

Adapting English Teaching to Industry Needs: An Instructional Perspective of Vocational High School Teachers

 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v10i6.1647>Nauroh Royyani, *Agus Gozali^{ab} ¹²Universitas Brawijaya, IndonesiaCorresponding Author: agus.gozali@ub.ac.id

ABSTRACT

English proficiency is essential in vocational education, equipping students with communication skills required in industrial workplaces. However, English instruction in many vocational high schools remains general and often fails to address the specific communication demands of different vocational fields. In addition, limited research has examined how instructional practices by teachers interact with institutional leadership to facilitate these adaptations. This study investigates how English teachers adapt their teaching and how curriculum leadership supports these efforts, aiming to bridge the gap between classroom instruction and industry expectations. Using a qualitative case study, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with three English teachers and one vice principal of curriculum at a vocational high school in Indonesia. Findings reveal that teachers implement contextualized strategies, including project-based learning, role-play, and authentic materials, while institutional support provides partial guidance and coordination. The study contributes to understanding the dynamic interaction between instructional adaptation and leadership, highlighting the need for strengthened collaboration to enhance vocational English instruction.

Keywords: Vocational English, English for Specific Purposes, Instructional Adaptation, School Leadership, Workplace Communication

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INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and industrial transformation, English proficiency has evolved into an essential competency that transcends academic boundaries and directly supports employability. In Indonesia, vocational education plays a crucial role in preparing students not only with technical expertise but also with the communicative skills necessary to function effectively in diverse professional settings. English serves as a lingua franca for international communication, particularly in industries that require cross-border interactions, technical documentation, and customer service. This issue is particularly significant for Indonesia's vocational education system, as English proficiency increasingly determines students' employability in both local and international markets. However, despite the growing importance of English as a workplace skill, English instruction in many vocational high schools remains general in nature, failing to reflect the specific communication demands of the professional world (Mahbub, 2018; Ridwan & Dwiyantri, 2024).

Vocational high schools or SMK are intended to equip students for immediate entry into the workforce. Their curriculum emphasizes practical, occupation-based competencies in fields such as accounting, automotive engineering, and culinary arts. As Mahmudah and Santosa (2021) observe, vocational graduates are expected to demonstrate not only technical mastery but also communication skills aligned with workplace contexts. Yet the persistent gap between classroom learning and real-world communication expectations remains a challenge. Many English teachers rely on general-purpose materials and a standardized syllabus that do not adequately address vocational communication needs. Consequently, students often struggle to apply their English knowledge in authentic work-related situations such as writing

emails, explaining procedures, or engaging in customer interactions (Muliyah & Aminatun, 2020; Kamaludin et al., 2022). However, there remains a clear mismatch between classroom English instruction and the actual communication demands of industry. Therefore, this study contributes to the growing field of vocational English research by revealing how teacher adaptation and institutional collaboration can transform general English teaching into an industry-responsive practice.

This instructional gap is closely tied to curriculum design and teacher preparation. While national curriculum policies outline general learning outcomes, they rarely specify industry-specific communicative competencies. As a result, English instruction in vocational settings tends to remain detached from students' professional realities. Teachers, operating within these constraints, are often left to interpret how to contextualize lessons for specialized fields. Research by Ridwan and Dwiyantri (2024) further highlights that this lack of contextualization results in low student motivation and limited transfer of learning to workplace applications. Addressing this issue requires a shift from traditional, form-focused instruction to a more contextualized model that integrates linguistic competence with real-world relevance.

Within this framework, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) provides a theoretical foundation for vocational English instruction. ESP emphasizes learner-centered, goal-oriented teaching that tailors language instruction to students' academic or professional needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, as cited in Wartu, 2020). In vocational contexts, this approach means that lessons should simulate workplace communication, such as reading manuals, describing processes, or handling client transactions, so that students are better prepared for the communicative demands of their future professions. Hyland (2022) asserts that ESP instruction must move beyond general grammar and vocabulary to functional, task-based communication. However, in Indonesia, the implementation of ESP-oriented teaching remains limited due to a lack of training, insufficient materials, and the absence of systematic institutional support (Muliyah & Aminatun, 2020; Kamaludin et al., 2022).

