

## Enhancing Students' Communicative Competence through Classroom Tasks in Hospitality Training

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### ABSTRACT

*This study explores how classroom tasks enhance students' communicative competence in English in a receptionist training program using Project-Based Learning (PJBL). By incorporating role-playing, simulations, and task-based interactions reflecting real-life scenarios such as guest greetings, check-ins, complaint handling, and local knowledge sharing, the program aims to develop four components of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic. A qualitative case study approach was employed, with data collected through classroom observations, interviews, and document analysis and then analyzed thematically. The findings show that tailored classroom tasks improve students' ability to use appropriate grammar and vocabulary, adjust communication to social contexts, organize coherent responses, and employ strategies to overcome communication barriers. This study highlights the critical role of classroom tasks in bridging the gap between theoretical learning and professional demands, offering practical insights for educators to design effective ESP curricula tailored to the hospitality sector.*

**Keywords:** *Communicative Competence, Classroom Tasks, Project-Based Learning, Hospitality Training*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Project-Based Learning (PJBL) has gained significant recognition as an innovative pedagogical approach, particularly for language education. PJBL promotes active learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving by placing students at the center of the learning process.. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), PJBL offers opportunities for students to simultaneously develop linguistic competence and practical communication skills that are essential in professional settings. Effective communication is critical in the hospitality industry, as receptionists frequently interact with guests from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

This research focuses on the implementation of PJBL at Hospitality Training in a program designed to teach English to prospective hotel receptionists. The program emphasizes practical communication tasks such as greeting guests, handling check-ins, addressing complaints, and providing information. These tasks align with real-life communication demands of the hospitality sector. By integrating PJBL into the curriculum, the training center aims to equip students with the necessary English language proficiency and communicative competence to thrive in their future roles.

Communicative competence, as defined by Canale and Swain (1980), comprises four components: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. These elements are vital for receptionists who need to use appropriate grammatical structures, adapt language based on cultural and social contexts, maintain coherent communication, and effectively manage communication breakdowns. This study investigated how PJBL classroom tasks enhance these competencies and prepare students for real-world communication in the hospitality industry.

Previous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of PJBL in vocational education, particularly in terms of improving communication skills and aligning classroom activities with professional needs. For instance, Wahyuni (2019), Saputri, et al. (2022) and Turyati (2019) demonstrated that PJBL fosters fluency, confidence, and total communicative competence among students in hospitality training. These findings underscore the practical benefits of PJBL in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and

professional application, making it a suitable approach for teaching English in vocational contexts.

Previous studies have consistently emphasized the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PJBL) in enhancing language proficiency and communicative competence. Wahyuni (2019) demonstrated that PJBL significantly improved students' critical thinking and communication skills in vocational high schools. Saputri (2022) highlighted that PJBL enhances fluency and confidence, key components of communicative competence, particularly in the hospitality context. Nurhayati (2013) and Fauziyah et al. (2022) showed that PJBL bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and professional demands, fostering communication skills tailored to workplace needs. Kurniawan et. Al (2023) and Ahmad and Jannah (2021) have identified PJBL as particularly effective in vocational and technical education, enhancing job readiness and domain-specific communication skills. Turyati et. Al (2019) and Sari et al., Al (2023) found that PJBL motivates students and strengthens their communicative competence, whereas Dewi et al. (2021) observed its impact on collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. Collectively, these studies validate PJBL's role in creating meaningful, real-world learning experiences that are particularly relevant for hospitality industry training.

Despite these advantages, research on PJBL specifically tailored to receptionist training remains limited. Existing studies often focus on general linguistic skills without addressing the communicative competencies that are crucial for receptionist tasks. This study addresses this gap by exploring how PJBL can be used to develop communicative competence through classroom tasks that reflect real-life demands of the hospitality industry.

This study contributes both theoretically and practically to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and vocational education. It provides insights into how PJBL can enhance communicative competence and assesses the relevance of instructional materials to receptionists' specific needs. These findings are expected to benefit educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers in designing effective training programs that prepare students for professional communication challenges in the hospitality sector. The purpose of this research is to provide empirical evidence and practical insights into how classroom tasks can bridge the gap between theoretical learning and real-world communication demands of hospitality professionals.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study approach. It investigates how classroom tasks help to develop students' communicative competence. The research was conducted in a receptionist English class at a hospitality school. The participants were four female students and one instructor. The participants were selected using purposive sampling. They provide insights into how classroom tasks influence the development of communicative competence in English for receptionist purposes.

