



# Investigation of English Proficiency in Rural Students at SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual in The School Year 2025/2026

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**Abstract:** This study employed a qualitative case study approach to investigate the English proficiency profile of tenth-grade students at SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual, a rural vocational school in Central Lombok. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, and English proficiency tests to gain a holistic understanding of students' abilities in vocabulary, grammar, reading, and speaking. The findings revealed that most students demonstrated average proficiency in vocabulary and grammar, good reading skills, and weaknesses in speaking performance due to limited exposure, low confidence, and minimal opportunities for real communication. The study identified several key factors influencing students' English proficiency, including psychological aspects (motivation and anxiety), environmental limitations (lack of English exposure and learning resources), and instructional practices that remain grammar-focused rather than communicative. Despite these challenges, students showed high motivation and positive attitudes toward learning English, especially in relation to their future tourism careers. The study recommends implementing communicative and contextualized teaching approaches, increasing authentic language exposure, and enhancing teacher professional development to strengthen students' overall English proficiency and confidence in using the language in real-life contexts.

**Keywords:** English Proficiency, Rural Students, Qualitative Case Study, Communicative Learning, Vocational Education

## Introduction

English has become the world's most influential language, serving as the global medium for education, business, technology, and international communication (Crystal, 2020). In Indonesia, English is taught as a compulsory subject from elementary to tertiary levels, with the expectation that students will develop communicative competence needed for academic and professional purposes (Coleman, 2011). However, the mastery level of English among Indonesian students remains uneven, especially between those in urban and rural areas, where the gap in resources and exposure leads to distinct learning outcomes (Amelia Safitri, Rahman, & Nugraha, 2024).

English proficiency comprises four interrelated skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing that need to be developed holistically (Brown, 2004). For vocational students, particularly those enrolled in tourism-focused schools (SMK Pariwisata), English serves not only as an academic subject but as a practical communication tool essential for their future profession (Jenkins, 2025). The tourism and hospitality industries demand graduates who can provide service and interact with guests in English fluently and confidently (Widiatmaka, 2025). Therefore, the ability to use English effectively becomes a core competency that determines employability, career progression, and the quality of customer service provided by vocational graduates.

Despite these demands, many rural vocational schools face critical limitations. Studies have shown that

rural students experience insufficient exposure to authentic language use, limited access to learning materials, and a lack of qualified English teachers (Coleman, 2011; Omidire, 2020). These challenges hinder the development of communicative competence, leading to an imbalance where students often perform better in receptive skills such as reading but struggle in productive skills such as speaking (Harmer, 2007).

In the case of SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual, located in a rural area of Central Lombok, English is a key vocational subject because students are trained for careers in tourism. However, despite their enthusiasm, many students still demonstrate average proficiency levels and low confidence in oral communication. This context provides an ideal setting for exploring the complex interaction of linguistic, psychological, and environmental factors influencing English proficiency in rural tourism education.

Several previous studies have investigated English proficiency and its determinants in rural or vocational contexts, yet few have focused on tourism-oriented schools in rural Indonesia.

Mahyuzar (2016) examined students' motivation in rural schools in Aceh and found that limited exposure and high anxiety negatively affected English performance. Saputri and Sukarno (2024); Widya, et al (2025) reported that many rural teachers still apply grammar-translation methods, which reduce students' opportunities to practice real communication. In contrast, Nurhayati (2023) found that English camp programs significantly improved students' speaking confidence and fluency, though the effects were temporary without continuous support.

Meanwhile, Widiatmaka (2025) highlighted the importance of contextual learning and exposure to authentic language use, especially in tourism-based schools where communication with visitors is crucial. Similarly, Marcellino (2008) emphasized that communicative competence can only develop when students engage in meaningful interaction rather than rote memorization.

Although these studies have contributed valuable insights, most focus either on general rural education or urban vocational settings. There remains a knowledge gap regarding how multiple factors psychological (e.g., confidence, motivation), environmental (e.g., exposure, resources), and pedagogical (e.g., teaching methods) interact to shape English proficiency among rural tourism students. Therefore, a qualitative case study exploring these interrelated dimensions is necessary to provide a holistic understanding of students' linguistic profiles and the conditions affecting their proficiency. These issues collectively indicate a need to examine both the

proficiency outcomes and the contextual influences that shape language learning in rural tourism education.