In recent years, several innovative pedagogical strategies have been introduced to enhance contextualization in vocational English teaching. One widely recognized approach is Project-Based Learning (PBL), which fosters authentic and meaningful learning experiences. Dewangga and Ahmad (2023) emphasize that PBL enables students to engage in projects that mirror real-world tasks, such as creating CVs, conducting product presentations, or simulating workplace interactions. Similarly, Ardiansyah (2023) found that project-based learning strengthens learners' motivation and communicative competence by connecting classroom content with their vocational aspirations. These approaches align closely with the ESP principle that instruction should reflect actual professional contexts.

Another critical dimension is the use of authentic materials. Handayani and Dewi (2022) note that using authentic resources, such as invoices, menus, or procedural manuals, allows learners to encounter the language used in real industries. Integrating authentic materials into English lessons bridges the gap between classroom learning and practical application, thereby enhancing both comprehension and relevance. In vocational schools, English teachers have begun incorporating materials from their students' fields, such as automotive repair manuals, culinary recipes, and accounting documents, to connect English language learning with technical expertise.

While these efforts mark significant progress, effective adaptation cannot rely solely on teacher initiative. Institutional structures and leadership play an equally vital role in sustaining and systematizing these practices. Kilag and Sasan (2023) argue that instructional leadership, particularly that exercised by vice principals for curriculum, is crucial for fostering pedagogical innovation. This includes guiding teachers in aligning instructional objectives with industrial needs, facilitating curriculum synchronization, and organizing professional forums such as the English Teacher Association (ETA). Similarly, Mahmudah and Santosa (2021) highlight that schools with strong institutional coordination tend to exhibit more consistent and relevant English-teaching practices, particularly when supported by cross-departmental collaboration and feedback from industry partners.

Despite these structural mechanisms, many vocational schools still face fragmented coordination between leadership and teachers. English teachers may attempt to contextualize lessons, but lack institutional follow-up or structured material development. This inconsistency suggests that although awareness of ESP principles is growing, systematic implementation remains uneven. Teachers' perceptions of their roles and the level of administrative support directly influence the extent to which ESP-oriented instruction can be realized in schools (Opre, 2022). When teachers perceive English as essential to students' career readiness and receive institutional backing, they are more likely to design industry-relevant learning experiences. On the contrary, weak coordination and limited institutional commitment often hinder innovation and sustainability.

Given these realities, challenges in vocational English education are not merely pedagogical but institutional. They require both instructional adaptation at the classroom level and structural support at the policy and leadership levels. While many studies have discussed these issues separately, few have explored the intersection between teaching practice and institutional mechanisms within a single framework. Nasihin and Oktariani (2022) examined curriculum alignment with industry needs, but their study did not address how teachers interpret and implement the curriculum. Meanwhile, Mulyah and Aminatun (2020) analyzed teachers' experiences with ESP but gave limited attention to administrative coordination. Kamaludin et al. (2022) discussed gaps in vocational graduates' communication skills without investigating how schools manage those challenges internally. While previous studies have explored either teachers' adaptation or institutional policy, few have examined how both interact in real vocational contexts. This indicates a gap in understanding how English teachers' instructional adaptations are supported or constrained by institutional structures and leadership. Thus, there remains a significant gap in understanding how instructional and institutional factors interact to make English teaching in vocational contexts more responsive to workplace communication demands.

In Indonesia, where vocational education contributes significantly to workforce readiness, understanding these interconnections is essential. According to the Central Statistics Agency (2024), vocational high school graduates constitute a substantial share of the nation's entry-level workforce, with an average wait of approximately 2 months to secure employment after graduation. This rapid transition highlights the urgency of equipping graduates with immediately applicable competencies, including English communication skills relevant to globalized sectors such as hospitality, accounting, and technology. To explore these dynamics in a concrete setting, this research focuses on one Vocational High School (VHS) in Indonesia, a well-established institution recognized for its diverse study programs, active industry collaboration, and consistent graduate employment outcomes. The school's adoption of the Emancipated Curriculum and engagement in curriculum synchronization with industry partners make it an appropriate site to examine how English teachers and curriculum leaders align instruction with industrial communication needs.