Data were collected through observations, interviews, and document analysis. Observations have focused on classroom interactions. They examined how students engage in tasks that develop sociolinguistic, strategic, discourse, and grammatical competence. Interviews with instructors and students further explored their perceptions of these competencies.

The data analysis followed Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's interactive model. This model includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data triangulation ensures validity by cross-checking information from multiple sources using different techniques, such as observations and interviews.

This study focuses on how classroom tasks contribute to the development of communicative competence. It examines how these tasks enable students to use English appropriately in real-world situations such as interacting with guests. By analyzing these tasks, this research seeks to determine how students' communicative abilities can be enhanced to meet the demands of the receptionist role.

The concept of communicative competence, as introduced by Canale and Swain (1980), comprises four components: grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence. Grammatical competence refers to the ability to produce and understand the correct sentence structures. Sociolinguistic competence involves the appropriate use of language in different social contexts, considering factors such as politeness and formality. Strategic competence refers to the use of communication strategies, such as paraphrasing or asking for clarification, to overcome difficulties in conversation. Finally, discourse competence concerns the ability to organize and produce coherent and cohesive speech or writing.

In English for Specific Purposes (ESP) contexts, these components are essential for learners, as they equip them with the tools necessary to interact effectively in professional environments. In particular, for student training to become receptionists in the hospitality industry, developing these competencies enables them to engage in meaningful communication with guests, colleagues, and superiors, thus contributing to successful workplace interactions.

Project-Based Learning (PJBL) is a pedagogical approach that emphasizes learning through real-world practical projects. This allows students to engage in authentic tasks that reflect the challenges they face in their professional lives. PJBL encourages active learning, critical thinking, and collaboration, which are essential for enhancing communicative competence. In the context of English training for receptionists, PJBL enables students to practice their language skills in relevant scenarios, such as handling customer inquiries, making reservations, or dealing with complaints.

The key advantage of PJBL is its ability to integrate the four components of communicative competence into authentic task-based activities. By engaging in projects that simulate real-world situations, students not only practice language in context, but also learn how to adjust their communication to different social and professional situations. For instance, when engaging in role-playing tasks, students may need to modify their language depending on the guest's status (sociolinguistic competence), use clarification strategies if communication breaks down (strategic competence), or structure their responses appropriately (discourse competence).

Although existing studies have explored the effectiveness of PJBL in ESP and language learning, there remains a gap in research that specifically addresses its application in English training for receptionists within the hospitality sector. Previous studies, such as those by Wiranegara et al. (2020), Gama (2023), and Wulandari (2022), investigated the use of PJBL in general ESP contexts and its impact on communication skills, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities. However, these studies have largely focused on broader fields, such as business English or general customer service training, rather than on the specific needs of receptionists in the hospitality industry.

The novelty of this research lies in its targeted exploration of PJBL for English training of receptionists, addressing the unique communicative challenges and needs of students in this specific vocational area. By focusing on a niche within ESP, this study provides deeper insights into how PJBL can be adapted to meet the communication demands of the hospitality industry. Additionally, this research will investigate the relevance of instructional materials used in these programs and their alignment with the real-world needs of students, offering a more focused examination of how language training can be tailored to the professional context of hotel reception.

This research contributes to the advancement of ESP in the hospitality sector by providing evidence-based recommendations for integrating PJBL into English training programs. It also highlights the specific ways in which PJBL can enhance the four components of communicative competence, ultimately improving students' preparedness for professional communication in the hospitality industry.

### III. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents research results and discussions related to the development of students' communicative competence in English for a receptionist training program using the PJBL (Project-Based Learning) approach.

#### Research Results

##### 1. Classroom Tasks to Enhance Students' Communicative Competences

The research revealed that classroom activities were intentionally designed to develop the four aspects of communicative competence—Grammatical, Sociolinguistic, Discourse, and Strategic Competence—through role-playing, simulations, and conversation practices tailored to hospitality contexts.

##### Classroom Tasks to Develop Grammatical Competence

To develop grammatical competence, classroom tasks were intricately designed to guide students in mastering both vocabulary and grammatical structures appropriate for the hospitality context. The focus was on formal and polite expressions that are essential for professional interactions, particularly for receptionists in the hospitality industry. These tasks involved role-play scenarios where students practiced structured dialogues using polite language forms, such as *"Would you mind if I..."* (I/GC/S/01). and *"It would be my pleasure..."* (I/GC/S/02). For example, students practiced dialogues like, "May I assist you with the reservation?" and "Could you please confirm your booking details?" These role-playing exercises allowed students to apply formal sentence structures in various guest interaction contexts, making them familiar with the language required in hospitality.

