

## FRAMEWORK OF VACATIONAL ENGLISH TEACHING MANAGEMENT IN INDONESIA: A LOOK FROM BATAM AS INDUSTRIAL CITY

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### Abstract

At the vocational school level, the primary objective of English teaching is to enhance students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in relation to workplace contexts. The effectiveness of vocational English teaching instruction significantly impacts the relevance and quality of knowledge and skills students acquire for their future careers. This study seeks to conduct a comprehensive and in-depth examination of the challenges in managing vocational English teaching in schools which located in Batam City, an industrial hub in Indonesia. To accomplish the research goals, the authors employed qualitative research methodologies to naturally and thoroughly explore field phenomena. The study involved 62 vocational school principals, 4 school supervisors, 71 vocational English teachers, and 4,035 vocational students in Batam City. Research techniques included field observations, document analysis, and detailed interviews to identify key issues in the vocational English teaching management process. Data processing involved initial collection, reduction, presentation, analysis, verification and validation, conclusion drawing, and recommendation formulation. The study's findings reveal that: 1) Vocational English teaching management in Batam City encompasses planning, implementation, and evaluation functions. 2) These management components have not been executed effectively and efficiently. 3) The primary challenge in managing of vocational English teaching in Batam City lies in the planning phase, where vocational English teaching materials are not adequately aligned with workplace contexts. This research provides valuable insights for government, educational departments, vocational school principals, English teachers, and industry stakeholders to design and implement vocational English programs that align with workplace demand. The implications of this study extend to improving students' English proficiency and preparedness for entering the workforce, especially in Batam City.

**Keywords:** English Teaching; Management; Vocational School; Industrial City

### INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of vocational education in Indonesia, as outlined by experts and the Independent Curriculum, is to enhance students' academic and vocational capabilities. Furthermore, this educational approach aims to foster competencies and life skills, preparing students for either the workforce or higher education. Specifically, vocational schooling seeks to cultivate technical and vocational proficiencies (Supriyanto, 2019), boost critical and analytical thinking abilities (Nurhayati, 2019), nurture effective communication skills (Widyastuti, 2018), equip students to tackle global challenges (Kusuma, 2019), and promote entrepreneurship and business acumen (Hermawan, 2020). These goals align with the Ministry of Education and Culture's (2022) objectives for implementing the Independent Curriculum in vocational schools. The curriculum focuses on developing core competencies (literacy, numeracy, and character), honing vocational and technical expertise, enhancing critical and analytical thinking, improving communication skills, and readying students for employment or further academic pursuits.

Secondary-level vocational education aims to produce graduates ready for the workforce, industry, and business sectors. Beyond specialized skills, these graduates must be proficient in English communication to succeed professionally. English proficiency is vital because many professional environments use it for instruction, operations, and international interactions. To meet industry demands, improving vocational students' English communication skills through an effective curriculum is crucial. A key factor in enhancing English education at vocational schools is the availability of industry-relevant teaching materials and learning resources. It's imperative that English teaching materials for vocational students align with industrial contexts, ensuring their language skills are applicable to professional settings. This approach also helps students grasp English communication concepts and standards, choose vocabulary suitable for professional environments, and use appropriate workplace terminology.

To meet the aforementioned objectives, vocational English instruction necessitates an effective and efficient management approach. The significance of English education in vocational management schools stems from its role in achieving management process goals. It is recognized that by employing a model that effectively utilizes all institutional resources (Syam, 2017), learning outcomes can be attained. Furthermore, Dezhbankhan et al. (2021) asserted that a management system comprises interconnected elements that establish goals and targets, and efficiently work towards their realization. Consequently, there is a pressing need for a management model that is effective, efficient, practical, and innovative to facilitate improvement. Given this context, this research aims to address the following questions: (1) What is the current model for managing English language instruction in Vocational Schools in Batam City? (2) What shortcomings exist in the English language learning management model employed by Vocational Schools in Batam City, considering its status as an Indonesian industrial hub?