Accordingly, this study seeks to explore how English teachers in vocational high schools adapt their instructional practices to meet industry-related communication needs and how institutional leaders support this process. By analyzing both pedagogical and organizational dimensions, the study aims to provide insights into how vocational English instruction can become more industry-responsive and systematically integrated within school structures. Building upon this rationale, the present study aims to address the following questions: (1) How do English teachers in vocational high schools adapt their instruction to meet workplace communication needs? and (2) How do institutional leaders support such adaptation? The findings are expected to contribute to a broader understanding of ESP implementation in Indonesian vocational education and to offer recommendations for curriculum design, teacher development, and institutional collaboration to support more effective English language teaching for professional purposes.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore how English teachers and curriculum leaders in a vocational high school adapt English instruction to meet workplace communication needs. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because it allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives within authentic educational settings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The case study design was chosen because it allows the researcher to examine a phenomenon within a bounded context and to capture the complexity of interactions between instructional practices and institutional support.

The research was conducted at a public VHS located in Malang, East Java, Indonesia that offered major programs, namely Accounting, Automotive, and Culinary Arts. The school was purposively selected because it represents a well-established vocational institution with a strong reputation, a high graduate employment rate, and consistent collaboration with multiple industry partners. These characteristics made it an ideal context for investigating how English instruction is contextualized to meet industry-related communication requirements and how institutional leadership contributes to this process.

Respondents

The study involved four participants: three English teachers and one vice principal of curriculum. The teachers were drawn from different vocational departments such as Accounting, Automotive, and Culinary Arts, to represent various occupational fields and ensure variation in teaching contexts, while the vice principal was selected due to the managerial role in coordinating curriculum development and implementation. All four participants were female, reflecting the current demographic composition of English teaching staff in many vocational schools.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, which focuses on information-rich cases relevant to the research objectives (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). The English teachers met the following criteria: (1) they had a minimum of three years of teaching experience, (2) were actively teaching in high-demand vocational departments, and (3) were willing to participate in reflective interviews. The vice principal of curriculum was included to provide insight into institutional strategies that support instructional adaptation and curriculum alignment with industrial needs. This composition allowed the research to capture both pedagogical and institutional perspectives within a single school context.

Instruments

Two semi-structured interview guides were used to collect the data, each designed for a specific participant group: English teachers and the vice principal of curriculum. The interview guide for English teachers was developed based on studies by Mulyah and Aminatun (2020) and Fadlia et al. (2020), which explore ESP-based teaching practices in vocational contexts. The dimensions in this guide included: (1) General Orientation on the Role of English in Vocational Education, (2) Instructional Adaptation Strategies, (3) Awareness of Industry Needs, (4) Perception of Institutional Support, and (5) Stakeholder Collaboration.

For the vice principal of curriculum, the interview guide focused on understanding their perspectives on institutional responsibilities for aligning English instruction with workplace communication needs. This guide was developed based on studies by Jafar et al. (2020), Maryanti et al. (2020), and Mutohhari et al. (2021), which highlight the role of leadership in vocational school development. The dimensions in this guide included (1) Perception of Industry Needs, (2) Instructional Readiness, (3) Institutional Role in Supporting Adaptation, and (4) Industry Partnership Engagement.

Sample questions focused on teachers' classroom strategies, material adaptation, and perceptions of industry relevance. Both interview guides adopted a semi-structured format to maintain consistency while allowing participants to elaborate freely on their experiences and opinions. The instruments were reviewed and refined by an ESP expert to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives.

Procedures

The research procedures followed the framework proposed by Creswell and Poth (2018) for qualitative case studies. The process began with identifying the research problem and establishing initial contact with the school. After obtaining permission, data were collected over two days through face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the four participants of one VHS in Indonesia. Each interview lasted approximately 45–60 minutes and was audio-recorded with participants' consent.