The "Basic Operational English" module served as an essential instructional tool in reinforcing these grammatical rules. The module's content was carefully aligned with the needs of the students, specifically focusing on the use of formal sentence structures and polite-questioning forms. Through direct instruction and observational data, students consistently applied these forms during the role-play exercises. In one particular simulation, a student replied to a guest inquiry, *"Certainly, let me confirm your booking for a*

*deluxe room overlooking the garden*" (I/GC/S/03). This demonstrates the practical application of polite language and formal structure, which are crucial for maintaining professionalism in a hospitality setting.

To further enhance their grammatical competence, the students participated in targeted grammar drills. These drills emphasized the use of conditional sentences, polite requests, and modal auxiliaries in contexts that mimicked real-world scenarios. For instance, one task asked students to transform informal sentences into more formal alternatives. A sentence like *"Can I book a room for you?"* was changed into, *"May I assist you in booking a room?"* This task focused not only on grammatical accuracy but also on reinforcing the significance of linguistic precision, which is essential for professional communication in the hospitality industry.

In addition to these grammar drills, structured pair activities provide further opportunities for students to practice their grammatical skills in conversational contexts. One student played the role of receptionist, while the other acted as guest. They exchanged questions and responses using the grammatical structures that they had learned. For example, during one of these exercises, a student confidently said, *"I'd be delighted to assist you with information about local attractions"* (I/GC/S/04). This type of structured activity helped students apply grammatical rules in realistic conversational settings, reinforcing both accuracy and professional tone in their language.

Role-playing exercises are an essential part of classroom tasks as they incorporate grammar into situational contexts. Students engaged in simulations in which they were tasked with handling special requests or responding to complaints from guests. For instance, in one role-play, a student confidently stated, *"I understand your concern, sir. Allow me to check how we can address this issue immediately"* (I/CC/S/05). This exercise allowed students to practice their grammatical knowledge in a dynamic environment, while also improving their confidence in real-life situations.

Another significant aspect of the tasks was their ability to extend their grammatical competence into written communication. Students were tasked with drafting email responses, creating written guides for guests, and other written assignments that required accurate sentence construction and polite phrasing. For instance, students wrote polite emails such as: *"Dear Guest, I would like to confirm your upcoming stay with us and ensure all your preferences have been noted."* These written tasks reinforced the importance of grammatical accuracy in professional and written communication, further enhancing students' grammatical competence.

Simulated team exercises add a further dimension to grammatical training. In these exercises, students worked collaboratively in more complex scenarios such as managing group reservations or coordinating guest services. These tasks required them to use accurate grammar while maintaining clear communication within group settings. For instance, during a group simulation, one student summarized a group decision by saying, *"We recommend scheduling your spa appointment for the afternoon to avoid delays"* (I/GC/S/06). This demonstrates the practical use of grammar in group settings where clarity and precision are paramount.

By integrating these various tasks—role-playing, grammar drills, written assignments, and collaborative activities—the classroom environment provides a rich platform for students to practice and refine their grammatical competence in various contexts. These tasks helped students develop fluency and accuracy in their language use, preparing them for the linguistic demands they faced in their professional careers as receptionists in the hospitality sector.

In conclusion, classroom tasks designed to enhance grammatical competence were deeply contextualized to meet the needs of hospitality students. Through role-playing, grammar drills, and collaborative exercises, the students were given numerous opportunities to practice and refine their language skills. The tasks not only emphasized formal and polite language structures, but also reinforced the importance of linguistic precision in guest interactions, preparing students to communicate effectively and professionally in the hospitality industry. The carefully crafted tasks ensured that the students could navigate the linguistic demands of their professional environment with confidence and professionalism.

### **Classroom Tasks to Develop Sociolinguistic Competence**

Developing sociolinguistic competence requires students to understand and adapt their language choices to a variety of social situations. To achieve this, classroom tasks incorporated diverse social contexts in which students practiced using the appropriate language for different guest profiles. One of the most impactful tasks used to foster this competence was role-playing, in which students simulated interactions with guests ranging from VIPs to regular and international guests (I/SC/S/01). For instance, when addressing a VIP guest, students practiced formal expressions such as, *"Good evening, sir/madam. How may I assist you today?"* These role-play tasks helped students adjust their communication style depending on the guest's social status, enabling them to distinguish between professional formal language and a more casual tone



depending on the situation.

