

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Background of study, Problem Identification, Limitation Research, Research Question, Research Objectives, and Research Significance.

### 1.1 Background

In recent years, the hospitality major has become one of the most in-demand vocational programs in Indonesian Vocational High Schools (SMK). This trend is closely related to the rapid growth of the tourism and hospitality industry, particularly in key destinations such as Bali, Yogyakarta, and Lombok. Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS, 2003) show that the number of international tourist arrivals to Indonesia reached 11.68 million visits, an increase that is significant compared to the previous year. This growth has fueled the demand for skilled workers in various hospitality sectors, including Front Office positions, which are considered the “face” of a hotel and the frontline of guest service.

Front Office students are expected to master technical skills such as check-in/check-out procedures, reservation management, and guest complaint handling, as well as soft skills such as interpersonal communication, empathy, and problem-solving. Beyond these, they must possess professional English communication skills, as English serves as the primary working language in international hotels. The Ministry of National Education Regulation No. 20 of 2016 on graduate Competency Standard emphasizes that SMK graduates must have both technical (hard skills) and communication (soft skills) competencies relevant to the professional world.

However, previous studies have revealed a gap between English learning in hospitality-focused SMKs and the actual needs of the industry. Widodo (2015) found that English teaching materials used in

SMKs are generally “General English” without emphasis on industry-specific tasks. Rahmawati and Cahyono (2018) further noted that this lack of relevance makes it difficult for students to apply English in real work contexts, while Suryanto (2019) stated that the absence of authentic materials leaves students unfamiliar with professional communication patterns in the hospitality industry.

A similar condition is found at SMA Karya Wisata Penarukan, particularly in the Front Office major. Initial observations indicate that English teaching in this school remains ineffective, as the teacher used generic learning Lesson Plans that are not based on the context of the hospitality workplace. These nodule lack Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and authentic expressions commonly used in international hotels. For instance, the materials do not include role-plays based on real-life situations, such as *handling overbooking guests or resolving billing disputes*, which are frequent occurrences at the Front Office. As a result, students tend to acquire English passively and lack confidence when speaking with foreign guests. This directly reduces their work readiness, even though the hospitality industry, especially international hotel chains, demands Front Office staff who can communicate at a high standard.

The English for Specific Purposes (ESP) approach is believed to bridge this gap. Richard and Rodgers (2001) define ESP as a language learning approach that focuses on the specific needs of learners according to their professional or academic fields. Borounjeni and Fard (2013) emphasize that “well-designed ESP courses not only improve learners’ language proficiency but also boost their workplace confidence and readiness. “In the hospitality context, Marriott International, as one of the largest hotel chain in the world, has a global Quality Assurance Manual that serves as an industry benchmark. In this document, Marriott (2021) specific detailed communication standard for Front Office employees, such as. : Greet the guest within 15 seconds of arrival, use the guest’s name at least twice during the interaction, and

close with a warm expression such as “Is there anything else I can assist you with today?” (Marriott Quality Assurance Manual, 2021, p. 47). Additionally, which emphasizes empathy, problem clarification, and quick solutions, “Acknowledge the issue, apologize sincerely, offer a solution, and confirm guest satisfaction before closing the conversation.” (Marriott International SOP- Guest Recovery, 2021). Such a standard combines both language proficiency and service skills, both of which should be integral to English teaching material or Front Office students. However, the Lesson Plans currently used at SMA Karya Wisata Penarukan do not reflect these standards, meaning students are not accustomed to using them in practice or assessment.

To address these issues, Marriott International was selected as the basis for material development because it is one of the world’s largest reputable hotel chains with standardized service procedures used globally. Marriott’s Quality Assurance Manual and Standard Operating Procedures provide clear, detailed, and measurable communication guidelines for Front office staff, making them an ideal benchmark for vocational education. These standards represent the real expectations of the international hospitality industry, ensuring that students learn expressions, service attitudes, and communication flows that directly mirror professional hotel operations. Therefore, adopting Marriott Standard ensures that the developed materials are not only authentic but also aligned with global competencies required in modern Front Office roles.

From the above discussion, it's evident that there is a clear research gap between the general, non-contextual English teaching Lesson Plans used at SMA Karya Wisata Penarukan and the specific needs of the international hospitality industry, particularly the global standards exemplified by Marriott International. To address this gap, this study employs the Design and Development (D&D) model by Richey and Klein (2007) to develop ESP-based English materials for Front Office students. These materials will incorporate real-world tasks,

role-play scenarios aligned with Marriott Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and authentic dialogues to equip students with targeted English skills, greater professional confidence, and enhanced competitiveness in the international job market.