## Method

### Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design, which allows an in-depth exploration of a specific phenomenon within its real-life context (Creswell, 2022). The case in this research is the English proficiency of rural vocational students at SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual, Central Lombok.

A qualitative case study was considered suitable because it provides holistic insights into how various factors psychological, environmental, and instructional shape students' English proficiency (Sugiyono, 2019). The design enables the integration of multiple data sources, including classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and English proficiency tests, ensuring data triangulation for credibility.

The research was conducted over a two-month period (March–April 2025), encompassing four main stages: planning, data collection, data analysis, and validation. Each phase was documented systematically to ensure dependability and confirmability.

### Setting of the Study

The study took place at SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual, a rural vocational school located in Central Lombok, Indonesia. The school focuses on tourism and hospitality education, offering specialized training in guiding, hotel services, and culinary arts. Despite its strong vocational orientation, the school faces several challenges typical of rural contexts, including limited exposure to English-speaking environments, scarce learning materials, and minimal digital infrastructure (Hasanah, et al., 2025).

The setting was chosen purposively to represent a rural tourism-based educational environment, where English proficiency is crucial for students' future professional engagement in the tourism sector (Widiatmaka, 2025).

### Participants of the Study

The participants consisted of 15 tenth-grade students (10 females and 5 males) enrolled in the Tourism Department at SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual. They were selected through purposive sampling based on their representativeness of the rural vocational context and their active involvement in English learning activities.

### Instruments of the Study

To ensure comprehensive and credible findings, four instruments were used for data collection: an

English proficiency test, semi-structured interview, classroom observation, and documentation.

### 1. English Proficiency Test

The test was designed to measure students' proficiency in vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. The items were constructed based on the English curriculum for vocational high schools (Kurikulum Merdeka 2024).

Each skill component contained 20 items:

- a) Vocabulary (word meaning, collocations, and synonyms)
- b) Grammar (tenses, subject-verb agreement, and sentence structure)
- c) Reading (short passages with comprehension questions)

Scoring System:

- a) 80-100 = Good
- b) 60-79 = Average
- c) 0-59 = Low

### 2. Validation Process

The instrument was reviewed by two English education experts from Hamzanwadi University to ensure content validity. A pilot test was conducted with five non-participant students from the same grade level to assess item clarity, reliability, and difficulty level. Revisions were made based on expert feedback before final administration. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.81$ ) indicated acceptable internal consistency for a small-scale case study.

### 3. Interview

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore students' perceptions, motivation, and challenges in learning English. Each interview lasted approximately 20-30 minutes, conducted in a quiet classroom after school hours.

Questions were grouped into four thematic areas:

- a) Students' English learning history and experiences.
- b) Perceived difficulties in learning different English skills.
- c) Motivation and strategies for improving proficiency.
- d) Environmental and instructional support.

The interviews were audio-recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis. Teacher interviews were also conducted to gain triangulated perspectives on instructional practices and student engagement.

### 4. Observation

Classroom observations were carried out using participant observation techniques (Siti Mania, 2018). The researcher observed three English lessons per week for a total of six sessions (90 minutes each) over one month.

An observation checklist and field notes were used to record:

- a) Student participation and interaction patterns.
- b) Use of English versus L1 (Bahasa Indonesia).
- c) Teaching methods and classroom atmosphere.
- d) Students' emotional responses (e.g., anxiety, enthusiasm).

Photographs of classroom activities were taken—with school permission—for documentation. Observations were followed by reflective field memos to capture the researcher's interpretations and contextual impressions.

### 5. Documentation

Supporting data were obtained from school archives, including attendance records, English syllabus documents, and photographs of classroom activities. These documents provided contextual information and served as data triangulation tools to confirm the validity of observation and interview findings (Queen Agave, 2018).

## Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process consisted of four systematic stages:

1. Preparation Stage: Obtaining research permissions from the school and explaining research objectives to participants.
2. Observation Stage: Conducting classroom observations to understand the learning environment and student interaction.
3. Interview Stage: Conducting semi-structured interviews with students and teachers to gather personal insights.
4. Testing Stage: Administering the English proficiency test after observations and interviews.
5. Documentation Stage: Collecting relevant materials to validate qualitative data.