Role-play scenarios specifically aimed at handling various types of interactions with guests provide a rich environment for developing sociolinguistic competence. For example, in a role-play scenario where students interacted with regular guests, they used less formal, yet still respectful, expressions such as, "Hi there, how can I help you today?" This contrast demonstrated students' ability to adjust the level of formality in their language use based on context, enhancing their ability to communicate appropriately with a diverse range of guests. This practice was essential, as it ensured that students could maintain professionalism while being culturally sensitive and socially aware.

The importance of cultural sensitivity and adapting communication was further emphasized through scenario-based exercises. These exercises presented students with real-world hospitality situations such as handling complaints or assisting guests with travel arrangements. For example, when dealing with a tourist guest, one student said, *"I recommend visiting the city park for a relaxing experience. Would you like me to arrange transportation for you?"* (I/SC/S/02). Such tasks enabled students to not only apply language skills, but also develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities by aligning their communication with the guests' needs and expectations. This practice reinforced their sociolinguistic competence by allowing them to balance politeness with efficiency while remaining culturally aware.

One significant piece of instructional material that contributed to these classroom tasks was "Updating Local Knowledge." This material introduced students to culturally relevant topics, such as local cuisine, historical landmarks, and the best tourist spots, which they had to incorporate into their interactions with guests. For example, when discussing restaurant options, students practiced offering culturally sensitive suggestions based on dietary restrictions or guests' preferences. One student, when asked about restaurant options, said, *"If you prefer halal options, I can recommend a wonderful restaurant nearby known for its traditional cuisine."* This approach expanded students' knowledge of local traditions, while allowing them to practice using language in ways that reflected respect for the guest's culture.

In addition to these role-play tasks, students were tasked with researching local cultural events and then presenting them to the class, fostering a deeper understanding of how language interacts with culture through professional communication. For example, one student confidently explained the significance of a local festival: *"This annual festival showcases traditional dances and cuisines; would you like me to check the schedule for you?"* (I/SC/S/04). These research and presentation tasks helped students to understand how to integrate cultural knowledge into their communication, preparing them for real-life interactions with guests from diverse backgrounds.

Reflective feedback sessions play an essential role in enhancing sociolinguistic competence. After each role-play, the students engaged in group discussions in which they analyzed their linguistic choices and reflected on how they adapted their language to suit the guest's profile. Instructors guided these discussions by pointing out areas for improvement, such as ensuring that the tone remained polite while adjusting to the social context. For instance, after one role-play scenario, an instructor pointed out that a student's language could be more relaxed when addressing a family member while maintaining politeness, helping them understand the delicate balance between formal and informal speech.

Another critical classroom task involved practicing specific requests, with a focus on cultural nuances. For example, students practiced guiding international guests through a culturally significant location while explaining the site's history. This task helped students navigate the intricacies of intercultural communication, ensuring that they could convey information appropriately while honoring cultural sensitivity. These exercises deepened the students' understanding of how language must adapt to accommodate both the social context and the guest's cultural background.

In these tasks, students not only improved their sociolinguistic competence, but also developed the ability to switch between different registers of language depending on the social situation. They learned to strike the right balance between formality and informality, while maintaining professionalism. These exercises underscored the importance of respecting cultural norms and understanding how they shape communication. As students participated in these scenarios, they became increasingly aware of how linguistic choices could influence guest perceptions and satisfaction. By integrating these lessons into their interactions, students gained confidence in effectively engaging with guests from diverse backgrounds in a professional setting.

Another example of the importance of sociolinguistic competence came when students had to handle situations that required cultural sensitivity. For instance, when dealing with guests from different countries, students learned to adapt their communication styles to ensure that they were culturally appropriate. This task allowed students to practice addressing cultural differences, an essential skill in a multicultural hospitality

environment.

Overall, these classroom tasks, —ranging from role-playing to real-world scenarios and localized cultural knowledge discussions, —were instrumental in developing students' sociolinguistic competences. These tasks encouraged students to adapt their language to a wide range of guest types and situations, ensuring that they could communicate appropriately and professionally across diverse contexts. The immersive nature of these tasks helped students apply their sociolinguistic skills in a manner that reflected real-world interactions in the hospitality industry, providing them with the tools needed to effectively and empathetically engage with guests from different cultural backgrounds. Through these tasks, students not only developed linguistic skills but also gained the cultural awareness needed to thrive in the globalized hospitality industry.

In conclusion, classroom tasks aimed at developing sociolinguistic competence played a crucial role in preparing students for professional communication in the hospitality industry. The integration of diverse social scenarios, cultural awareness activities, and targeted feedback sessions ensured that students developed the necessary skills to interact with their guests in a culturally sensitive and professional manner. By immersing students in these tasks, instructors successfully prepared them to meet the communication demands of the multicultural workforce. Through these classroom tasks, students acquire the linguistic flexibility and cultural sensitivity required for success in the dynamic and diverse world of hospitality.