#### Definition of Management

Management is generally described as the process of planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling to reach predetermined objectives. Fayol (2010) defined it as planning, organizing, and controlling resources to achieve goals efficiently and effectively. Both definitions highlight the functions of planning, organizing, and controlling, but differ in their inclusion of implementation, which Fayol omits. Management also involves strategy implementation to optimize resource use, enhance decision-making, streamline operations, and adapt to external environments (Taylor, 2012). It is a forward-looking approach aimed at navigating competitive landscapes to achieve organizational objectives through planning, execution, and coordination of resources, workforce, systems, and aiming for efficiency and effectiveness (Robinson, 2015).

Management definitions have evolved, with experts offering expanded perspectives. Subagyo (2015) describes it as coordinating activities, including planning, staffing, coordination, direction, and supervision. Hasibuan (2014) views it as a science and art involving the effective and efficient use of resources to achieve goals, aligning with Assauri's (2016) interpretation of coordinating actions to reach objectives. Yamin (2018) defines education management as a systematic, systemic, and comprehensive process to achieve national education goals, involving planning, organizing, actualizing, and monitoring to turn vision into action. Similarly, Mulayasa (2014) describes it as cooperative activities to attain educational objectives. Management, therefore, encompasses efforts to achieve goals through planning, organizing, implementing, controlling, and evaluating, aiming for effective and efficient results.

#### Effective in Management

In education, success is gauged by achieving organizational or educational goals. "Effective" indicates producing desired outcomes, being successful, and valid. Effectiveness broadly refers to achieving anticipated goals and targets. Drucker (2014) differentiated effectiveness, performing correct tasks, from efficiency, executing tasks correctly. Siagian (2018) elaborated that effectiveness involves timely accomplishment of targets using allocated resources. It also includes resource utilization to a specific degree. Abdurrahmat (2014) defined effectiveness as using predetermined resources to produce specific work within a timeframe.

Effectiveness entails achieving planned goals and targets timely through appropriate actions using available resources. A task is effective when goals are met or exceeded. Siagian (2018) outlined several criteria for effective work: (1) clear goal definition to meet targets, (2) a strategy for goal attainment, (3) robust analysis and policy formulation connecting objectives with operations, (4) thorough planning for future actions, (5) proper program preparation and guidelines, (6) adequate work facilities and infrastructure, (7) efficient and effective execution of programs, (8) educational supervision and control systems addressing human imperfections. Effectiveness is demonstrated when established goals are achieved or surpassed. Siagian's criteria for effective organizational work include: (1) defined objectives for meeting targets, (2) articulated strategy for goal achievement, (3) comprehensive analysis and policy formulation connecting objectives with efforts, (4) meticulous planning for future actions, (5) appropriate program development and guidelines, (6) sufficient facilities and infrastructure, (7) efficient program execution, (8) supervision and control systems addressing human limitations.

#### Efficiency in Management

Efficiency refers to the proper use of resources to achieve goals without wasting money, time, and energy. Sule and Saefullah (2010) define efficiency as performing tasks correctly, while Usman (2016) emphasizes it as saving resources by doing work right. Sedarmayanti (2017) aligns with this view, stating that efficiency measures resource use in a process, with more economical resource use indicating higher efficiency. An efficient process is cheaper and faster. Efficiency involves using organizational resources accurately to achieve goals quickly and economically. It is the ability to complete work using minimal resources, time, and energy, comparing resources used with the output obtained. Efficiency focuses on saving resources and managing them correctly to avoid waste. Mardiasmo (2017) outlines the benefits of efficiency in organizations: saving and reducing resource use, optimizing existing resources, improving work unit performance, maximizing profits, and minimizing waste and misuse of resources.

#### English Language Learning in Vocational Schools

The Merdeka Curriculum of 2022 aims for Vocational School students, by the end of Phase E, to effectively use spoken, written, and visual English for context-appropriate communication. English instruction sources include various text types like narratives, descriptions, procedures, expositions, recounts, reports, and authentic materials. Students use English to express emotions, discuss daily life topics, and engage in writing to gain knowledge. They develop skills to infer implicit meanings and create diverse texts, understanding their purpose and audience. In Phase E, students develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency. For listening and speaking, they communicate in various contexts, ask and respond to questions, and sustain conversations, identifying main ideas and details in discussions on youth-relevant topics. They express opinions on youth issues, discuss interests, and use nonverbal cues for better comprehension. In reading, they evaluate diverse texts to gather information, identifying main ideas, plot development, and making inferences.

