often interrupted by frequent pauses and filler words such as "uhm" and "eee". For instance, when the guest asked about room availability, Mr. YD responded with: "Good... good afternoon sir. Welcome to Golden Tulip. Uhm... do you have... already booking? No? Eee okay, wait... I check room available." The multiple pauses, repeated words, and hesitation made the conversation feel slower than necessary.

In addition, Mr. YD sometimes needed clarification, which also interrupted the flow. He asked, "How many nights you stay?" and "Breakfast... you want or no breakfast?" These phrases were clear but not fluid, with gaps that affected the smoothness of the interaction. Although the check-in was completed successfully, his fluency issues hindered the natural pace of communication.

Receptionist Staff's name: Mr. AF

The observation of Mr. AF's fluency revealed that, while he generally maintains a natural flow of conversation, there are areas for improvement, particularly in reducing pauses and hesitation during more complex responses. In this instance, when addressing the guest's concern about the hot water not working in his room, Mr. AF's speech showed some hesitations and filler words that interrupted the flow.

For example, when the guest described the issue with the hot water, Mr. AF responded with: "Eee, good morning, sir. Uhm... I'm very sorry to hear about the problem with your hot water. You say, it's... not working, right?" The pauses and filler sound such as "eee" and "uhm" broke the natural flow of the conversation, making it seem less fluid than necessary.

Further into the conversation, Mr. AF used hesitation before offering solutions: "Uhm... okay, let me check this for you. I will contact engineering, and they can fix it quickly, or... if you prefer, I can offer you another room." While his

solutions were professional and appropriate, the hesitation could have been minimized for a smoother response.

Following the observation, interviews were conducted as the next step. A total of nine questions were posed to four receptionists at Golden Tulip Hotel Pontianak—Mr. TM, Ms. MD, Mr. YD, and Mr. AF. The questions focused on their educational background in English and their strategies for communicating with guests in English. The details of these questions are outlined below:

Question 1: How long have you been working as a receptionist at this hotel?

1. Mr. TM

Mr. TM responded that he has been working as a receptionist at the hotel for almost two years. At first, he mistakenly said '2 months,' but then quickly realized the error and corrected himself, clarifying that he meant '2 years.' He explained that he started working there in 2022, which confirms his experience of nearly two years in the position.

2. Ms. MD

Ms. MD explained that she has worked at Golden Tulip for a total of five years. She began her career there in the Food and Beverage (F&B) department, where she worked for two years. Later, she was offered an opportunity to move to the receptionist position. Ms. MD decided to accept the offer because she felt that the receptionist role was more aligned with her educational background—she studied hospitality during vocational high school. Since then, she has worked as a receptionist for three years, building her skills and experience in the front office area until now.

3. Mr. YD

Mr. YD mentioned that he has been working at Golden Tulip for around ten years. He explained that after graduating from senior high school, he began working at Golden Tulip and has remained there ever since. After a brief hesitation, he added that approximately four of those years have been spent in the receptionist position. His response highlights a long-term commitment to the hotel, with extensive experience across various roles, including a significant period in the front office.

4. Mr. AF

Mr. AF stated that he has been working at Golden Tulip since 2023, and mentioned that it has been almost two years now. When asked specifically about his experience as a receptionist, he explained that he has held the receptionist position for around two years. Prior to joining Golden Tulip, Mr. AF worked at Ibis Hotel. Although he did not go into detail about his reasons for switching hotels, he did mention that he feels comfortable working at Golden Tulip, suggesting a positive experience in his current role.

Question 2: What is your main responsibility as a receptionist here?

1. Mr. TM

When asked about his main responsibilities as a receptionist, Mr. TM explained that his duties include handling check-ins and check-outs, managing reservations, and addressing guest complaints. He emphasized that these tasks are central to his role, ensuring smooth operations and guest satisfaction at the hotel.

2. Ms. MD

When asked about her main responsibility as a receptionist, Ms. MD shared that her focus is on ensuring guest comfort and providing excellent service. She emphasized the importance of knowing how to handle guests effectively, highlighting the role of hospitality in creating a positive experience.

3. Mr. YD

Mr. YD initially hesitated before repeating the question and then clarified that his main responsibility as a receptionist involves handling guest check-ins and check-outs.

4. Mr. AF

Mr. AF explained that his main responsibility as a receptionist involves overseeing operations, managing employees, and, of course, ensuring guest satisfaction. He added that his role also includes tasks such as creating schedules, developing promotions, and organizing events, demonstrating a broad range of responsibilities beyond the front desk

Question 3: What do you think is the most important skill for a hotel receptionist?