### **Classroom Tasks to Develop Discourse Competence**

To foster discourse competence, classroom tasks were designed with precision to enable students to develop a strong ability to organize and coherently structure communication. One key classroom task was the "Starting and Developing Conversations" session, in which students practiced engaging in sequential, professional interactions. These included essential elements of hospitality, such as greeting guests, providing clear directions, and offering follow-up assistance to ensure smooth exchanges. The typical dialogue practiced during this session was structured as follows: *"Good evening, sir. Your room is on the second floor. Please take the elevator to the left. Do you need further assistance?"* (I/DC/S/01). This task emphasized clarity, enabling students to present information logically and in an easy-to-follow manner, which is crucial for effective communication in hospitality settings.

Moreover, simulations of hotel procedures, such as check-in and check-out processes, were central to developing discourse competence. These tasks required students to deliver step-by-step information to guests, ensure clarity, and avoid confusion or omission of details. For example, during a check-out simulation, a student rehearsed the sentence, *"Your check-out time is 12:00 PM. Would you like assistance with your luggage?"* These activities were structured to help students maintain an organized flow of conversation, closely mirroring the procedural nature of the services provided in a hotel. By practicing such tasks, students were able to learn how to handle sequential information in an orderly manner, which is essential when addressing real-world guest needs.

In addition to procedural simulations, students also participated in problem-solving role-plays designed to address real-life challenges. One critical task involves managing guest complaints, which is a key aspect of communication in hospitality. During a task focused on overbooked rooms, a student responded to a guest's concern by saying: *"I sincerely apologize for the inconvenience. We have arranged an upgraded room for you. Please allow me to finalize the arrangements immediately"* (I/DC/S/02). This scenario helped students maintain professionalism while handling guest dissatisfaction. This task also enabled them to employ a calm and coherent communication style, which is vital in high-stress situations.

Role-playing extends beyond service issues and includes tasks related to explaining hotel services and amenities. For example, students were tasked with describing the hotel's offerings to potential guests, practicing structured presentations like: *"Our hotel offers a 24-hour fitness center, complimentary breakfast, and free Wi-Fi in all rooms. Would you like assistance by exploring our premium packages?"* This task emphasizes the need for logical sequencing and smooth transitions when presenting information. The ability to deliver such a structured presentation is important in hospitality settings where guests need clear and organized information.

Another essential classroom task is focused on maintaining coherence during extended conversations, such as explaining multiple hotel services in a single interaction. In one such exercise, students were taught how to connect details effectively: *"Your reservation includes complimentary breakfast served from 7:00 AM to 10:00 AM. The restaurant is located on the ground floor. Would you also like information about nearby attractions?"* These exercises emphasized the importance of maintaining a coherent flow in a conversation while ensuring that all guest inquiries were addressed systematically. By mastering this skill, students were able to ensure that guests received thorough and accurate information, which was critical in delivering a

positive guest experience.

Through the continuous practice of these tasks, the students were able to improve their ability to maintain clarity and logical progression in communication. The structured practice sessions were reinforced with detailed feedback from instructors who highlighted areas for improvement. For instance, students were guided on how to maintain smooth transitions between topics, ensuring that their responses were concise and well-structured. Feedback is particularly valuable in helping students avoid fragmented or disjointed responses, a common challenge when dealing with complex information.

In the context of a professional setting, maintaining coherent and logical conversation is essential. The tasks designed to develop discourse competence not only emphasized clarity, but also helped students structure their communication in a way that was both efficient and effective. These classroom activities are pivotal in preparing students for real-world interactions, where clear and logical communication is crucial for customer satisfaction and professionalism.

To further support the development of discourse competence, instructors use various assessment techniques, including real-time feedback during simulations and video recordings of student performance. This allowed students to review and critique their own performance, which enhanced their understanding of the effective communication strategies. Instructors also conducted peer assessments in which students provided constructive feedback to each other. This collaborative approach allows students to refine their communication skills by learning from their peers' strengths and weaknesses.

Structured and detailed classroom tasks that focused on discourse competence demonstrated the critical role of effective communication in the hospitality industry. These tasks provided students with a framework to develop their ability to organize thoughts, maintain logical flow, and clearly deliver relevant information. By participating in these tasks, students not only enhanced their communication skills but also gained confidence in handling real-world guest interactions professionally and efficiently.