All recorded data were then transcribed into a substantive format, focusing on the main ideas relevant to the research objectives. The researcher read and reread the transcripts to become familiar with them and began categorizing the data into preliminary themes. The analysis emphasized accuracy and faithfulness to participants' expressions while maintaining clarity for interpretation.

To ensure data credibility, the research employed both expert validation and member checking. An ESP specialist reviewed the interview guides to confirm methodological soundness, while participants were invited to verify the summarized data to ensure accurate representation of their responses. In addition, reflexive notes were maintained throughout the research process to document interpretative decisions and minimize potential bias. Collectively, these systematic procedures enhanced the study's trustworthiness and overall methodological rigor.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which comprises three primary stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. This analytical model was chosen because it promotes continuous interaction between data collection and interpretation, allowing for iterative refinement and validation.

In the data condensation stage, relevant portions of the interview transcripts were coded manually. The researcher identified recurring patterns, concepts, and expressions related to instructional adaptation, industry communication needs, and institutional leadership. These codes were then grouped into thematic categories to simplify interpretation.

During data display, the reduced data were organized in a thematic matrix to visualize relationships between research questions, participant perspectives, and emerging themes. This organization facilitated cross-case comparisons among teachers and the vice principal, enabling a clearer understanding of their roles and interconnections.

Finally, in conclusion, drawing on and verifying the data, the researcher interpreted the findings to answer the research questions and verify results across data sources. Specifically, source triangulation was employed by comparing insights from teachers and the vice principal to ensure interpretive accuracy and validity. Reflective analysis further enabled the researcher to examine how instructional and institutional factors interact to adapt English teaching to industry-related communication needs. This integrated analytical process provided a comprehensive understanding of how vocational English instruction is shaped through the dynamic relationship between classroom practices and school-level coordination.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are organized to address two interconnected dimensions of this study: how English teachers in vocational high schools adapt their instructional practices to meet industry-related communication needs, and how institutional leaders, particularly vice principals of curriculum, perceive and support these adaptation efforts. The discussion integrates both perspectives to provide a holistic understanding of pedagogical and institutional responsiveness within the vocational education context.

The Role and Importance of English in Vocational Education

The first key finding addresses how teachers and curriculum leaders perceive the role and significance of English in vocational education. The data reveal that English is regarded not merely as an academic requirement but as a practical competency that enhances students'

employability. Teachers consistently emphasized that English functions as a bridge between school-based learning and workplace communication. One participant explained:

"English is essential because industries give value to candidates who can speak foreign languages." (Teacher 1)

Similarly, the vice principal highlighted that English proficiency serves as an essential workplace asset:

"English communication is important. Even though not all local industries use it daily, in international settings it is required." (Vice Principal of Curriculum)

These statements demonstrate that English is perceived as both a communicative and economic resource, reinforcing its function as a means of professional mobility. This aligns with Hyland (2022), who asserts that ESP must equip learners with field-related communicative competence. The finding also aligns with Safira and Azzahra (2022) and Dou (2024), who found that, in vocational contexts, English learning should target the communicative demands of specific occupational sectors rather than general linguistic mastery.

Teachers in this study integrated this understanding into classroom practices by emphasizing employability-oriented tasks. As one teacher shared:

"I teach English through tasks like CV, job interview, and application letter, because many companies already use English." (Teacher 2)

Another participant highlighted how English supports service-based professions:

"Students will have to explain dishes to foreign guests, so we practice this in English to prepare them for real jobs." (Teacher 3)

These examples indicate that English learning is shaped by students' vocational needs, resonating with Pambudi and Kaliaskarova (2023), who argued that aligning English learning with authentic job tasks increases motivation and confidence. Similarly, Nasihin and Oktariani (2022) found that when teachers incorporate career-related tasks, students develop a stronger awareness of English as a workplace necessity.

In comparison with prior research, this finding underscores the growing pedagogical shift from academic English toward employability-based English teaching in vocational settings. Unlike earlier studies that primarily emphasized curriculum-level reforms, the present study highlights teachers' active role in redefining English as a professional tool. This finding confirms the first research question, demonstrating that the perceived importance of English is not merely institutional rhetoric but an actionable classroom reality.