1. Mr. TM

Mr. TM answered that being friendly is essential. He highlighted that friendliness plays a crucial role in interacting with guests, along with public speaking skills, which are important for effectively communicating and creating a positive experience

2. Ms. MD

Ms. MD stated that the most important skill for a hotel receptionist is communication with guests. She briefly hesitated while answering but emphasized that effective communication is key to interacting with guests.

3. Mr. YD

Mr. YD answered that the most important skill for a hotel receptionist is the ability to handle guests with a smile. He emphasized that maintaining a friendly demeanor is essential, but equally important is being helpful with whatever the guest requests, ensuring their needs are met with a positive and accommodating attitude.

4. Mr. AF

Mr. AF stated that the most important aspect for a hotel receptionist is not necessarily a technical skill, but attitude, which he considers the number one priority. He emphasized that having the right attitude is fundamental in

delivering excellent service. In addition to attitude, he mentioned that product knowledge and speaking ability are also important, followed by intelligence, which helps in adapting to various guest needs and situations.

Question 4: How often do you serve international guests in your role as a hotel receptionist?

1. Mr. TM

When asked how often he serves international guests in his role as a hotel receptionist, Mr. TM initially hesitated and repeated the question. He then explained, mixing in some Indonesian, that while the exact number of international guests can't be predicted, he estimated that there are usually between three to seven international guests per month at the hotel.

2. Ms. MD

Ms. MD answered that she frequently serves international guests in her role as a hotel receptionist. She explained that every week, the hotel typically receives tourists, with guests from China and Malaysia being a common presence on a daily basis.

3. Mr. YD

Mr. YD initially hesitated and repeated the question to clarify, before explaining that, on average, he serves international guests regularly. He estimated that, in a typical week, he interacts with around 20 international tourists, with approximately 3 guests on any given day.

4. Mr. AF

Mr. AF answered that he frequently serves international guests in his role as a hotel receptionist. He mentioned that currently, he meets foreign guests every week, and noted that in the previous month, he interacted with international guests almost every day—sometimes up to seven guests in a single day. He estimated that this could total over 30 international guests in a month. However, he also added that the number of foreign guests this month has decreased, possibly due to travel patterns, and he is unsure when they will return.

Question 5: Do you think speaking English is important for your role as a hotel receptionist? Why?

1. Mr. TM

Mr. TM stated that speaking English is very important for his role as a hotel receptionist. He explained that hospitality involves many foreign guests visiting the hotel for both business and pleasure, making English an essential skill for effective communication and service.

2. Ms. MD

Ms. MD emphasized that speaking English is important for her role as a hotel receptionist. She explained that while basic tasks like check-ins are manageable, more complex inquiries from guests can be challenging. She noted that when guests speak slowly in English, she is able to understand, but when British guests speak quickly, it can be more difficult to follow. In such cases, she mentioned that she often has to ask them to repeat

themselves. Despite these challenges, she affirmed that English remains an essential skill for her job.

3. Mr. YD

Mr. YD answered that speaking English is very important for his role as a hotel receptionist. He explained that this skill is essential because he interacts with guests from all around the world.

4. Mr. AF

Mr. AF answered that speaking English is very important for his role as a hotel receptionist. He explained that the hotel industry operates on a large global scale, making English essential for communicating effectively with guests from various countries.

Question 6: What are your goals for improving your English communication skills in your role as a hotel receptionist?

1. Mr. TM

Mr. TM explained that his goal for improving his English communication skills is to attend English classes. He mentioned that the hotel offers a mandatory English class every Thursday for all staff, where they learn various aspects of hospitality vocabulary, pronunciation, and more. The classes are taught by Mr. Yove. Outside of these classes, Mr. TM does not participate in any other English courses, as he primarily relies on the hotel's program

2. Ms. MD

Ms. MD answered that her goal for improving her English communication skills is to speak more frequently with guests in English. She believes that the more she practices speaking with guests, the better she will become. Additionally, she mentioned that she uses her phone to study English and that the hotel provides English training. This training includes watching videos with translations and explanations, which help her improve her language skills. Furthermore, she explained that every Friday, all staff members are required to speak in English, which encourages consistent practice and improvement.

3. Mr. YD

After repeating the question to clarify, he explained that his goal for improving his English communication skills is to engage in daily learning. He mentioned that he plans to take private classes to enhance his proficiency in English, aiming to further develop his language skills for his role as a hotel receptionist.

4. Mr. AF

Mr. AF, after briefly repeating the question for clarification, stated that his main goal in improving his English communication skills is to be able to speak more formally. He acknowledged that grammar is his weakness, and he hopes to strengthen this aspect to enhance his overall communication in a professional setting.

Question 7: Describe your role as a hotel receptionist to me. What do you like and dislike about it?

