

Exploring English Speaking Learning Style Preferences of Hospitality Students in Makassar

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ABSTRACT

Effective English communication is increasingly essential for hospitality students because the tourism and hospitality industry requires professionals to interact with international guests and stakeholders in diverse communicative situations. This research investigates the English learning preferences of Hospitality students in Makassar, particularly regarding speaking and pronunciation activities, as a basis for developing contextually relevant English instruction. A quantitative descriptive approach was employed, using a questionnaire to identify students' preferences for various speaking and pronunciation learning activities. The findings demonstrate a strong preference for interactive, collaborative, practical, and visually supported speaking activities. Group discussion was the most preferred activity (85%), followed by describing pictures or objects (82.5%), describing two different pictures or objects and explaining procedures (77.5% each), and giving arguments about cases (75%). For pronunciation, learning through dictionaries received the highest preference (72.5%), followed by imitating pronunciation modeled by lecturers or instructors and learning from native speakers through digital applications (70% each). English debating received a relatively lower preference (42.5%), suggesting that more demanding activities may require gradual scaffolding, although they remain important for developing spontaneous speaking, argumentation, and critical thinking. Similarly, tongue-twister activities (60%) can support articulation and fluency as supplementary practice. Overall, the findings indicate that Hospitality students favor learning experiences that promote active participation, authentic communication, technological engagement, and practical language use within authentic hospitality communication contexts. The research therefore recommends an industry-oriented Hospitality English syllabus integrating collaborative tasks, visual materials, authentic workplace simulations, pronunciation modeling, and technology-assisted practice to strengthen students' communicative competence and professional readiness.

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1. Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving economic and technological landscape, professional demands have significantly increased, particularly in terms of effective communication skills. In the tourism sector, the ability to use English both orally and in written form has become a fundamental requirement, as professionals frequently interact with international visitors (Munusamy & Kaliappen, 2024; Silva et al., 2025). English has developed into a global language that plays a crucial role in international communication. Therefore, countries with strong tourism potential, such as Indonesia, must prepare their future workforce, especially tourism students, with adequate English competence (Yusra et al., 2022; Said et al., 2021; Anggawirya et al., 2021).

The growing complexity of the tourism industry is also accompanied by rapid technological and social transformations that have reshaped how students access information, construct knowledge, and engage in learning. Contemporary learners are exposed to diverse digital platforms, multimedia resources, interactive technologies, and

increasingly flexible modes of learning. These developments have consequently influenced students' learning habits, preferences, expectations, and approaches to knowledge acquisition (Szymkowiak et al., 2021). Learning should therefore not be understood merely as the transmission of information from teachers to students but as a dynamic process through which individuals construct and transform knowledge based on their experiences. From this perspective, learners may demonstrate different preferences in the ways they perceive, process, interpret, and apply information. Understanding how students learn is consequently as important as determining what they need to learn (Guay, 2022; McGuire et al., 2023; Olafsen et al., 2025)

One factor that has traditionally been associated with individual differences in learning is learning style, referring broadly to learners' preferred ways of receiving, processing, organizing, and interpreting information. Students do not necessarily respond to instructional environments in identical ways; rather, they may demonstrate varying degrees of preference for visual, auditory, experiential, reflective, collaborative, or practical modes of engagement. Such differences have important pedagogical implications because students' engagement with instructional materials and classroom activities may be influenced by how learning experiences are presented. Identifying students' learning preferences may therefore provide teachers with useful pedagogical information for developing more responsive and learner-oriented instructional practices (Dhananjaya et al., 2024).

In the context of hospitality education, this issue becomes particularly significant because English learning is closely connected to the practical communication demands of the workplace. Hospitality students are not only expected to understand grammatical structures and vocabulary but also to use English appropriately in authentic professional situations, such as welcoming guests, handling reservations, responding to complaints, providing information, serving customers, and conducting tour-related interactions. English instruction in hospitality education therefore requires a pedagogical orientation that bridges linguistic knowledge and professional practice. Beyond their aesthetic function, literary texts also provide valuable linguistic resources through which readers can examine how language constructs identity, emotion, ideology, and social relations. (Yaumi et al., 2023). Exploring students' learning preferences can contribute to this process by providing insights into the types of instructional experiences through which they may engage more effectively with English learning.