## **1.2 Identification of Problem**

Initial observations at SMA Karya Wisata revealed significant challenges in delivering English lessons, particularly within the Front Office subject within the hospitality department. Teachers predominantly relied on general English textbooks that were not tailored to the specific language demands of the hospitality context. These materials lacked authentic workplace scenarios, such as handling guest check-ins, taking reservations, or addressing customer complaints situation crucial for students preparing for the tourism industry.

Recent studies underscore the necessity of aligning English teaching materials with the specific needs of hospitality students. For instance, Syafudin (2024) conducted a needs analysis at Politeksin Indonusa Surakarta, highlighting that students in hospitality programs require English skills pertinent to their future careers in the service industry. Similarly, Anggayan et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of a linguistic approach to teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to food and beverage service students, noting that tailored instruction enhances students' communication abilities in real-world hospitality settings. Furthermore, Yani et al. (2023) addressed the scarcity of vocational English teaching material, particularly for the Front Office sector, and developed Lesson Plans based on students' needs to bridge this gap. These findings align with the assertion by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) that ESP material development should commence with through analysis of learners' needs and the target context.

Classroom observations at SMA Karya Wisata revealed that students often struggled to relate the material to real-life practices in spoken English, especially during simulated guest service situations.

Teachers also reported difficulties in adapting the curriculum due to a lack of practical resources and supporting media.

### **1.3 Research Limitation**

Grounded in the identified problems and contextual considerations, this study aims to design and develop a specialized English teaching Lesson Plan for Front Office English, targeting Grade XI Front Office students at SMA Karya Wisata (KARWIS). Such development is crucial to effectively prepare learners for internship placements and subsequent employment in the hospitality sector. The school was chosen due to the generic nature of its existing English lesson plan, which lacks alignment with the practical communication demands of the industry. Therefore, this lesson plan is purposefully customized for this particular cohort and is not intended for broader application across other classes or vocational programs.

### **1.4 Research Question**

This study is conducted to develop an English teaching Lesson Plan for the Hospitality Department, specifically tailored to Grade XI students at SMA Karya Wisata, focusing on the Front Office subject. The research aims to address the following question :

1. What are the eleventh-grade hospitality students' needs regarding the English Teaching Lesson Plan?
2. How is the development process of the English Teaching Lesson Plan for the Hospitality major at SMA Karya Wisata?
3. How is the quality of the developed teaching Lesson Plan for eleventh grade at SMA Karya Wisata Penarukan?

### **1.5 Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study is to develop an English program at SMA Karya Wisata Penarukan, with a particular focus on the *Front Office subject*. Specifically, this study aims to :

1. Identify the specific English language needs of eleventh-grade hospitality students.
2. Develop an English Teaching Lesson Plan that is relevant to the vocational context of the Front Office.
3. Evaluate the quality of the developed Lesson Plan based on student and teacher feedback.

### **1.6 The Significance of the Study**

In general, two kinds of research significance are expected to be achieved by this research, namely :

#### **1. Theoretical Significance**

Theoretically, the results of this research are expected to provide meaningful contributions to the development of knowledge, particularly in the field of English, to enrich references and need of students, so that the developed teaching Lesson Plan can effectively and sustainably support the achievement of the expected learning objectives.

#### **2. Practical Significance**

##### **1. For Teacher**

The results of this study can provide information, data, and a general description of the development of the teaching Lesson Plan, especially in a hotel school. In addition, this study can also be a reference and guideline if teachers want to develop a quality teaching Lesson Plan in English learning and measure how effective the teaching materials are in meeting students' needs, and can also measure how much students understand when they get material from the teacher.

##### **2. For students**

The results of this study are expected to provide valuable information, data, and insights regarding the development of



English teaching Lesson Plans that are designed to meet the needs of students in the teaching and learning process. By providing materials that are more relevant and accessible, it is hoped that student particularly 11th-grade students in the Hospitality Department, will be able to better understand the required competencies and improve their learning outcomes.

### 3. For Other Researchers

For other researchers who use this research as a reference, it is hoped that they can help and make the best use of the results of this research by conducting similar research that can provide information related to the development of teaching material in learning English, especially for students majoring in hospitality.