1. **Mr. TM**

Mr. TM shared that he doesn't have any dislikes about being a receptionist, as it aligns with his passion. He expressed that what he enjoys most about the role is meeting new people and providing service to them, emphasizing that hospitality is truly his passion.

2. **Ms. MD**

Ms. MD answered her role as a hotel receptionist, highlighting both the challenges and rewards of the position. She explained that one of the aspects she dislikes is handling guest complaints, particularly when guests express dissatisfaction about the room, such as those who request a non-smoking room but are still dissatisfied even after the room has been treated. However, she noted that if a guest requests a specific room, the hotel staff always tries to accommodate them. She also mentioned that foreign guests rarely complain and are generally polite. On the positive side, Ms. MD enjoys her daily tasks and is particularly fond of her role because it aligns with her passion for hospitality.

3. **Mr. YD**

Mr. YD described his role as a hotel receptionist, mentioning that he enjoys meeting new people, which he identified as the main reason he enjoys his job. When asked about dislikes, he explained that he has none, as he likes all aspects of his work.

4. **Mr. AF**

Mr. AF described his role as a hotel receptionist as interesting and expressed that there are many aspects of the job that he enjoys. He stated that there is little he dislikes about the position, although he admitted that the long working hours can be challenging. At Golden Tulip, he typically works 12-hour shifts, which he considers manageable. However, he noted that in his previous workplace, the shifts were even longer—up to 16 hours per day—making time the only aspect he finds less favorable.

Question 8: What is your opinion on how hotel receptions should handle customer complaints or inquiries in English?

1. **Mr. TM**

Mr. TM stated that when handling customer complaints or inquiries in English, the first step is to listen carefully to the guest's complaint, maintaining a smile throughout the interaction. He emphasized the importance of offering a solution, and if he is unable to resolve the issue, he would refer it to the supervisor to ensure the problem is addressed.

2. **Ms. MD**

Ms. MD answered that when handling customer complaints or inquiries in English, the first step is to listen carefully to the guest and understand of their complaint. Once the issue is clear, she would explain the situation to the guest and provide a solution. If the problem is beyond her ability to resolve, she would direct the guest to a supervisor. However, if she is able to handle the situation, she would manage it herself. In cases where the guest

is very upset, she would escalate the issue to a supervisor to ensure it is addressed properly.

3. **Mr. YD**

Mr. YD felt a bit confused with the question. So, after having the question explained in Bahasa, he answered that when handling customer complaints or inquiries in English, it is important to listen carefully to the guest's complaint. He emphasized that understanding the issue first allows the receptionist to assist the guest by addressing their needs and providing the necessary support.

4. **Mr. AF**

Mr. AF answered that when handling customer complaints or inquiries in English, the first important step is to establish eye contact with the guest to show attentiveness. He emphasized the importance of actively listening to the guest's concerns, identifying the core of the complaint, and then taking prompt action to find and implement a solution. According to him, responsiveness and professionalism are key in ensuring guest satisfaction.

Question 9: Imagine, you are at the front desk when a guest accidentally breaks a vase in the hotel lobby. How would you communicate with the guest and resolve the situation?

1. **Mr. TM**

Mr. TM explained that in the event of a guest accidentally breaking a vase in the hotel lobby, he would remain calm and understanding. He then mentioned that it is important not to blame the guest for the accident. His approach would be to reassure the guest by saying, 'It's okay, no problem, sir,' maintaining a composed and empathetic attitude. This approach emphasizes customer care, handling the situation with professionalism and without placing undue stress on the guest.

2. **Ms. MD**

Ms. MD answered if there is a guest accidentally breaking a vase in the hotel lobby, the standard procedure would be to charge the guest for the damage. However, if the guest is foreign, she would first consult with a supervisor to decide whether to apply the charge. She mentioned that while she has not encountered an incident with a foreign guest breaking a vase, there was an instance where a foreign guest broke a glass, but no charge was applied. In such situations, she would reassure the guest by saying, 'No problem, sir'.

3. **Mr. YD**

Mr. YD answered that if a guest accidentally breaks a vase in the hotel lobby, he would calmly reassure the guest by saying, 'It's okay, sir no problem.' He took a moment to think before answering, possibly because he was considering how to express his response in English. He emphasized that the guest's actions should be seen as an accident. After that, he would consult with his supervisor or manager to determine whether a charge should be applied for the damage. If the manager decides to impose a charge, Mr. YD would then communicate this to the guest in a professional manner.

4. Mr. AF

Mr. AF explained that if a guest accidentally broke a vase in the hotel lobby, his first priority would be to ensure the guest's comfort and safety. He would calmly approach the guest, reassuring them with a statement such as, 'No worries, sir, are you okay?'