Instructional Adaptation through Contextualized and Authentic Learning

The second key finding illustrates how English teachers adapt their instructional approaches to ensure contextual relevance and engagement. The study found that teachers employ methods such as Project-Based Learning (PBL), simulations, and authentic materials to connect English instruction with students' vocational fields. As one teacher described:

"I use role-play for job interviews or giving suggestions; students act as staff or consultants in realistic tasks." (Teacher 1)

Meanwhile, the vice principal emphasized the school's institutional support for these initiatives:

"We actively promote Project-Based Learning that is contextualized to industry needs and student specialization." (Vice Principal of Curriculum)

These findings align with Dewangga and Ahmad (2023), who suggest that PBL encourages active learning by immersing students in professional scenarios that mirror workplace communication. Rampes et al. (2025) also highlight that such experiential tasks foster self-confidence and long-term retention of communicative skills.

Teachers further supported authentic learning by incorporating real-world industry resources into their materials. One participant explained:

"We use real industry resources. For example, students visit the workshop to describe tools for descriptive texts. Procedure texts explain the steps to change

a tire while performing the procedure. I also use brochures from our industry partners.” (Teacher 2)

This approach is consistent with Handayani and Dewi (2022) and Mitrulescu and Negoescu (2024), who state that authentic materials promote functional language learning by exposing students to real linguistic input. The adaptation of classroom content to vocational specializations was also evident, as one teacher noted:

“In accounting, I add topics like CV vs PT, and adapt texts to tax, finance, and audit terms, so it fits the department.” (Teacher 1)

The integration of vocationally relevant materials demonstrates teachers’ awareness of language needs across fields, echoing the pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) concept by Ahmed and Shogbesan (2023), which emphasizes contextual alignment between subject content and pedagogical design.

These practices show that English teachers in vocational schools play an active role in tailoring instruction to students’ professional pathways. This finding extends the conclusions of Muliya and Aminatun (2020) and Kamaludin et al. (2022), who observed that such contextual adaptations increase learners’ engagement and practical language competence.

Moreover, the present study adds nuance by showing that these adaptations are not merely methodical choices but also reflective responses to industry demands, demonstrating a high level of teacher agency in shaping ESP-oriented instruction. In this regard, teachers are not only replicating industrial tasks but also reconstructing authentic communication experiences, reflecting the principle of situated learning, where knowledge is contextualized within social practice (Pengiran & Besar, 2018).

However, teachers also acknowledged challenges such as limited access to authentic resources and time constraints, which often hinder the full implementation of contextualized learning projects. Taken together, this finding confirms the first research question, illustrating that instructional adaptation in vocational English teaching is grounded in authenticity, reflection, and contextual responsiveness to students’ professional environments.

Teachers’ Awareness of Industry Communication Needs

The third key finding reveals how teachers and curriculum leaders perceive the communication demands specific to each vocational department and the strategies they employ to address them. Teachers demonstrated a clear awareness that English functions differently across vocational areas, requiring contextual understanding of technical terminology and workplace discourse. As one teacher emphasized:

“In automotive, they must understand technical terms like engine parts or service procedures in English.” (Teacher 2)

The vice principal further supported this observation by noting the curriculum alignment with industrial requirements:

“Regarding curriculum and learning, the basic competencies include understanding English instructions, reading technical documents, and comprehending job-related English terms.” (Vice Principal of Curriculum)

These statements reflect an understanding that English in vocational contexts is domain-specific, supporting the notion of English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). This finding aligns with Wijayanti and Nugroho (2021), who argue that vocational English instruction should prioritize job-related literacy and technical communication. Similarly, Husain and Mahfoodh (2021) suggest that teachers’ familiarity with professional language functions determines how effectively they can design authentic and meaningful classroom activities.