For writing, students create various texts, demonstrating goal and audience awareness through planning, writing, reviewing, and rewriting, using proper punctuation and capitalization. They present information in print and digital formats. The Ministry of Education and Culture (2022) outlines that the Independent Curriculum for Phase E includes Core Competencies, Basic Competencies, Learning Achievements, and higher-level thinking skills. Core Competencies involve effective communication, information analysis, active participation in discussions, and appropriate text composition. Basic Competencies cover listening comprehension, oral communication, reading comprehension, and writing proficiency. Learning Outcomes emphasize mastering complex sentences, vocational vocabulary, text analysis, discussion participation, and

writing techniques. The curriculum also stresses higher-level thinking skills such as analysing texts, evaluating information validity, and expressing ideas effectively in writing and presentations.

According to the British Council. (2022) Standards for English Language Teaching, students in vocational schools should demonstrate English language proficiency through several competencies. These include: (1) comprehending English language structure, (2) effectively communicating both orally and in writing, (3) comprehending and analysing diverse text types, (4) applying English in daily and professional contexts, (5) enhancing skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, (6) developing critical and analytical thinking abilities, and (7) utilizing English within their specific vocational field (aligned with their skills program).

## **METHODOLOGY**

To accomplish the research objectives, a qualitative approach was employed. Sugiyono (2023) defines qualitative research as a method that gathers data from natural environments, primarily using participant observation, comprehensive interviews, and documentation. This research methodology was chosen to emphasize understanding the significance and context of English education management in vocational schools within Batam City, an industrial hub in Indonesia. Furthermore, this approach was selected because the field data contained information about the existing English language learning management model in Batam City's vocational schools and the shortcomings of each management function within the implemented model. The study was conducted across 62 vocational schools, both public and private, in Batam City, Riau Islands Province, Indonesia. To gather the necessary information, researchers carried out in-depth interviews with 62 vocational school principals, 4 school supervisors, 71 vocational English teachers, and 4,035 vocational students in Batam City.

To gather more comprehensive information, investigators have employed direct observation techniques within the school environment, participating in certain classroom activities and observing English practice sessions. To validate the data obtained through interviews and observations, the investigator verified the accuracy of the collected information. (1) A credibility assessment was performed using triangulation, which involved examining interview data through various methods and obtaining identical information from multiple sources. (2) Consistency checks were implemented to evaluate the reliability of information acquired from diverse sources. (3) Transferability evaluations were conducted to verify the authenticity of the research data and determine if the gathered information could be applied in other settings by involving individuals from different schools. Subsequently, (4) Confirmability tests were carried out to generate valid

information by comparing insights from academics, English teacher community leaders, and vocational English instructors with relevant knowledge and experience, while also exploring recent findings and literature. The data analysis approach developed by Miles and Huberman comprises four stages: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involves the process of choosing, concentrating on, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming information from a transcription.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result of the Research

Learning management refers to the oversight of educational resources, including teaching materials. The Indonesian Education System Law Number 20 of 2003 outlines this process in three phases: planning, execution, and assessment. In light of the Republic of Indonesia's Presidential Instruction Number 9 of 2016, which calls for the renewal of vocational education, educational methods must be in sync with workplace needs. As a result, the administration of English language instruction should be customized to meet industry requirements. Through field research utilizing comprehensive interview methods, direct observations, and document analysis, researchers discovered that English language learning management in Batam City's Vocational Schools comprises planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. A visual representation of the English Learning Management Model for Vocational Schools in Batam City is provided below.