Furthermore, in order to obtain a more comprehensive and objective evaluation of the receptionists' English-speaking proficiency, a speaking test was administered as one of the primary instruments in this study. The test aimed to measure the participants' performance across five key aspects of speaking: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The results of this test serve as a crucial component in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each participant, thereby supporting a more in-depth analysis of their overall communicative competence in English.

1. Mr. TM

Hotel Facilities and Services

The hotel offers a range of facilities and services to ensure guests have a comfortable stay. These include a swimming pool, gym, spa, and restaurant. One of the standout features is the swimming pool, which is maintained daily to ensure the water remains clean and fresh. The pool is semi-outdoor, ensuring that the temperature remains comfortable for guests. It has two sections: one for children and another for adults. The restaurant operates from 7 AM to 12 PM, providing a wide selection of meals, while the reception is available 24 hours a day for guest assistance.

Tourist Attractions Nearby

For guests looking to explore the local area, there are several popular tourist spots nearby. One recommended site is the Tugu Khatulistiwa, a monument marking the equator. Another great location is Rumah Radank, a local historical house, and the nearby museum that showcases the region's cultural heritage. These attractions are easily accessible by car or services like Gojek, providing convenient options for guests to explore the city.

Handling a Complaint

In the event that a guest complains about the air conditioning not working in their room, my first step would be to apologize sincerely for the inconvenience. I would then recommend contacting the engineering team to check the air conditioning unit. If the issue persists and cannot be resolved immediately, I would offer the guest the option of moving to another room to ensure their comfort and satisfaction. Throughout the process, I would maintain a professional and calm demeanor to ensure that the guest feels valued and their concerns are handled efficiently.

2. Ms. MD

Hotel Facilities and Services

The hotel offers various facilities to enhance the guests' experience, including a gym, swimming pool, spa, and a restaurant. The gym, along with the pool and spa, is located on the C floor, while the breakfast area is situated on the first floor. Among these, the swimming pool is particularly popular with foreign guests due to its cleanliness and scenic view. The pool is open from 6 AM to 8 PM, providing ample time for guests to enjoy the facility.

Tourist Attractions Nearby

For guests interested in exploring local attractions, Ms. MD recommended a few spots, such as a nearby durian market and a shopping mall. Additionally, guests often inquire about the Tugu Khatulistiwa (Equator Monument), and the staff typically assists by guiding them with directions or showing them the location on a map on their phone, ensuring guests have an easy time navigating the area.

Handling a Complaint

In the case of a guest complaining about the air conditioning not working in their room, Ms. MD explained that the first step is to inform the guest that the issue will be addressed promptly. She would immediately contact the engineering team to inform them about the malfunction and ensure the air conditioning is repaired as quickly as possible. Once the issue is resolved, guests usually do not raise further complaints. However, if the problem cannot be fixed, Ms. MD would offer the guest the option of moving to a different room, and she noted that guests are typically agreeable to this solution.

3. Mr. YD

Hotel Facilities and Services

Mr. YD provided a brief overview of the hotel's facilities, including the gym, swimming pool, spa, and restaurant. He explained that the breakfast area is located in the hotel lobby, with breakfast served daily from 6 AM to 10 AM. For other services, the gym, spa, and swimming pool are located on the C floor, offering guests a range of options to relax and exercise during their stay.

Tourist Attractions Nearby

When asked about nearby tourist attractions, Mr. YD recommended the Equator Monument (Tugu Khatulistiwa) as a must-see landmark. He also suggested visiting local gift shops such as Along or PSP, where guests can buy souvenirs. For transportation, he mentioned that guests could easily use Google Maps to find their way, and suggested using ride-sharing services like Grab or Gojek, or even ordering a taxi through the hotel for added convenience.

Handling a Complaint

In the event of a complaint about a non-functional air conditioner, Mr. YD explained that his first step would be to listen attentively to the guest's concerns. He would then inform the guest that the engineering team would check the issue and request a brief wait time of approximately five minutes for the staff to arrive. If the problem cannot be resolved promptly, he would offer the guest an alternative by arranging for them to move to a different room.

Anastasya, Stevi, Warti, Fransiska Way, Subanti, Gregorius (2026). The Analysis of English-Speaking Skills of Receptionists at Golden Tulip Hotel Pontianak. *ELSA Journal, Volume 6* (2), 23-49.

4. Mr. AF

Hotel Facilities and Services

Breakfast is served at the lobby from 6 AM to 10 AM. The spa, gym, and pool are located on the C floor. The gym and pool are open from 6 AM to 10 PM, while the spa operates from 10 AM to 9 PM.

Tourist Attractions Nearby

Recommended nearby attractions include Tugu Khatulistiwa, Radank, and the Waterfront, where guests can enjoy views of the Kapuas River.