All stages were conducted ethically, with participants' consent and confidentiality ensured throughout.

## Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model (Sugiyono, 2019), which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

However, the present study further integrated thematic coding analysis to interpret qualitative data systematically.

#### 1. Data Reduction

All raw data from interviews, observations, and tests were transcribed, organized, and coded. Repetitive or irrelevant information was omitted. Key categories such as *motivation, vocabulary mastery, anxiety, and environmental exposure* were identified through open coding.

#### 2. Thematic Coding

The data were then analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, as cited in Creswell, 2022). Patterns and themes were developed through axial coding, linking factors influencing English proficiency.

For example.

- a) Observation data showing students' hesitation in speaking were coded under *low confidence* and *fear of mistakes*.
- b) Interview statements about lack of English-speaking environments were coded under *environmental constraints*.
- c) Both were integrated into the overarching theme: *psychological and environmental barriers to communication*.

#### 3. Data Display

The analyzed data were presented in descriptive narrative form and supported by frequency tables and charts. This facilitated cross-case comparisons among participants and skill areas.

#### 4. Conclusion Drawing and Verification

Conclusions were drawn inductively and verified through triangulation across multiple data sources tests, interviews, and observations. Member checking was performed by sharing summaries with participants to confirm accuracy and interpretation.

### Trustworthiness of the Data

To ensure methodological rigor, the study applied Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability:

1. **Credibility:** Achieved through triangulation and member checking.
2. **Transferability:** Supported by detailed contextual descriptions of the school and participants.
3. **Dependability:** Maintained through clear documentation of research steps and field notes.

4. **Confirmability:** Ensured by basing interpretations on actual data rather than researcher bias.

### Methodological Limitations

Although this study provides valuable insights, several methodological limitations must be acknowledged:

1. Limited sample size (15 participants) restricts generalizability to other rural schools.
2. The qualitative nature of the study focuses on depth rather than breadth, which may not capture broader statistical trends.
3. Researcher involvement during observations may have influenced participants' behavior (observer effect).
4. The English proficiency test measured only vocabulary, grammar, and reading, excluding writing and listening components due to time constraints.
5. The data collection period (two months) limited the ability to track long-term language development.

Despite these constraints, the study's multi-instrument approach, thematic triangulation, and contextual depth ensure that the findings remain credible, informative, and relevant to improving English education in rural vocational settings.

## Result and Discussion

### Overview of Students' English Proficiency

The findings of this qualitative case study provide a detailed description of the English proficiency profile of tenth-grade students at SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual, Central Lombok. The data were obtained from classroom observations, interviews, and English proficiency tests covering vocabulary, grammar, and reading, while speaking performance was assessed qualitatively through observation and interview interactions.

The test results revealed that students' overall proficiency ranged from Average to Good. In vocabulary, 47% (7 students) scored in the Average range, 33% (5 students) in the Good range, and 20% (3 students) in the Low range. For grammar, 67% (10 students) were Average and 33% (5 students) Good, while none scored Low. Reading showed the strongest performance, with 67% (10 students) achieving Good and 33% (5 students) Average.

However, observations and interviews indicated that speaking remained the most difficult skill,



characterized by hesitation, limited vocabulary use, and anxiety during classroom discussions.

An excerpt from the observation field notes illustrates this:

*"During the role-play activity, most students avoided eye contact when asked to speak English. Only two students volunteered to answer in English, while others whispered in Bahasa Indonesia. The teacher encouraged participation, but students laughed nervously before switching back to L1."* (Observation Note, 15 March 2025)

This behavioral pattern highlights the gap between students' cognitive understanding of English and their ability to produce it spontaneously in communicative contexts.

### Qualitative Findings and Thematic Analysis

Through thematic coding of interview and observation data, three major themes emerged as key factors influencing students' English proficiency:

- a) Psychological Factors – motivation, confidence, and anxiety.
- b) Environmental Factors – exposure, resources, and community context.
- c) Instructional Factors – teaching methods and classroom interaction.

Each theme is elaborated below.