A prominent theoretical framework for understanding learning preferences is Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT). Kolb conceptualizes learning as a cyclical process in which knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. The model emphasizes four interconnected modes of learning: Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation. Based on the combination of these modes, learners have traditionally been categorized into four learning styles: Diverging, Assimilating, Converging, and Accommodating. These orientations represent different ways of perceiving and processing experience and provide a framework for examining how learners engage with educational activities (Allen et al., 2022; Hunter, 2023). In hospitality education, their framework is particularly relevant because many learning activities inherently involve experiential, reflective, conceptual, and practical dimensions.

The relevance of learning preferences is also evident in English language instruction. Learners who demonstrate stronger visual preferences, for instance, may respond positively to written texts, diagrams, photographs, presentations, infographics, and videos. Learners who favor auditory modes may benefit from lectures, conversations, pronunciation activities, discussions, podcasts, and other listening-based tasks. Meanwhile, students who demonstrate stronger preferences for experiential or kinesthetic engagement may respond more effectively to role-plays, simulations, demonstrations, problem-solving tasks, and hands-on practice. (Yamo et al., 2024).

This relationship between learning and professional practice is particularly important because hospitality education is inherently practice oriented. Unlike academic disciplines that may rely predominantly on theoretical instruction, hospitality programs generally seek to integrate conceptual knowledge with practical competencies. English courses within hospitality programs may therefore incorporate activities such as hotel check-in and check-out simulations, restaurant-service dialogues, telephone reservations, complaint handling, front-office communication, tour-guiding practices, and other workplace-based scenarios. These activities provide students with opportunities to transform linguistic knowledge into communicative performance and consequently correspond closely with experiential and active forms of learning (F. Farida et al., 2024; Hien, 2021).

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of a particular instructional approach cannot be assumed to be uniform across all learners. Although practical simulations may be highly beneficial for some students, others may require explicit explanations, written resources, vocabulary preparation, or opportunities for reflection before engaging in communicative

performance. This variation highlights the importance of examining the characteristics of a particular student population rather than if a single instructional model will accommodate all learners equally. In other words, effective English instruction should recognize learner diversity while simultaneously maintaining alignment with the authentic communicative demands of the hospitality profession.

Understanding students' learning preferences may consequently contribute to the development of more responsive and diversified curriculum and instructional design. When educators have a clearer understanding of the learning tendencies of hospitality students, they can strategically combine different pedagogical approaches, including multimedia-based instruction, collaborative learning, reflective activities, experiential tasks, simulations, demonstrations, and authentic workplace scenarios (Bernadetha Haule et al., 2024; Oje et al., 2023; Staneviciene & Žekienė, 2025). Such pedagogical variety does not necessarily imply that instruction should be rigidly matched to a particular learning-style category. Rather, it can encourage educators to provide multiple pathways for engagement, allowing students to encounter content through complementary modes of perception, reflection, conceptualization, and practice. This approach may create a more inclusive learning environment and increase opportunities for meaningful student participation.

Moreover, the integration of varied instructional strategies is particularly relevant in the era of digital transformation. Hospitality students increasingly encounter English through social media, online tourism platforms, digital reservation systems, virtual learning environments, videos, podcasts, and other technology-mediated resources. Consequently, English instruction needs to move beyond conventional classroom practices and incorporate learning experiences that reflect the communicative and technological realities of the contemporary hospitality industry. A systematic understanding of students' learning preferences can provide an important foundation for selecting and integrating such resources in ways that remain pedagogically purposeful and professionally relevant.

From a curriculum perspective, identifying learning preferences may also help educators achieve a more appropriate balance between knowledge acquisition, reflective learning, communicative practice, and experiential engagement. Rather than privileging one mode of learning, hospitality English instruction can be designed around a combination of activities that allow students to encounter new information, reflect on their experiences, conceptualize linguistic and professional principles, and subsequently apply them in realistic contexts. Such an approach is consistent with the experiential nature of hospitality work, where professional competence is developed not only through knowing what to do but also through practicing how to communicate, respond, adapt, and make decisions in unpredictable situations.