Handling a Complaint

If a guest complains about the air conditioning, I would first make eye contact and listen to the complaint. Then, I would contact the engineering team to fix the issue or offer the guest a room change if needed. This study assessed the English-speaking proficiency of four receptionists at Golden Tulip Hotel Pontianak using Brown's (2003) rubric across five criteria: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. Scores ranged from Level 1 (Very Basic) to Level 3 (Intermediate Professional). TM and MD scored 6/25 (Level 1), showing major weaknesses in all areas. YD scored 10/25 (Level 2) with improved vocabulary and comprehension but persistent pronunciation and fluency issues. AF scored highest at 15/25 (Level 3), demonstrating clear pronunciation, good grammar, wider vocabulary, strong comprehension, and coherent fluency. The findings highlight a significant proficiency gap, indicating the need for targeted English training for most receptionists, while higher scorers can guide advanced program development.

CONCLUSION

The study at Golden Tulip Hotel Pontianak revealed varying levels of English-speaking proficiency among receptionists, highlighting a significant gap in skills. TM and MD, vocational high school graduates, scored lowest at Level 1 (Very Basic), showing major weaknesses across all criteria. YD, a senior high school graduate, was at Level 2 (Basic Work-Related Proficiency), while AF, a university graduate, reached Level 3 (Intermediate Professional Proficiency), indicating a positive correlation between education and language ability. The findings suggest the need for a tiered English training program tailored to employees' proficiency and educational background. Basic-level training should focus on pronunciation, grammar, and essential hospitality vocabulary with practical scenarios. Intermediate-level training should refine accuracy, expand vocabulary, and improve fluency, possibly incorporating peer mentoring. The current informal Friday speaking policy has limited impact and should be replaced or supported by structured, goal-oriented training for effective, sustained language development.

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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DEEP LEARNING CURRICULUM IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: A CASE STUDY AT SMK NEGERI 1 BENGKAYANG

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the implementation of the Deep Learning Curriculum within English Language Teaching (ELT) at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang. The research explores how deep learning principles, such as inquiry-based learning, collaboration, creativity, and reflection enhance students' communicative competence and critical thinking. A qualitative case study design was used, involving classroom observations, interviews with English teachers and students, and analysis of lesson plans. The findings reveal that deep learning practices encourage active participation and authentic language use through project-based and problem-based tasks. Despite positive impacts on student engagement and confidence, challenges were found in aligning assessments, teacher readiness, and limited exposure to authentic English input. The study concludes that integrating deep learning into ELT promotes meaningful language learning and supports the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum in vocational education.

Keywords: Deep Learning Curriculum, ELT, vocational education, communicative competence, SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang

INTRODUCTION

Language learning in vocational education requires more than grammatical accuracy, it demands communicative competence, creativity, and adaptability to workplace contexts. The Deep Learning Curriculum promotes these values by emphasizing inquiry, collaboration, and reflection, aligning well with communicative language teaching (CLT) principles in ELT (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In the Indonesian Merdeka Curriculum, deep learning supports the goal of developing student agency and authentic learning. At SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang, English teachers have begun integrating deep learning strategies to enhance students' speaking and problem-solving skills through meaningful communicative activities. This study aims to explore how deep learning is implemented in ELT classes, what challenges are encountered, and how it influences students' engagement and language development.

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Deep learning, as conceptualized by Fullan and Langworthy (2014), shifts traditional rote memorization toward higher-order thinking skills, such as critical analysis and real-world application, which are essential for vocational students preparing for industries like tourism, manufacturing, and business services in West Kalimantan. In ELT contexts, this approach fosters "six Cs" character, citizenship, collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking enabling learners to navigate authentic workplace scenarios, such as role-playing client negotiations or collaborative project presentations. At SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang, a vocational high school serving diverse local communities including Dayak Salako students, such strategies address the gap between classroom English and practical communication needs, promoting cultural relevance alongside linguistic proficiency.

Despite its promise, implementing deep learning in resource-constrained vocational settings like Indonesian SMKs presents unique hurdles, including teacher training deficits, large class sizes, and misalignment with high-stakes national exams that prioritize grammar over fluency (Kirkpatrick, 2017). Preliminary observations at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang reveal enthusiastic student responses to activity-based lessons, yet persistent challenges like limited technology access and time constraints hinder sustained engagement. This study employs a qualitative case study design, drawing on classroom observations, teacher interviews, and student focus groups to provide empirical insights tailored to similar Merdeka Curriculum implementations. By examining these dynamics, the research contributes to the growing body of work on innovative pedagogies in Indonesian vocational ELT, offering practical recommendations for teacher professional development and curriculum adaptation. Ultimately, it underscores how deep learning can empower vocational learners to thrive in globalized workplaces, bridging local cultural contexts with international communication standards.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Deep learning in language education involves understanding meaning and applying knowledge to new situations (Marton & Säljö, 1976). In language education, this approach complements communicative methodologies that prioritize real-world use of language, critical thinking, and collaboration (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Both CLT and deep learning emphasize learner autonomy, active participation, and meaningful communication. According to Fullan, Quinn, and McEachen (2018), deep learning develops six global competencies: character, citizenship, collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking, all essential in English communication and vocational contexts. The Merdeka Curriculum encourages teachers to design project-based learning (PBL) experiences that connect classroom learning to real-life challenges.