#### 1. Psychological Factors: Motivation vs. Confidence

Most students expressed strong instrumental motivation, driven by their aspiration to work in tourism. As one student said:

*"I really want to be a tour guide in Mandalika, but I feel shy to speak English because I'm afraid of making mistakes and my friends laugh at me."* (Student Interview 7)

This quote illustrates that although motivation is high, low self-confidence and fear of negative evaluation hinder active communication. Krashen's (1982) *Affective Filter Hypothesis* helps explain this phenomenon: anxiety raises the mental barrier that prevents input from being internalized and output from being produced.

Students' affective barriers were further observed in classroom behavior: even when they knew the correct vocabulary, they preferred silence to avoid embarrassment. This finding aligns with Gardner's (1985) argument that attitudes and self-perception directly influence second language acquisition success.

#### 2. Environmental Factors: Limited Exposure and Community Support

The rural setting of SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual significantly shapes students' language learning experience. Although the school is located in a tourism region, authentic English communication opportunities are rare. As one teacher explained:

*"The students are motivated, but they don't have many chances to use English outside school. At home, nobody speaks English. Even the TV or internet access is limited."*

(Teacher Interview 2)

Most students also reported that their families and peers rarely encouraged English use:

*"My parents can't speak English. Sometimes I practice by myself, but I forget quickly because nobody corrects me."*

(Student Interview 3)

This lack of environmental reinforcement supports Coleman's (2011) observation that rural learners are disadvantaged due to insufficient linguistic exposure and technological access. Consequently, input is restricted to classroom instruction, which is often grammar-oriented rather than communicative.

This finding resonates with Krashen's (1982) *Input Hypothesis*, suggesting that without meaningful and comprehensible input slightly beyond the learner's current level (i+1), language acquisition stagnates.

#### 3. Instructional Factors: Teacher Roles and Strategies

Observation data revealed that English teachers at SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual demonstrated dedication and creativity despite limited resources. Lessons combined explanation, translation, group work, and game-based learning. However, the dominant teaching style remained teacher-centered, focusing on grammar explanation and vocabulary drills.

*"The teacher explained tenses for 25 minutes and then asked students to translate sentences. Only a few students used English orally during class discussions."* (Observation Note, 28 March 2025)

Teachers often acted as motivators and facilitators, using humor and encouragement to maintain engagement. In several sessions, teachers introduced role-plays related to tourism (e.g., hotel check-in dialogues), which

briefly increased student participation. However, limited time and lack of authentic models constrained communicative practice.

This partially supports Hymes' (1982) *Communicative Competence Theory*, which emphasizes the need for socially appropriate language use. The current instructional design develops linguistic knowledge (grammar and vocabulary) but provides insufficient interaction for pragmatic competence.

As Saputri and Sukarno (2024) noted, rural schools often prioritize exam-oriented teaching. Similarly, this study found that instructional emphasis on form rather than function results in stronger receptive (reading, grammar) but weaker productive (speaking) skills.

## Discussion

### Why Receptive Skills Outperform Productive Skills

The consistent pattern of stronger reading proficiency compared to speaking ability reflects broader trends in EFL contexts where exposure to written input exceeds oral interaction (Brown, 2004; Harmer, 2007).

Several factors explain this phenomenon:

1. **Learning Input Source:**  
Students are frequently exposed to textbooks and written exercises but rarely to spoken English. Hence, reading becomes their primary mode of input.
2. **Risk Avoidance:**  
Speaking requires immediate processing and greater risk of error, which heightens anxiety. Reading, in contrast, allows silent comprehension without social pressure (Krashen, 1982).
3. **Instructional Design:**  
The grammar-translation approach strengthens vocabulary and grammar recognition skills linked to reading comprehension—but neglects oral fluency (Saputri & Sukarno, 2024).
4. **Cultural Norms:**  
In rural communities, students often value politeness and conformity, discouraging them from speaking spontaneously in class (Mahyuzar, 2016).

This imbalance highlights the need for communicative and experiential learning approaches, such as project-based tasks and English-for-tourism simulations, to improve productive skills.