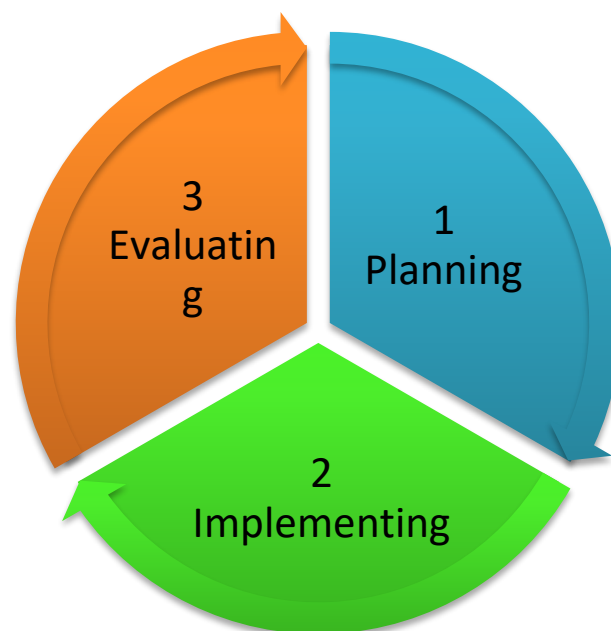


Figure 1. Management Model of Vocational English Teaching

#### 1. Planning

The vocational English teachers prepare for general English learning plan and does not



involve industry parties. Using English textbooks from publishers whose teaching material content is not relevant to workplace demands.

## 2. Implementing

Vocational English teachers are implementing English learning process according to learning plans and English textbooks which have not been adapted to workplace demands in Batam City

## 3. Evaluating

Teachers who evaluate vocational school English learning in Batam City do not yet focus on measuring communication skills because they still focus on measuring students' understanding of grammar and reading skills.

## DISCUSSIONS

The study results suggest that English education in Batam City's vocational institutions fails to meet workplace demands. During curriculum planning, English teachers neglect to create learning objectives that reflect industry needs and do not engage with business representatives to tailor the syllabus to job market requirements. In the classroom, instructors fail to use materials relevant to real-world work scenarios, making it difficult for students to see the relevance of their studies to future employment. The assessment methods in these vocational programs continue to emphasize grammar knowledge and reading comprehension over practical communication skills. As a result, graduates lack the necessary English proficiency for professional environments.

The researcher evaluated the need for new educational resources by interviewing educators and students. This investigation focused on the effectiveness of current textbooks and the obstacles students face in English language acquisition, particularly in listening skills. The study also delved into the challenges teachers encounter when finding and implementing listening materials, as well as the suitability of content in existing textbooks. Furthermore, the researcher analyzed records of student performance on listening assessments to evaluate the learning outcomes of vocational school students in Batam. The results of this investigation provide a rationale for developing effective and practical textbooks that emphasize the listening component of English language education. The research methodology incorporated open-ended interviews with various stakeholders, school supervisors, principals, teachers, and vocational students.

Between May 15 and 17, 2024, researchers carried out interviews at vocational schools, both public and private, in Batam City. They employed an interview guide specifically designed to investigate the effectiveness of textbooks, the availability of teaching materials, and the obstacles students encounter in learning English. The results of these interviews uncovered a notable problem

in English education within Batam City's vocational institutions: *“a scarcity of textbooks specifically tailored to vocational school needs. The learning materials provided by schools, acquired from publishers, consist of general English textbooks intended for high schools, Islamic high schools, and vocational schools alike. Furthermore, teachers lack the time to create teaching materials that align with their students' vocational programs and specializations. Consequently, the reference materials used for instruction are often irrelevant to both the vocational school context and workplace communication scenarios. The current textbooks are overly complex, with explanations that are too broad and generalized, making them difficult for both students and teachers to utilize effectively. [15,16,17/5/2024/10:26].”*

To gather more in-depth information for their research, the team carried out extensive interviews with 36 students enrolled in both public and private vocational institutions in Batam. The results of these interviews revealed various problems with the English textbooks currently utilized in the educational process. *“Students reported that the teaching materials were not aligned with the communication requirements and situations encountered in professional settings. The general nature of the content presentation made it difficult for students to utilize the books independently for individual or group study. Furthermore, the English curriculum lacked connection to production-related subjects. Another concern was the infrequent practice of listening skills in class due to the absence of appropriate equipment, resulting in students being unaccustomed to developing their listening abilities. [15,16,17/5/2024/09:30].”*

