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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 an English for Receptionists 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, then analyzed thematically. 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. The 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.

Keyword: Communicative Competence, Classroom Tasks, Project Based Learning, Hospitality Training

INTRODUCTION

Project-Based Learning (PJBL) has gained significant recognition as an innovative pedagogical approach, particularly in language education. By placing students at the center of the learning process, PJBL promotes active learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), PJBL offers opportunities for students to simultaneously develop linguistic competence and practical communication skills, which are essential in professional settings. For the hospitality industry, effective communication is a critical competency, 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 training 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 the 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), consists of 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 manage communication breakdowns effectively. This study investigates how PJBL classroom tasks enhance these competencies, preparing students for real-world communication in the hospitality industry.

Previous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of PJBL in vocational education, particularly in 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 applications, making it a suitable approach for teaching English in vocational contexts.

Previous studies consistently emphasize the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PJBL) in enhancing language proficiency and communicative competence. Wahyuni (2019) demonstrated that PJBL significantly improves 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 hospitality contexts. 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 & Jannah (2021) 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. (2023) found that PJBL motivates students and strengthens their communicative competence, while 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-oriented learning experiences, particularly relevant for hospitality industry training.

Despite these advantages, research on PJBL specifically tailored to the training of receptionists remains limited. Existing studies often focus on general linguistic skills without addressing the communicative competencies 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 the real-life demands of the hospitality industry.

This research 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 the specific needs of receptionists. The 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 the real-world communication demands of hospitality professionals.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative case study approach. It investigates how classroom tasks help develop students' communicative competence. The research is conducted in a

receptionist English class at Hospitality Schools. The subjects are four female students and one instructor. These participants were selected using purposive sampling. They provide insight into how classroom tasks influence the development of communicative competence in English for receptionist purposes.

Data is collected through observations, interviews, and document analysis. Observations focus on classroom interactions. They examine how students engage in tasks that develop sociolinguistic, strategic, discourse, and grammatical competence. Interviews with the instructor and students further explore their perceptions of these competencies.

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

The study focuses on how the tasks in the classroom 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, the research seeks to determine how students' communicative abilities can be enhanced to meet the demands of a receptionist role.

The concept of communicative competence, as introduced by Canale and Swain (1980), comprises four components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence. Grammatical competence refers to the ability to produce and understand correct sentence structures. Sociolinguistic competence involves the appropriate use of language in different social contexts, taking into account factors such as politeness and formality. Strategic competence refers to the use of communication strategies to overcome difficulties in conversation, such as paraphrasing or asking for clarification. 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 students with the tools necessary to interact effectively in professional environments. In particular, for students training to become receptionists in the hospitality industry, developing these competences 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. It allows students to engage in authentic tasks that reflect the challenges they will face in their professional lives. PJBL encourages active learning, critical thinking, and collaboration, all of which are essential for enhancing communicative competence. In the context of English training for receptionists, PJBL enables students to practice 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 are not only practicing language in context but also learning 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 a communication breakdown occurs (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 specifically addressing 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), have 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 data coding in this study is as follows: (1) Technique of collecting data divided into three types: Interview (INT), Observation (O), and Document (D). (2) The source of data; Instructor (INS), Student (S) and Communicative Competence, which are Grammatical Competence (GC), Sociolinguistic Competence (SC), Strategic Competence (StC), and Discourse Competence (DC).

The novelty of this research lies in its targeted exploration of PJBL for English training for receptionists, addressing the unique communicative challenges and needs of students in this specific vocational area. By focusing on a niche within ESP, this study will provide deeper insights into how PJBL can be adapted to meet the communication demands of the hospitality industry. Additionally, the 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 will contribute to the advancement of ESP in the hospitality sector by providing evidence-based recommendations for integrating PJBL into English training programs. It will also highlight the specific ways in which PJBL can enhance the four components of communicative competence, ultimately improving the preparedness of students for professional communication in the hospitality industry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

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

Results

Classroom Tasks to Enhance Students' Communicative Competences

The research reveals 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

In developing 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 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 a variety of 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 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 demonstrated a practical application of polite language and formal structure, which is crucial in maintaining professionalism in a hospitality setting.

To further enhance their grammatical competence, 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, a 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 not only focused on grammatical accuracy but also on reinforcing the significance of linguistic precision, essential for professional communication in the hospitality industry.