Deep learning has evolved from a cognitive construct into a multidimensional educational paradigm encompassing cognitive, socio-emotional, and contextual dimensions. Unlike surface learning, which emphasizes memorization, deep learning focuses on knowledge construction, transferability, and critical engagement. Recent scholarship highlights three core dimensions.

Cognitive depth, learners engage in higher-order thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation), relational understanding, knowledge is interconnected across disciplines and contexts, Transferability, learning can be applied to real-world situations, particularly relevant in vocational settings. In this sense, deep learning aligns with the OECD Learning Compass (2030), emphasizing student agency and transformative competencies.

In ELT, deep learning shifts the focus from linguistic accuracy to communicative competence and meaning-making. This transformation is supported by three major pedagogical approaches: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), CLT emphasizes authentic interaction and real-life communication. It supports deep learning by encouraging negotiation of meaning, promoting learner autonomy, and facilitating contextual language use. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), TBLT engages learners in goal-oriented tasks that mirror real-world activities. It enhances, Problem-solving skills, language use in context and collaborative learning. Project-Based Learning (PBL), PBL integrates language learning with complex, interdisciplinary projects, fostering Critical thinking, Creativity and Reflective learning.

Vocational education requires authentic, context-driven learning experiences. Deep learning is particularly relevant because it bridges school learning with workplace demands, develops both hard skills and soft skills, and encourages adaptability in dynamic labor markets. However, challenges arise in implementation curriculum rigidity, teacher-centered traditions, and limited industry collaboration. The Role of Teacher Agency and Pedagogical Capacity Teacher readiness is a critical factor in implementing deep learning. Teachers must shift from knowledge transmitters to learning facilitators and content delivery to learning design Key competencies include designing authentic tasks facilitating reflective learning and using formative assessment. This research indicates that without adequate professional development, deep learning initiatives often fail to achieve intended outcomes.

Traditional assessment methods (e.g., multiple-choice tests) are insufficient for deep learning. Instead, authentic assessment is required performance-based tasks, portfolio assessment, and reflective journals. These approaches evaluate language use in context, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. Despite growing interest in deep learning, there is still limited empirical research in vocational ELT contexts and lack of integrated frameworks combining pedagogy, cognition, and context. This study contributes by proposing a localized deep learning ELT model tailored to Indonesian SMK settings.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative case study approach (Yin, 2018), exploring the implementation of deep learning in English classes at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang. Participants consisted of two English teachers and twenty students from Grade XI Accounting and Office Administration programs. Data were collected through classroom observations, teacher and student interviews, and document analysis of lesson plans and teaching materials. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify emerging patterns related to instructional design, engagement, and challenges. The case study design enables the researcher to explore the phenomenon comprehensively and holistically. The study is conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. The site is selected based on the following considerations. The school has begun integrating technology and AI-based learning, its relevance to vocational education, accessibility of data for the researcher. The research is conducted over a period of six months, covering preparation, data collection, analysis, and reporting. The

participants of this study include, English teachers, Students of Grade X and XI, Vice Principal of Curriculum Affairs and School Principal. Participants are selected using purposive sampling, based on their relevance to the research objectives.

Data are collected through the following methods. Observation is conducted to examine the implementation of the deep learning curriculum, teacher-student interactions and the use of technology and AI in teaching and learning. The observation is non-participant in nature. In-depth interviews are conducted with English teachers (to explore teaching strategies), students (to understand learning experiences) and school management. Semi-structured interview guidelines are used to ensure flexibility and depth. Documents analyzed include Lesson plans (RPP) or teaching modules, School curriculum documents, Students' learning outcomes and AI-based learning media. The primary instrument in this study is the researcher as a human instrument. Supporting instruments include Observation checklist, Interview guidelines, and Documentation checklist. These instruments are developed based on indicators of deep learning implementation, such as Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), Student-centered learning and Integration of technology and AI. Data analysis in this study follows the interactive model, which emphasizes a continuous and cyclical process of examining qualitative data. This approach allows the researcher to move back and forth between different stages of analysis to develop a deeper and more accurate understanding of the findings. The first stage is data reduction, which involves the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming raw data obtained from fieldwork. At this stage, the researcher carefully reviews interview transcripts, observation notes, and relevant documents to identify key themes and discard irrelevant information. Data reduction is not merely a process of elimination, but also an effort to organize data in a meaningful way so that it becomes manageable and aligned with the research objectives.