### Interconnection of Influencing Factors

Analysis revealed a dynamic interplay between psychological, environmental, and instructional variables. Students' motivation to learn English interacts

with their exposure opportunities and teaching experiences. For instance, when teachers employed interactive strategies (e.g., games or tourism role-plays), students' confidence temporarily increased. However, without environmental reinforcement, this confidence quickly diminished.

The following quote exemplifies this connection:

*"I feel excited when we play games in English class. But after class, I don't use English again, so I forget."* (Student Interview 9)

This cyclical relationship motivation without practice leading to attrition illustrates how rural contexts limit sustainable language development.

The integration of multiple factors confirms Krashen's (1982) idea that input, affective state, and learning context jointly influence acquisition. It also aligns with Hymes' (1982) notion that communicative competence arises not merely from grammatical knowledge but from socially meaningful interaction, which is scarce in rural environments.

### The Role of Teachers in Enhancing Communicative Competence

Teachers at SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual play a central role in mediating between limited environmental resources and students' learning needs. Despite infrastructural challenges, they employed several effective strategies:

1. Using contextual topics related to tourism (e.g., hotel reservations, tourist attractions).
2. Encouraging peer collaboration during group discussions.
3. Organizing small-scale English speaking practice during extracurricular sessions.

However, the impact of these efforts remains limited without consistent exposure and institutional support. The observed lessons indicate that communicative competence development requires structural changes more classroom time for interaction, access to English media, and partnerships with the tourism industry for authentic practice (Nurhayati, 2023; Widiatmaka, 2025).

### The Impact of Rural and Vocational Contexts

The rural setting and vocational focus profoundly shape students' English learning conditions. On one hand, the tourism orientation of the school generates intrinsic motivation, as students associate English mastery with future employment opportunities. On the other hand, socioeconomic limitations such as minimal exposure, scarce media, and limited teacher training restrict actual progress.

Students' awareness of English as a "career skill" rather than a "school subject" distinguishes this context from typical academic high schools. However, the lack of collaboration between schools and local tourism

sectors diminishes authentic learning opportunities.

This context supports the argument by Coleman (2011) and Widiatmaka (2025) that English learning in rural vocational schools must be contextually integrated with real-world communication to achieve sustainable outcomes.

### Alignment with Theoretical Perspectives

The findings of this study strongly support Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis and Affective Filter Theory, as students' proficiency is limited by low-quality input and high anxiety. Similarly, Hymes' (1982) Communicative Competence Theory is reflected in the gap between linguistic knowledge and pragmatic use – students know the forms but lack situational fluency.

However, the findings also extend these theories by demonstrating how rural socioeconomic conditions amplify these constraints. Limited exposure and teacher-centered instruction intensify affective barriers, suggesting that theoretical models must account for contextual inequality in resource distribution.

### Summary of Findings

1. Students demonstrated average proficiency in vocabulary and grammar, good proficiency in reading, and low proficiency in speaking.
2. Psychological factors (motivation, confidence, anxiety), environmental constraints (limited exposure, resources), and instructional practices (teacher-centered approach) collectively influence learning outcomes.
3. Receptive skills are stronger because learning is input-dominant and low in communicative output.
4. Teachers act as key facilitators but are constrained by infrastructural and contextual barriers.
5. The rural tourism context both motivates and restricts English learning creating potential but lacking support systems for its realization.

### Implications

These results imply that English instruction in rural vocational schools should:

1. Prioritize communicative, experiential, and project-based learning relevant to the tourism industry.
2. Provide psychological support and low-stress environments to reduce students' affective filters.
3. Strengthen school-industry collaboration to offer authentic language exposure.
4. Ensure continuous teacher professional development focusing on communicative teaching methods.

By addressing these areas, rural vocational schools can bridge the gap between students' motivation and their actual English performance, ultimately improving employability and community participation in the global tourism sector.

### Conclusion

This qualitative case study investigated the English proficiency profile of rural vocational students at SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual and the factors influencing their language development. By integrating data from classroom observations, interviews, and proficiency tests, the study achieved its objectives of describing students' proficiency levels and identifying the internal and external factors shaping their learning outcomes.