In addition to these grammar drills, structured pair activities provided further opportunities for students to practice their grammatical skills in a conversational context. One student played the role of a receptionist, while the other acted as a guest. They exchanged questions and responses using the grammar structures 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 grammar rules in realistic conversational settings, reinforcing both accuracy and professional tone in their language.

Role-playing exercises were an essential part of the classroom tasks, as they incorporated grammar into situational contexts. Students engaged in simulations where 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 grammatical competence into written communication. Students were tasked with drafting email responses, creating written guides for guests, and other written assignments that demanded 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, written communication, further enhancing their grammatical competence.

Simulated team exercises added a further dimension to their grammatical training. In these exercises, students worked collaboratively on 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 demonstrated 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 provided a rich platform for students to practice and refine their grammatical competence in varied contexts. These tasks helped students develop fluency and accuracy in their language use, preparing them for the linguistic demands they would face in their professional careers as receptionists in the hospitality sector.

In conclusion, the 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, 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 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 wide variety of social situations. To achieve this, the classroom tasks incorporated diverse social contexts where students practiced using appropriate language for different guest profiles. One of the most impactful tasks used to foster this competence was role-playing, where 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 provided 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 the 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 practiced saying, *"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 guest's needs and expectations. This practice reinforced their sociolinguistic competence by allowing students to balance politeness with efficiency while remaining culturally aware.

One significant 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 then 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 guest 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 in 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 understand how to integrate cultural knowledge into their communication, preparing them for real-life interactions with guests from diverse backgrounds.

Throughout these classroom activities, reflective feedback sessions played an essential role in enhancing sociolinguistic competence. After each role-play, students engaged in group discussions where they analysed 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 for 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 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 nuance. For example, students practiced guiding an international guest through a culturally significant location while explaining the site's history respectfully. This task helped students navigate the intricacies of intercultural communication, ensuring that they could convey information appropriately while honouring cultural sensitivities. These exercises deepened 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 also underscored the importance of respecting cultural norms and understanding how they shape communication. As students participated in these scenarios, they increasingly became aware of how linguistic choices can influence guest perceptions and satisfaction. By integrating these lessons into their interactions, students gained the confidence to engage effectively with guests from diverse backgrounds in a professional setting.

One more 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 style to ensure it was culturally appropriate. This task allowed students to practice addressing cultural differences, which is 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 competence. The tasks encouraged students to adapt their language to a wide range of guest types and situations, ensuring 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 engage effectively and empathetically 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 a globalized hospitality industry.

In conclusion, the 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 guests in a culturally sensitive and professional manner. By immersing students in these tasks, instructors successfully prepared them to meet the communication demands of a multicultural workforce. Through these classroom tasks, students acquired 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 structure communication coherently. One key classroom task was the "Starting and Developing Conversations" session, where 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 a smooth exchange. A 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 a hospitality setting.

Moreover, the simulations of hotel procedures like check-in and check-out processes were central to developing discourse competence. These tasks required students to deliver step-by-step information to guests, ensuring clarity and avoiding any 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 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 guest needs in the real world.

In addition to procedural simulations, students also participated in problem-solving role-plays designed to address real-life challenges. One critical task involved managing guest complaints, 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 practice maintaining professionalism while handling guest dissatisfaction. The task also enabled them to employ a calm and coherent communication style, which is vital in high-stress situations.

Role-playing extended beyond service issues and included 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 centre, complimentary breakfast, and free Wi-Fi in all rooms. Would you like assistance with exploring our premium packages?"* This task emphasized 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 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 is critical in delivering a positive guest experience.

Through continuous practice of these tasks, 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 was 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 a coherent and logical conversation is an essential skill. 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 were 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 used various assessment techniques, including real-time feedback during simulations and video recordings of student performances. This allowed students to review and critique their own performance, which enhanced their understanding of effective communication strategies. Instructors also conducted peer assessments, where students provided constructive feedback to each other. This collaborative approach allowed students to refine their communication skills by learning from their peers' strengths and weaknesses.

The 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 a logical flow, and deliver relevant information clearly. By participating in these tasks, students not only enhanced their communication skills but also gained the confidence to handle real-world guest interactions professionally and efficiently.

In summary, the classroom tasks designed to develop discourse competence were crucial in helping students learn how to communicate effectively in professional settings. These tasks focused on structuring conversations, maintaining coherence, and delivering clear information to guests. Through role-plays, 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 for the demands of the hospitality industry.