The second stage is data display, where the reduced data are systematically presented in an organized form. This can include descriptive narratives, matrices, tables, or visual charts that help clarify patterns and relationships within the data. By displaying the data in such formats, the researcher can interpret complex information more effectively and identify emerging trends or categories that may not be immediately visible in raw data form.

The final stage is conclusion drawing and verification. In this phase, the researcher interprets the meaning of the data by identifying patterns, relationships, and explanations that address the research questions. Conclusions are not drawn hastily; instead, they are continuously verified through comparison with existing data, re-examination of evidence, and triangulation across multiple sources. This iterative verification process ensures that the findings are credible, valid, and grounded in the data.

Overall, the interactive model provides a flexible yet systematic framework for qualitative data analysis, enabling researchers to generate well-supported and insightful conclusions through an ongoing process of reflection and validation. The analysis is conducted in a continuous and cyclical process throughout the study. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the following strategies are applied Source triangulation (teachers, students, and school leaders), method triangulation (observation, interviews, documentation), member checking (validation from participants) and audit trail (documentation of research process). The research follows the steps; preliminary study, proposal development, data collection, data analysis, and dissertation writing. This study adheres to ethical principles, including Obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, and maintaining researcher objectivity.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings of this study reveal that the implementation of deep learning in English Language Teaching (ELT) operates across three interconnected levels: instructional design, classroom interaction, and reflective learning. These levels illustrate how deep learning is translated from policy into actual classroom practice, highlighting both progress and existing gaps. At the instructional design level, teachers have begun to incorporate elements of deep learning into their lesson planning. This is evident in the use of real-life scenarios, such as job interviews and customer service dialogues, which are relevant to students' vocational contexts. In addition, teachers utilize contextualized materials that align with students' specific majors, making learning more meaningful and applicable. However, despite these efforts, lesson plans often only partially reflect the principles of deep learning. There remains a noticeable gap between what is planned and what is fully implemented in the classroom, suggesting that teachers may still be in the early stages of adapting to this approach.

At the classroom interaction level, the implementation of deep learning becomes more visible. Classroom observations indicate increased student participation, particularly during group-based activities. Students actively engage in negotiating meaning in English, demonstrating not only linguistic practice but also deeper cognitive processes. They can interpret meaning, express opinions, and collaboratively solve communication problems. This level of engagement reflects a key characteristic of deep learning, where students move beyond surface-level understanding toward critical thinking and meaningful language use.

At the reflective learning level, however, the findings show that implementation is still limited. While some teachers have introduced feedback sessions as a form of reflection, the use of structured reflective tools, such as learning journals or self-assessment frameworks, remains minimal. As a result, students have fewer opportunities to develop metacognitive skills, such as self-awareness and the ability to evaluate their own learning processes. This indicates that reflective practices, which are essential for sustaining deep learning, have not yet been fully integrated into classroom routines. In summary, while there are clear indications that deep learning is being implemented in vocational ELT, particularly in classroom interactions, there are still significant challenges in ensuring consistency across instructional design and reflective learning practices.

Teachers did not strictly follow one approach but used a hybrid model PBL for projects, TBLT for task execution and CLT for communication practice. This hybridization is significant because it reflects contextual adaptation and supports flexible learning environments. However, lack of theoretical grounding sometimes leads to inconsistent implementation and superficial task design. Student Engagement: Behavioral, Cognitive, and Emotional Dimensions. Behavioral Engagement Increased participation in group activities and Higher attendance and task completion. Cognitive Engagement represents students demonstrated critical thinking and ability to analyze and respond in English improved. Emotional Engagement increased confidence in speaking and reduced anxiety in communication. These findings confirm that deep learning promotes holistic engagement. The study found that students developed communicative competence, improved fluency, and better interaction skills. Higher-order Thinking Skills (HOTS) also increase problem-solving in communication contexts and analytical thinking. This aligns with 21st-century skill frameworks shows transferable skills, collaboration, and presentation skills. Teachers encounter significant structural and pedagogical challenges in implementing deep learning approaches in the

classroom. One of the primary difficulties lies in designing meaningful deep learning activities that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and student autonomy. Many teachers are still accustomed to traditional, teacher-centered methods, making the transition to student-centered learning environments complex and demanding. This situation highlights the urgent need for systematic and continuous professional development programs that equip teachers with the necessary pedagogical and technological competencies. In addition, infrastructure constraints remain a critical barrier. Limited access to digital tools, inadequate technological facilities, and insufficient learning resources hinder the effective integration of technology into deep learning practices. As a result, the potential of deep learning to enhance students' engagement and learning outcomes cannot be fully realized.