Despite this awareness, many teachers acknowledged that students often lack an early understanding of how English connects to their future professions. As one teacher explained:

“Not all students realize the importance of English; they only see it after direct experience during internships.” (Teacher 3)

Another teacher shared:

"At first, many students don't realize the importance of English until they meet foreign clients or go through job interviews." (Teacher 1)

This finding resonates with Kamaludin et al. (2022), who reported that vocational students frequently underestimate the role of English until they encounter real workplace interactions. Teachers in this study addressed this gap by implementing scaffolding techniques to build confidence and communicative competence gradually. As one teacher mentioned:

"Students struggle to express ideas in English, so I let them write in Bahasa first, translate, and then practice speaking." (Teacher 1)

Similarly, another teacher added:

"Students lack confidence when speaking English, but I motivate them with cooking presentations and exposure to real kitchen tasks." (Teacher 3)

These strategies reflect adaptive teaching grounded in learner needs and experiences, consistent with the findings of Sabilla and Kaniadewi (2025) and Muliayah and Aminatun (2020), who observed that vocational teachers often act as mediators between academic and professional communication. However, limited exposure to authentic professional discourse continues to constrain teachers' ability to model workplace communication accurately, suggesting that classroom adaptation remains only partially aligned with real industrial demands. In conclusion, this finding substantiates the first research question by demonstrating that teachers' awareness of industrial communication needs drives pedagogical adaptation; nevertheless, such awareness must be complemented by continuous professional development to deepen their understanding of evolving workplace discourse.

Institutional Support and Leadership Role

The fourth key finding highlights the critical influence of institutional leadership and structural support in facilitating adaptation in English teaching. Both teachers and the vice principal emphasized that leadership encouragement, curriculum flexibility, and professional forums significantly affect how teachers implement ESP-oriented instruction. The vice principal stated:

"I actively encourage the use of PBL and suggest that English teachers apply ESP principles to make learning relevant." (Vice Principal of Curriculum)

Teachers also recognized institutional mechanisms that enabled innovation:

"Curriculum synchronization with industry and MGMP forums really helps us adjust our teaching materials." (Teacher 1)

This reflects the leadership model described by Kilag and Sasan (2023), which identifies curriculum coordination and professional mentoring as key factors in teacher motivation. Similarly, Mahmudah and Santosa (2021) found that school administrators' engagement in pedagogical discussions strengthens teachers' ability to contextualize learning.

The flexibility of the Merdeka Curriculum was also identified as a facilitating factor. As one teacher noted:

"We can adjust the learning outcomes using the curriculum guidelines, especially when aligned with industry standards." (Teacher 2)

This finding aligns with Sanusi, Wasliman, & Hanafiah (2021), who suggest that flexible curricula allow teachers to design instruction that reflects both academic and industrial priorities. It also supports Nasihin and Oktariani (2022), who emphasize that school-level leadership determines how effectively curriculum reforms translate into classroom innovation.

However, while institutional support at SMK Negeri 12 Malang was generally strong, the study also identified challenges in resource allocation and teacher participation in decision-making. As noted in previous studies (Muliayah & Aminatun, 2020; Kamaludin et al., 2022), effective instructional reform requires ongoing dialogue between teachers and administrators rather than one-way policy implementation.

This finding confirms the second research question by demonstrating that leadership in vocational schools functions not merely as an administrative authority but also as a pedagogical catalyst that bridges institutional policy and classroom innovation. Institutional

structures such as ETA forums and curriculum synchronization programs further reinforce this role by serving as collaborative platforms that transform policy support into tangible instructional practices, highlighting the interconnectedness between governance and pedagogy.

Collaboration with Industry Stakeholders

The final key finding emphasizes the importance of collaborating with industry stakeholders to enhance the contextual relevance of English instruction in vocational schools. The data indicate that meaningful partnerships between schools and industries provide both curricular input and authentic teaching resources that help align English learning with workplace demands. These collaborations, though primarily intended for productive subjects, indirectly strengthen English teaching by offering real professional contexts for language use.

As stated by the teachers and the vice principal of curriculum, curriculum synchronization activities involve cooperation with companies such as PT. Cipta Sarana Cendekia, AHASS Honda, Daihatsu, and several hotel and restaurant partners like Vernon.