In summary, classroom tasks designed to develop discourse competence were crucial in helping students learn how to communicate effectively in professional settings. These tasks focus on structuring conversations, maintaining coherence, and delivering clear information to guests. Through role-play, simulations, and feedback, students were able to enhance their ability to manage guest interactions, which is essential for a successful career in hospitality. The ability to maintain a coherent and logical conversation was one of the key competencies students developed through these tasks, preparing them to meet the demands of the hospitality industry.

### **Classroom Tasks to Develop Strategic Competence**

Strategic competence plays a crucial role in effective communication, particularly when communication barriers or misunderstandings exist. In this study, classroom tasks were specifically designed to equip students with strategies to navigate through such challenges while maintaining professional interactions. One of the primary tasks for developing strategic competence was "Handling Miscommunication in Conversations." This task immersed students in role-play scenarios that simulated real-life situations in which misunderstandings and communication breakdowns occurred. Students practiced crucial clarification phrases such as *"Could you please repeat that?"* and *"I'm sorry, I didn't catch that. Could you clarify what you mean by...?"* These tasks provided students with a safe space to refine their communication strategies and improve their ability to overcome challenges, while maintaining politeness and professionalism (I/StC/S/01).

The incorporation of telephone conversation simulations further reinforces the development of strategic competence. This task presented students with real-world challenges in which they had to manage guest inquiries over the phone, which is a common situation in hospitality. Unlike face-to-face communication, telephone conversations lack visual cues, making it more difficult to gauge guests' emotions or intentions. To address this, students practiced using verbal strategies such as paraphrasing and polite questioning. They were tasked with responding to unclear requests, such as *"Could you please spell the name for the reservation?"* or *"Would you like me to confirm the details of your request again?"* These exercises highlight the importance of precise language and attentiveness in telephone communication, enabling students to navigate potential misunderstandings and ensure clarity (I/StC/S/02).

In addition to verbal communication strategies, non-verbal communication has also been emphasized through specific classroom tasks. Non-verbal cues, such as gestures, eye contact, and active listening, are crucial for reinforcing verbal communication in face-to-face interactions. During role-play scenarios in which students simulated guest interactions, non-verbal strategies were incorporated to demonstrate empathy and professionalism. For example, when a guest expressed frustration over a delay, a student responded by nodding reassuringly while saying, *"I completely understand your concern, sir. Let me address this issue*

*promptly.*" This task highlighted how non-verbal cues, such as body language, can help maintain positive rapport with guests and ensure effective communication (I/StC/S/03).

The instructional material "Engaging in Brief Telephone Conversations" complemented these tasks by presenting students with realistic scenarios that they might encounter in the hospitality industry. For instance, students practice responding to unclear guest requests or managing conflicting information during phone conversations. These exercises not only aimed to refine their communication strategies but also provided opportunities for reflection and self-assessment. After completing these tasks, the students participated in feedback sessions where they reviewed their performances, identified areas for improvement, and discussed ways to refine their strategies for future interactions. These reflective discussions contribute to a deeper understanding of strategic competence and its practical applications in real-world situations (I/StC/S/04).

The integration of role-play exercises with reflective feedback is particularly important in developing students' strategic competence. Through these tasks, the students were encouraged to think critically and adapt their communication strategies in real-time. For example, in a role-play scenario in which a guest asked an ambiguous question about room availability, a student paraphrased the inquiry, saying, "*Certainly, sir. Are you asking whether we have suites available for the weekend?*" This demonstrates the students' growing confidence in clarifying ambiguities while maintaining professionalism. These tasks not only enhanced students' ability to clarify misunderstandings, but also strengthened their problem-solving skills, which are vital for managing real-world communication challenges (I/StCC/S/05).

Overall, a combination of role-play exercises, telephone simulations, and reflective feedback sessions created a comprehensive framework for developing strategic competence. These classroom tasks were intentionally designed to align with real-world scenarios, ensuring that the students gained practical experience in handling complex communication situations. Through these tasks, students not only enhanced their linguistic skills, but also developed their emotional intelligence and adaptability, which are essential for managing guest interactions effectively. The deliberate focus on strategic competence, supported by tailored classroom tasks, enabled students to gain the tools and confidence necessary to address communication barriers and maintain professional interactions in various hospitality contexts (I/StC/S/09).

These classroom tasks demonstrate the relevance of strategic competence in hospitality training as they help students apply theoretical concepts to practical situations. By incorporating strategies for handling miscommunication, paraphrasing, and using non-verbal cues, students are better equipped to manage the complexities of communication in dynamic, multicultural environments. The results of these tasks reinforce the importance of task-based learning and its effectiveness in preparing students for real-world challenges they face as receptionists.