### Summary of the Main Findings

The findings revealed that students' overall English proficiency ranged from Average to Good, with notable variation across language skills. Students demonstrated relatively strong receptive skills, particularly in reading, but weaker productive skills, especially speaking. This imbalance reflects limited oral exposure, high anxiety, and classroom instruction that remains primarily grammar-oriented.

Three interrelated factors were found to influence students' proficiency development:

1. Psychological factors – high motivation but low self-confidence and fear of making mistakes, aligning with Krashen's (1982) *Affective Filter Hypothesis*.
2. Environmental factors – minimal English exposure and scarce learning resources in the rural context, consistent with Coleman's (2011) argument about linguistic disadvantage in rural education.
3. Instructional factors – teacher-centered methods that emphasize grammatical accuracy over communicative competence, which partially contradict Hymes' (1982) *Communicative Competence Theory*.

Despite these constraints, the study found that both teachers and students demonstrated strong commitment and enthusiasm for English learning, supported by the vocational and tourism orientation of the school.

### Theoretical and Practical Contributions

#### 1. Theoretical Contribution

The study contributes to second language acquisition theory by providing empirical evidence from a rural vocational context, extending Krashen's and Hymes' frameworks to settings characterized by limited input and socioeconomic constraints. It illustrates how affective, environmental, and instructional dimensions interact dynamically, shaping English proficiency outcomes in a low-resource educational environment.

This nuanced integration highlights that theoretical models of language acquisition must account for contextual inequalities including limited exposure and teacher training

that influence learners' ability to internalize input and produce output effectively.

## 2. Practical Contribution

Practically, this study offers concrete insights for English language teaching in vocational schools, particularly those located in rural areas. It demonstrates the importance of contextualized and communicative instruction aligned with students' professional aspirations in tourism. The findings also underscore the need for teacher innovation, psychological support, and environmental enrichment to foster communicative competence and learner autonomy.

## Policy Implications

The findings of this study have several implications for education policymakers, school administrators, and curriculum developers in vocational education:

1. **Curriculum Integration:** English learning in vocational schools should explicitly incorporate tourism-based communicative modules, connecting classroom learning with real-world communication tasks.
2. **Teacher Professional Development:** Regular training and workshops should be provided to equip teachers with communicative, project-based, and technology-assisted teaching strategies suited for rural contexts.
3. **Infrastructure and Exposure Programs:** Educational policymakers should support the development of English learning facilities such as multimedia classrooms, language laboratories, and collaboration programs with tourism industries to increase authentic exposure.
4. **Psychosocial Support:** School guidance units should integrate confidence-building and anxiety-reduction programs to lower students' affective filters and enhance oral participation.

Such policies are vital to bridge the urban-rural proficiency gap and ensure that vocational graduates are well-prepared for global tourism communication demands.

## Recommendations for Development and Intervention

To strengthen English learning outcomes in rural vocational schools, several targeted interventions are recommended:

1. **English-for-Tourism Projects:** Implement project-based learning programs (e.g., tour guide simulations, English service training) that provide authentic, task-oriented communication practice.
2. **Collaborative Exposure Programs:** Establish partnerships with local tourism

offices, hotels, and travel agencies to organize short-term English immersion activities, internships, and interaction with foreign visitors.

3. **Teacher Exchange and Mentorship:** Facilitate collaborative networks among rural and urban teachers for sharing best practices, materials, and communicative teaching innovations.
4. **Community-Based English Clubs:** Encourage student-led extracurricular clubs involving community members, enabling English practice beyond the classroom and promoting sustainable motivation.
5. **Integration of Technology and Media:** Utilize low-cost digital resources (e.g., mobile learning apps, recorded dialogues) to simulate English exposure for students with limited internet access.

By implementing these interventions, rural vocational schools like SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual can move beyond traditional grammar instruction toward functional, communicative, and context-driven English education that meets both academic and industry needs.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study emphasizes that rural vocational students possess high motivation and potential to achieve communicative English competence when given appropriate pedagogical support, authentic exposure, and confidence-building opportunities. Strengthening contextualized English education in SMK Pariwisata will not only enhance students' personal and academic growth but also contribute to local tourism development and Indonesia's global competitiveness.

Future research is encouraged to adopt longitudinal or comparative approaches between rural and urban vocational schools, examining the long-term impact of communicative interventions on students' professional language competence.

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