## FOSTERING CREATIVITY AND DIGITAL SKILLS IN VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN THROUGH LEARNING GRAMMAR AND SPEAKING CONVERSATION SKILLS

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### ABSTRACT

*With a focus on the development of speaking and grammatical skills that are essential for vocational students, this research looks at how English language education is incorporated into the Design and Visual Communication (DKV) curriculum at SMK Negeri 7 Batam. This study emphasizes the importance of language competency in improving academic achievement and professional preparedness, especially in view of the growing worldwide significance of English in the design and multimedia industries. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining questionnaires, classroom observations, and interviews to determine the particular requirements of DKV students and evaluate the efficacy of existing teaching strategies. The results show that collaborative and project-based learning settings greatly aid in the acquisition of English by matching language proficiency with design-oriented activities including group discussions, presentations, and critiques.*
***Keywords****: Vocational Education, Design Communication, Grammar And Speaking Skills.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Design and Visual Communication (DKV) program at SMK Negeri 7 Batam offers Grade 11 students a curriculum that combines technical creativity with fundamental academic abilities. English language proficiency, especially in speaking and grammar, is essential to their academic path. Effective English communication is essential for students in vocational domains like DKV, both for academic achievement and for future employment prospects when communication and design collide (Wijayanto, Barlian, & Nurbani, 2022).

Many students struggle with English, especially when it comes to verbal fluency and grammatical precision, even while they excel in creative subjects. Since grammar is the structural basis of language, it helps students create sentences that are compelling and unambiguous, which improves their visual storytelling. As English continues to dominate international sectors like design and multimedia, students who have a firm command of grammar are better able to understand and communicate design principles in professional settings (Arinta, 2021). Furthermore, by bridging language gaps using well-known creative tools, visual aids can greatly assist students in overcoming these difficulties when learning grammar and speaking (Gistituati et al., 2021).

For students to succeed academically and professionally, it is essential to improve their speaking skills, especially in the areas of design and visual communication. Gaining proficiency in English not only makes communication easier but also boosts self-esteem, enabling students to share their thoughts, participate in debates, and work well with others and clients. For design students, who frequently have to communicate creative notions, this is especially crucial (Duropan, 2020). Additionally, it has been demonstrated that integrating graphic media and the scientific method into language instruction enhances speaking abilities and student engagement, making it a useful strategy for vocational education settings.

Meeting these English language requirements, particularly in speaking and grammar, is consistent with SMK Negeri 7 Batam's goal of producing capable and adaptable graduates who are ready to succeed in the creative industries both domestically and abroad. Evidence from recent research that highlight the importance of visual arts and customized English learning resources in promoting language competency for design students further supports these findings (Wijayanto, Barlian, & Nurbani, 2022; Gistituati et al., 2021).

## METHOD

To thoroughly evaluate the relationship between English language instruction and the specific requirements of Visual Communication Design (DKV) students, integrating various research methodologies can yield more comprehensive understandings. Recent studies indicate that using a mixed-methods approach enables a deeper and more complex understanding of educational settings. For example, as mentioned by Harris (2022), "a mixed-methods approach can uncover both quantitative patterns and qualitative subtleties, portraying a more complete understanding of student experiences and teacher methods.".

The survey was created to evaluate students' views on their learning experiences, especially emphasizing the connection between English teaching and their interests in design. This method provided quantitative information regarding the effectiveness and significance of lessons, which are essential for students who might possess stronger visual and creative learning tendencies. Questions were designed to examine factors such as content relevance, engagement levels, and students' comfort using English as the language of instruction. Students offered insights regarding their perceived advancement, the clarity of instructors' explanations, and their capability to utilize English in discussions related to design. This instrument provided a summary of student perceptions regarding English learning in their area of interest.

Classroom observations, guided by the ISTE Standards for Students, added an additional layer of qualitative data. These standards highlight the significance of critical thinking, creativity, and digital teamwork in contemporary education. In line with Carter's (2024) findings, which indicate that "observational data can illuminate the relationship between teaching methods and student involvement in digital-era education," this method concentrated on the effectiveness of English lessons that integrated digital resources and critical thinking activities, particularly for students who excel in visual communication.

To enhance the findings, interviews were conducted with the English teacher and five students. The interview with the teacher examined instructional methods, obstacles faced, and perspectives on student development. The educator also considered how English abilities are incorporated into the DKV curriculum and how the program might be enhanced to better meet students' particular requirements in visual communication. The student interviews provided individual viewpoints on classroom experiences, highlighting challenges encountered while using English in creative assignments, favored methods of learning, and recommendations for enhancing the relevance of language lessons.

Through the integration of these methods, the study was able to triangulate data, thereby increasing the validity of the findings. According to Morgan (2021), "triangulation strengthens the reliability of research outcomes, especially in educational settings where diverse student needs must be addressed." By combining surveys, observations, and interviews, this study offers a well-rounded perspective that can guide the enhancement of English language instruction tailored to the specific requirements of DKV students.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In conducting a needs analysis for developing English language skills, specifically grammar and speaking for students in the Design, Communication, and Visual Department at SMK 7 Negeri Batam, several crucial factors come into play. The emphasis on project-based learning and collaborative activities underscores a student-centered learning environment that can foster effective English communication within the design and multimedia context.

To begin with, the significance of English as a language of instruction and an essential skill is vital for students seeking careers in design and visual communication, where English influences global trends and terminology. This significance indicates the necessity for resources designed for professional situations in these domains, emphasizing practical communication settings, such as group discussions, presentations, and critiques that are crucial for productive client and team engagement.

Examining the existing educational techniques, finding a middle ground between teacher-centered and learner-centered strategies is beneficial. Although educators offer extensive support, fostering self-directed learning enables students to enhance their adaptability in English usage, particularly in more fluid contexts like spoken language. The content-based model is emphasized as successful, as it combines English teaching with subject-specific content, enabling students to acquire language skills relevant to their vocational training.

The educational approach at SMK 7 Negeri Batam also focuses on competency-based training, particularly for skills that necessitate practice and evaluation in group environments. Engaging activities such as team discussions, excursions, and multimedia materials—videos, music, and games—were recognized as highly effective methods for enhancing language abilities. These approaches involve students actively, promoting a more engaging learning experience that transcends conventional lecture-based teaching. Moreover, peer observation and self-assessment activities foster essential reflective skills, enabling students to recognize their personal language strengths and areas that require

enhancement.

Technology significantly influences the learning experience of students, especially via presentations and digital resources that aid project-oriented activities. In a progressively digital educational environment, employing technology as a medium for learning reflects the real-life situations students will face in their careers. Although conventional tools such as chalkboards continue to be utilized for clarity, incorporating presentations, online videos, and multimedia content helps students get acquainted with the tools they will use in the workplace.

The examination also highlights the significance of collaborative learning since students frequently favor teamwork. Group assignments enable them to generate and combine ideas, transforming English learning into a socially interactive experience that also cultivates teamwork abilities vital in the design field. Group assignments match their inclination for learning via teamwork, highlighting a curriculum designed to enhance communicative skills in a cooperative, practical environment.

## CONCLUSION

The needs assessment for the English language teaching in the Design and Visual Communication (DKV) program at SMK 7 Negeri Batam underscores the essential importance of customized language training in equipping students for their upcoming professions. Integrating English into project-based and collaborative learning connects language learning with students' career skills.

## Acknowledgement

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