## Discussion

This study makes a substantial contribution to the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly in enhancing students' communicative competence through classroom tasks integrated into a Project-Based Learning (PBL) framework. These findings confirm the efficacy of PBL in addressing four fundamental components of communicative competence—sociolinguistic, grammatical, discourse, and strategic—based on Canale and Swain's (1980) model. Previous studies, such as those by Kosasih (2020) and Mortini (2023), have similarly highlighted the value of PBL for professional communication skills development. However, this study extends the existing literature by specifically targeting the hospitality sector's unique requirements, including adjusting language formalities to guest status, and addressing cross-cultural communication challenges. The holistic integration of all four competencies advances earlier works, such as Nursulistyo (2021), which focused on individual competencies and provided a comprehensive strategy for preparing students for real-world professional communication.

These findings underscore the necessity of refining classroom tasks to better mirror workplace complexities. Role-play, clarification exercises, and video-based simulations have emerged as pivotal tools for enhancing students' preparedness to navigate realistic communication scenarios. In line with Jaya and Mortini (2023), who emphasized role-play, this study further advocates the design of tasks that incorporate varied and authentic contexts, such as service challenges and cross-cultural guest interactions. A novel finding is the integration of clarification strategies into these tasks, enabling students to effectively manage communication breakdown while maintaining professionalism. For instance, during role-play, students practiced resolving guest complaints and verifying unclear requests, developing critical skills to ensure seamless communication. These contributions not only enrich the literature on PBL in ESP, but also offer educators actionable insights into curriculum design.

This research also highlights the potential of adopting technological tools, such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), to further enhance classroom tasks. VR creates immersive, computer-generated



simulations that allow students to experience lifelike hospitality scenarios, such as checking international guests or handling unexpected service issues, in a controlled environment. This interactive approach provides students with opportunities to refine their communication skills, while gaining confidence in their ability to manage dynamic situations. Conversely, AR overlays real-world settings with digital content, offering real-time contextual support during role-plays. For example, AR could provide visual cues or simulated guest profiles to aid students in tailoring their language choices during check-in simulations. These technologies not only make learning more engaging but also bridge the gap between classroom activities and real-world applications, offering significant potential for advancing ESP education.

The findings of this study have clear pedagogical implications for improving ESP curricula, particularly in the hospitality sector. Educators should prioritize designing classroom tasks that closely replicate the challenges of professional communication, emphasizing cultural sensitivity, conflict resolution, and context-appropriate language use. Multilingual instructional materials should be developed to address the linguistic diversity encountered in hospitality environments, equipping students with the tools necessary to communicate effectively with guests from various cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, incorporating VR and AR into classroom tasks offers a transformative approach to teaching, allowing more immersive and dynamic learning experiences.

Future research should focus on evaluating the long-term impact of these classroom tasks on students' professional performance, particularly in hospital settings. Investigating how the skills acquired through PJBL transfer to workplace interactions can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of these teaching methods. Additionally, expanding the application of this framework to other vocational sectors, such as tourism and healthcare, can test its adaptability and validate its utility across diverse professional contexts.

In conclusion, this study advances the understanding of how classroom tasks enhance communicative competence in ESP, particularly through a hospitality perspective. Bridging theoretical models with practical applications offers a robust framework for equipping students with the skills necessary to meet the evolving demands of the hospitality industry. This research lays the groundwork for future innovations in ESP pedagogy, ensuring that students are prepared to navigate the complexities of professional communication in a multicultural and dynamic world.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes the pivotal role of Project-Based Learning (PJBL) in enhancing students' communicative competence in the context of hospitality training. This research illustrates how the integration of sociolinguistic, grammatical, discourse, and strategic competencies through carefully designed classroom tasks prepares students to meet the demands of professional communication. By focusing on practical classroom tasks that mirror the types of real-world interactions that students are likely to encounter in hospitality settings, this study demonstrates that PJBL offers a comprehensive approach to developing the communicative skills essential for professional success. Classroom tasks such as role-playing, clarification exercises, and video-based simulations are designed to reflect actual communication scenarios encountered in hospitality contexts, from greeting guests to handling complex service challenges. These tasks have been shown to help students develop the ability to navigate complex communicative situations, strengthening their ability to function in multicultural and dynamic environments typical of the hospitality industry.