An observational study conducted from May 18-19, 2024, *“examining teachers' learning plans, textbooks, and learning support facilities, uncovered that among the five books from different publishers (four domestic and one from Singapore), none presented material aligned with industrial contexts. The books' content focused on general teaching materials suitable for both high schools and vocational schools. Additionally, no teachers had prepared learning plans that corresponded to industry needs. [18/5/2024/08.30].”*

In contrast to the previously mentioned explanation, the actual situation in Batam City Vocational School shows ineffective English language teaching. An online survey conducted in March 2023, involving 62 vocational schools, uncovered substantial shortcomings: 92.3% lacked English learning labs, 75% had no manual labs, 92.3% were without digital labs, and 78.8% did not have appropriate textbooks. Concerning workplace requirements, 92.3% of teachers had never developed teaching materials aligned with industry needs, and 96.2% lacked textbooks tailored to workplace demands. As a result, many Batam City Vocational School students have not passed their English evaluations. During the 2021-2022 academic year, the English Vocational School Batam



City exam, taken by 4023 students, had a pass rate of only 11.87%. Discussions with subject teachers revealed infrequent listening and speaking exercises due to a lack of modern facilities. Students reported difficulties in understanding speakers, maintaining concentration, dealing with fast speech, and insufficient listening and speaking practice. These challenges faced by Batam City vocational school students in learning English are consistent with the findings of Maliwan (2021; Safira & Azzarah, 2022; Nushi & Orouji, 2021).

In Batam City, the effectiveness of English education in vocational schools is currently subpar, with 92.3% of these institutions lacking suitable English teaching materials that meet workplace needs. This inadequacy has led to poor English communication skills among students, as demonstrated by the fact that only 11.87% of 4,023 students passed the language assessment. A Discussion Group Forum held at Vocational High School 2 Batam in March 2023 uncovered that 62 vocational schools in the city were utilizing textbooks ill-suited for their students' requirements, and teachers had not created English teaching resources that satisfied industry demands. The significance of industry-specific English textbooks cannot be underestimated, as they can greatly improve students' chances of obtaining their first job (Pohan et al., 2019). To tackle these challenges, it is essential to adopt innovative strategies for managing English language instruction (Supriyanto 2019; Nurhayati 2019).

Research conducted in the field revealed that Vocational Schools in Batam City are not effectively teaching English. Teachers encounter major obstacles, primarily because the current curriculum fails to address the practical English skills needed by vocational graduates in their future jobs. This problem arises from the lack of English textbooks that are specifically designed for vocational education and aligned with industry requirements. Moreover, students have limited chances to engage in listening exercises. As a result, learners fail to develop the English communication abilities essential for their prospective industrial careers. To address these crucial issues, it is imperative that scholars develop English Listening textbooks tailored for vocational schools. These educational materials should be crafted to meet the communication demands of both industrial and professional environments.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The findings reveal that the vocational English learning management in Batam City, an industrial hub, involves planning, implementation, and evaluation. Interviews, observations, and document reviews show that the current model is ineffective due to inadequate planning. Instructors fail to create learning plans that meet industry requirements, lacking empirical data, industry involvement, and consideration of students' workplace English communication needs. In the

implementation phase, textbooks and materials for listening, reading, speaking, and writing are irrelevant to the industrial context, resulting in learning experiences and competencies that do not match professional English communication demands. Additionally, evaluations focus on grammar and reading skills rather than communication abilities. These findings are valuable for vocational English educators, industries, and government bodies in Batam, offering insights for improving English language instruction management to align with industrial needs. They also provide a framework for future research to develop effective vocational English learning models tailored to professional environments. Enhancing the learning process to meet employer requirements can improve job readiness among graduates, potentially reducing unemployment among vocational school alumni.

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