"We align our teaching through curriculum synchronization with PT. Cipta Sarana Cendekia." (Teacher 1)

The vice principal confirmed this role of collaboration, stating:

"Curriculum development is supported through synchronization activities involving industry partners." (Vice Principal of Curriculum)

This aligns with Warti (2020), who explains that industry involvement in ESP curriculum design bridges the gap between school learning and workplace communication. Similarly, Tursunova (2024) argues that synchronization activities create shared understanding between educators and employers, ensuring that vocational students acquire both technical and communicative competence.

Teachers further noted that industrial collaboration enriched their classroom materials. One participant shared:

"We use materials like the 'Pintar Bersama Daihatsu' book, which provides real technical content from the industry." (Teacher 2)

Another added:

"I refer to hotel or restaurant feedback and job descriptions when developing my class materials." (Teacher 3)

These findings align with Handayani and Dewi (2022), who highlight that authentic materials foster meaningful engagement and contextual understanding. In the culinary department, collaboration with hotel partners like Vernon enabled students to perform real communication tasks such as describing dishes or interpreting menus in English.

Although the collaboration framework at the research site has established strong foundations, English teachers' involvement in direct industry meetings remains limited. This mirrors the issue identified by Nasihin and Oktariani (2022), who note that English teachers in vocational settings are often excluded from industrial training, reducing their access to up-to-date communicative data.

This finding substantiates the second research question by demonstrating that collaboration with industry stakeholders acts as both a pedagogical and institutional bridge, connecting vocational English instruction to authentic workplace contexts and reinforcing the relevance of ESP-based education in real industrial environments.

The overall discussion reveals that a dynamic interaction between pedagogical adaptation, teacher awareness, institutional leadership, and industry collaboration shapes English teaching in vocational schools. The five key findings collectively demonstrate that contextualizing English instruction in vocational settings requires more than curriculum reform; rather, it depends on teachers' reflective practices, administrative facilitation, and real-world engagement.

Building upon these insights, this study contributes to the growing discourse on English for Specific Purposes by illustrating how vocational English teaching can evolve into a responsive system grounded in collaboration and authenticity. In particular, the findings

highlight that sustainable pedagogical improvement emerges from the synergy between individual teacher agency and institutional structures that support contextual adaptation.

Furthermore, while the study underscores the collaborative nature of vocational English adaptation, it also uncovers persistent challenges related to limited teacher involvement in industry training and uneven access to authentic professional resources. Addressing these issues requires structured professional development and stronger cross-sector coordination to sustain ESP-based innovation in vocational schools.

Overall, the findings affirm that long-term advancement in vocational English education relies on a shared commitment between teachers, school leadership, and industry partners to bridge academic learning and professional practice in authentic, evolving workplace contexts.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined how English teachers in VHSs adapt their instructional practices to meet industry-specific communication demands and how institutional leadership supports these efforts. The findings indicate that teachers employ contextualized strategies such as project-based learning, simulations, role-play, and authentic materials aligned with students' professional domains. These practices demonstrate teachers' growing awareness of technical terminology and workplace communication needs, as well as their agency in reshaping English instruction to enhance students' employability. Institutional support, particularly through the vice principal of curriculum, professional forums, and curriculum synchronization with industry stakeholders that facilitates coordination and fosters the implementation of ESP-oriented instruction. Overall, this study contributes to a broader understanding of how pedagogical adaptation, leadership, and school-industry collaboration intersect to form an industry-responsive English teaching model. Practically, the findings highlight that sustained professional development in ESP and stronger teacher participation in industrial programs are crucial for maintaining contextual alignment between classroom instruction and workplace realities. These insights are particularly relevant for teachers, curriculum developers, and policymakers seeking to strengthen vocational English programs through collaboration and authenticity. Nevertheless, the study was limited to a single institution with a small number of participants, and thus, broader comparative research is needed to capture variations across vocational contexts. Future studies should explore student perspectives, workplace outcomes, and direct industry input to deepen understanding of how vocational English education can more effectively prepare graduates for real-world communication demands.

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