The findings of this study further underline the importance of developing multilingual instructional materials that address the multicultural and dynamic nature of the hospitality industry. The hospitality sector is increasingly globalized, meaning that receptionists are more likely to engage with guests from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This necessitates a focused effort to enhance students' linguistic capabilities and ensure that they can adapt their communication styles to suit different cultural expectations and guest statuses. The development of multilingual materials that cater to the needs of international guests helps students gain the cultural sensitivity and language proficiency required for effective communication. Through task-based learning scenarios that simulate cross-cultural interactions, students can gain hands-on experience with the challenges of communicating in a multicultural setting. In particular, such materials and tasks help bridge the gap between classroom learning and the reality of workplace communication demands, allowing students to apply their knowledge directly to their future careers.

This study also makes a significant contribution to the application of PJBL in English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The holistic integration of the four aspects of communicative competence—sociolinguistic, grammatical, discourse, and strategic—provides a unified framework for addressing the

multifaceted communication requirements of the hospitality sector. This comprehensive approach sets this study apart from previous research, such as that of Nursulistyo (2021), which focused on individual aspects of competence in isolation. By integrating all four competencies, this study provides a more nuanced understanding of how different communicative skills are interconnected and should be developed simultaneously to prepare students for real-world professional challenges. For example, students must be able to navigate both formal and informal language forms while engaging in diverse service scenarios, requiring them to have a deep understanding of sociolinguistic and grammatical rules. The new findings of this research, such as the development of simple multilingual materials and realistic role-play scenarios, offer valuable insights into how ESP curricula can be enhanced to meet the specific needs of the hospitality industry.

In addition, the integration of real-world scenarios into classroom tasks is a key factor in ensuring that students are prepared for industry demands. This study demonstrates how realistic role-play exercises, such as those involving guest check-ins or handling service complaints, are not only useful in developing communication skills but also in fostering cultural awareness. Students practice interacting with various types of guests—VIPs, tourists, and business guests—each of which requires different levels of formality and tone. These tasks serve as training grounds for students to refine their language skills and cultural sensitivities. Moreover, the task-based learning approach encourages students to engage in problem-solving, allowing them to develop critical thinking skills that are vital when dealing with complex guest interactions. By incorporating these tasks into the curriculum, students can bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical experience and better prepare them for real-world challenges in hospitality settings.

The results also show the importance of strategic competence, which is developed through tasks such as clarification exercises and problem-solving activities. Receptionists often encounter communication challenges, particularly when dealing with non-native English speakers or unclear guest requests. Therefore, the ability to clarify and resolve such misunderstandings is crucial. This study found that by engaging in role-play focused on communication breakdowns, students were able to practice using strategies such as paraphrasing, asking for clarification, and using non-verbal cues to ensure effective communication. This focus on strategic competence also extends to telephone communication, where students practice handling miscommunication over the phone, a critical skill given the lack of visual cues during phone conversations. By practicing these strategies in the classroom, students were better equipped to manage communication challenges in their future roles as receptionists, thus improving both the quality and efficiency of guest interactions.

The holistic approach presented in this study offers a comprehensive framework to enhance communicative competence through targeted classroom tasks. These findings provide actionable recommendations for curriculum developers and educators, who can now incorporate specific classroom tasks that align with industrial needs, fostering students' readiness for real-world professional environments. Additionally, this study underscores the value of integrating technology into task-based learning, as video-based simulations, virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR) can provide students with immersive learning experiences that further strengthen their competence. The ability to simulate real-life guest interactions in a controlled classroom environment prepares students for the complexities they encounter on the job, making PJBL an indispensable tool in vocational training programs.

This study contributes significantly to ESP by offering a comprehensive framework for integrating communicative competence into hospitality training. These findings provide critical insights into the development of task-based learning and realistic scenario simulations, which are essential for preparing students for professional success. By emphasizing the importance of integrating all four components of communicative competence, this research offers a clear path forward for educators seeking to enhance their curricula and better equip students with the skills they need to succeed in an increasingly globalized and multicultural world. Through this approach, students are empowered to navigate the communication challenges of the hospitality industry, ensuring that they are well-prepared for their future careers.

In conclusion, this study provides a robust framework for enhancing students' communicative competence in hospitality training, offering practical recommendations for curriculum development and teaching strategies that meet industrial demands. The insights gained from this study will contribute to the ongoing development of ESP education, particularly in preparing students for cross-cultural communication and professional engagement in a dynamic global environment. By focusing on realistic task-based learning and the integration of the four key competencies, this study sets the stage for future innovations in language

teaching methodologies and vocational education in the hospitality sector.

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