Classroom Tasks to Develop Strategic Competence

Strategic competence plays a crucial role in effective communication, particularly when there are communication barriers or misunderstandings. In this study, classroom tasks were specifically designed to equip students with strategies to navigate such challenges while maintaining professional interactions. One of the primary tasks for developing strategic competence was the "Handling Miscommunication in Conversations" module. This task immersed students in role-play scenarios that simulated real-life situations where 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 reinforced strategic competence development. This task presented students with real-world challenges where they had to manage guest inquiries over the phone, a common situation in hospitality. Unlike face-to-face communication, telephone conversations lack visual cues, making it more difficult to gauge a guest's emotions or intentions. To address this, students practiced using verbal strategies like 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 highlighted the importance of precise language and attentiveness in telephone communication, enabling students to navigate potential misunderstandings and ensuring clarity (I/StC/S/02).

In addition to verbal communication strategies, non-verbal communication was also 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 where 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 a 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 they might encounter in the hospitality industry. For instance, students practiced 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, 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 contributed 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 was particularly impactful in developing students' strategic competence. Through these tasks, students were encouraged to think critically and adapt their communication strategies in real-time. For example, in a role-play scenario where 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 demonstrated the student's 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, the 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 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 a variety of 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 the real-world challenges they will 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 the Project-Based Learning (PJBL) framework. The findings confirm the efficacy of PJBL 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), similarly highlighted the value of PJBL 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, providing a comprehensive strategy for preparing students for real-world professional communication.

The findings underscore the necessity of refining classroom tasks to better mirror workplace complexities. Role-plays, clarification exercises, and video-based simulations emerged as pivotal tools for enhancing students' preparedness to navigate realistic communication scenarios. In line with Jaya & Mortini (2023), who emphasized role-plays, this study further advocates for designing 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 breakdowns while maintaining professionalism. For instance, during role-plays, students practiced resolving guest complaints and verifying unclear requests, developing critical skills for ensuring seamless communication. These contributions not only enrich the literature on PJBL in ESP but also offer educators actionable insights into curriculum design.

This research also highlights the potential for 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 in 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 a check-in simulation. 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 provide 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 varied cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, incorporating VR and AR into classroom tasks offers a transformative approach to teaching, allowing for 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 hospitality settings. Investigating

how 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 further 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 lens. By bridging theoretical models with practical applications, it 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, dynamic world.

CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes the pivotal role of Project-Based Learning (PJBL) in enhancing students' communicative competence within the context of hospitality training. The research illustrates how the integration of sociolinguistic, grammatical, discourse, and strategic competencies through carefully designed classroom tasks prepares students for the demands of professional communication. By focusing on practical classroom tasks that mirror the types of real-world interactions students are likely to encounter in hospitality settings, the study demonstrates that PJBL offers a comprehensive approach to developing communicative skills essential for professional success. The 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 research 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 receptionists are more likely to engage with guests from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This necessitates a focused effort to enhance students' linguistic capabilities, ensuring that they can adapt their communication styles to suit different cultural expectations and guest statuses. The development of multilingual materials, which cater to the needs of international guests, helps students gain the cultural sensitivity and language proficiency required for effective communication. Through the use of 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 in their future careers.

The 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 to address the multifaceted communication requirements of the hospitality sector. This comprehensive approach sets this study apart from previous research, such as that by Nursulistyo (2021), which focused on individual aspects of competence in isolation. By integrating all four competencies, this research 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 need to 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 in 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 the demands of the industry. The 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, business guests—each requiring different levels of formality and tone. These tasks serve as a training ground where students can refine their language skills and cultural sensitivity. 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 are able to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical experience, better preparing them for real-world challenges in hospitality settings.

The results also show the importance of strategic competence, which was developed through tasks like 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 misunderstandings is crucial. This study found that by engaging in role-plays 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 miscommunications 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, improving both the quality and efficiency of guest interactions.

The holistic approach presented in this study offers a comprehensive framework for enhancing 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 industry needs, fostering students' readiness for real-world professional environments. Additionally, the 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 will encounter on the job, making PJBL an indispensable tool in vocational training programs.

This study contributes significantly to the field of ESP by offering a comprehensive framework for integrating communicative competence into hospitality training. The findings provide critical insights into the development of task-based learning and realistic scenario simulations that 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 looking 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 they are well-prepared for their future careers.

In conclusion, the research provides a robust framework for enhancing students' communicative competence in hospitality training, offering practical recommendations for

curriculum development and teaching strategies that meet industry demands. The insights gained from this study 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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