Another major challenge is the misalignment between the national curriculum and the principles of deep learning. The national curriculum tends to emphasize content coverage, requiring teachers to complete a wide range of topics within a limited timeframe. In contrast, deep learning prioritizes depth over breadth, encouraging students to explore concepts more comprehensively and meaningfully. This fundamental difference creates tension between policy expectations and classroom practices. Teachers often feel pressured to prioritize syllabus completion over facilitating deeper understanding, which ultimately limits the effectiveness of deep learning implementation.

Student diversity also presents a significant challenge in the application of deep learning. Learners come with varying levels of English proficiency, which affects their ability to participate actively in complex learning tasks. Additionally, differences in learning motivation further complicate classroom dynamics, as some students are highly engaged while others show limited interest. These variations require teachers to adopt differentiated instruction strategies that can accommodate diverse learning needs. Without proper support and training, however, implementing such strategies can be both time-consuming and difficult, further adding to the challenges faced by educators.

Discussion

Toward a Contextualized Deep Learning Model

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of deep learning in vocational English Language Teaching (ELT) cannot be approached in a generic or one-size-fits-all manner. Instead, it requires a contextualized model that considers the unique characteristics of vocational education, including students' career orientations, practical skill demands, and industry relevance. First, deep learning must be contextualized. This means that learning activities, materials, and assessments should be closely aligned with students' vocational fields and their future professional needs. In vocational settings, students are more motivated when learning is directly connected to real-world applications. Therefore, integrating authentic tasks, industry-based scenarios, and job-related communication practices can significantly enhance engagement and relevance. Contextualization ensures that deep learning is not only theoretical but also practical and meaningful for students' career development. Second, deep learning needs to be scaffolded. The development of students' cognitive and linguistic abilities should occur gradually and systematically. Many vocational students may not yet possess the higher-order thinking skills or language proficiency required for deep learning tasks. As a result, teachers must provide structured support, such as guided practice, modeling, and step-by-step instruction, before gradually

transferring responsibility to learners. This scaffolding process helps students build confidence and competence, enabling them to engage more effectively in complex learning activities.

Finally, deep learning must be supported systemically. Successful implementation cannot rely solely on individual teacher efforts; it requires comprehensive support at the institutional and policy levels. This includes continuous teacher training programs to enhance pedagogical and technological skills, curriculum reform to ensure alignment with deep learning principles, and infrastructure improvement to provide adequate access to digital tools and learning resources. Without such systemic support, efforts to implement deep learning are likely to remain fragmented and unsustainable. In conclusion, a contextualized, scaffolded, and systemically supported approach is essential for the effective integration of deep learning in vocational ELT. Such a model not only addresses existing challenges but also provides a sustainable pathway for improving the quality and relevance of vocational education.

Teachers applied deep learning through project-based tasks, such as designing English promotional videos, conducting role plays simulating workplace scenarios, and collaborative problem-solving discussions. These activities promoted authentic language use and encouraged critical thinking and creativity. Students reported higher motivation and confidence when using English for real purposes. They practiced communication strategies, negotiation skills, and collaborative learning, key aspects of both CLT and deep learning. Challenges included insufficient training in deep learning pedagogy, time constraints, and difficulty in developing authentic assessment rubrics for communication-based tasks. The success of deep learning in ELT relies on school-level support, flexible curriculum planning, and professional development.

CONCLUSION

The integration of the Deep Learning Curriculum into English Language Teaching (ELT) at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang demonstrates a significant contribution to the development of students' communicative competence, collaborative skills, and higher-order thinking abilities. The findings indicate that the adoption of deep learning strategies, particularly project-based learning and inquiry-based learning, facilitates more meaningful, contextualized, and student-centered language use. These approaches enable learners to actively construct knowledge, engage in authentic problem-solving, and apply English in real-life vocational contexts, thereby enhancing both linguistic proficiency and transferable skills. Furthermore, the study underscores that the effectiveness of deep learning implementation is contingent upon systematic and sustained institutional support. This includes continuous professional development for teachers to strengthen pedagogical competence, the design and application of authentic and performance-based assessments, and the alignment of instructional practices with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum. Without these supporting structures, the potential impact of deep learning risks being limited to partial or inconsistent classroom practices. In conclusion, the successful integration of the Deep Learning Curriculum in vocational ELT requires a holistic and strategic approach that bridges policy and practice. It necessitates not only pedagogical innovation at the classroom level but also organizational commitment at the school level to ensure long-term sustainability and scalability.

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