Ultimately, investigating the learning style profiles and learning preferences of hospitality students can provide valuable pedagogical and curricular insights for English language education (Malini et al., 2022; Sulaiman Alhumaidan & Mohammed Alghamdi, 2023). Such an investigation can help educators better understand learner diversity and develop instructional environments that combine linguistic development with authentic professional practice. More importantly, in the tourism and hospitality sector, where communication constitutes a central component of service quality and customer satisfaction, English competence should be understood not simply as an academic requirement but as a form of professional capital. Accordingly, examining how hospitality students prefer to engage with English learning may constitute an important step toward developing more relevant, inclusive, experiential, and industry-responsive English language instruction.

Against this background, the present research seeks to investigate the learning style profiles and preferences of hospitality students in learning English in Makassar. The research is expected to provide empirical insights into the ways hospitality students perceive and engage with English learning and to identify pedagogical implications for designing instructional strategies that are responsive to learner diversity and aligned with the communicative demands of the hospitality industry. By connecting learner characteristics with the practical requirements of tourism education, the research may contribute to the development of English language instruction that is not only academically sound but also professionally meaningful and contextually relevant.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This research employed a mixed-methods research design by integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate the English language learning needs of students in the Hospitality Department. The use of a mixed-methods approach was considered appropriate because students' language needs constitute a multidimensional phenomenon that cannot be adequately captured through numerical data alone. Quantitative data obtained from questionnaires provided measurable information regarding students perceived needs, interests, proficiency levels, learning preferences, and

expectations, while qualitative data derived from interviews offered more in-depth explanations of the experiences, challenges, and contextual factors underlying those needs.

The integration of both forms of evidence was particularly important because needs analysis involves not only identifying what students perceive they need to learn but also understanding why those needs emerge and how they relate to the academic and professional contexts in which students are expected to use English. Thus, the quantitative component was employed to identify general patterns and tendencies across the participants, whereas the qualitative component was used to elaborate, contextualize, and interpret those patterns. The two strands of data were subsequently considered complementary rather than independent, allowing the researcher to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the students' English language requirements.

The primary purpose of this methodological design was to identify the actual and perceived English language needs of Hospitality Department students as a foundation for developing a contextually relevant syllabus. The research was therefore oriented toward needs assessment and pedagogical recommendation, with the findings serving as an empirical basis for determining the content, learning objectives, language skills, topics, communicative functions, learning activities, and instructional strategies that should be incorporated into the proposed syllabus. In this respect, the methodology was designed not merely to describe students' existing competencies but also to establish a systematic connection between students' present conditions, their target learning needs, and the English competencies required in hospitality-related academic and professional settings.

More specifically, the quantitative and qualitative phases were integrated at the interpretation stage. Questionnaire results were used to establish dominant trends in students' responses, while interview findings were examined to explain and deepen the meaning of those trends. For example, if questionnaire data indicated that students considered speaking to be a high-priority skill, interview data could provide insight into the specific communicative situations in which students experienced difficulties, such as interacting with hotel guests, handling complaints, providing tourist information, or conducting service-related conversations. Such integration strengthened the validity of the needs assessment by allowing the researcher to examine students' needs from multiple perspectives.

The methodological orientation of the research was consequently pragmatic and development oriented. Rather than treating students' needs as abstract linguistic categories, the research approached needs analysis as a practical process for informing curriculum and syllabus development. The ultimate objective was to ensure that the proposed syllabus would correspond not only to students' current English abilities but also to the communicative competencies they are expected to develop for future academic and professional purposes in the hospitality sector.

2.2 Participants and Sources of Data

The participants in this research consisted of students enrolled in the Hospitality Department, supported by lecturers who provided additional perspectives concerning students' English learning needs. The inclusion of both students and lecturers was intended to obtain a more comprehensive representation of the learning context. Students were considered the primary source of information regarding their perceived needs, interests, difficulties, expectations, and learning preferences, while lecturers contributed professional and pedagogical perspectives based on their experiences of teaching and observing students' English learning.

The research therefore drew upon two principal sources of empirical data: questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire generated quantitative data that could be systematically categorized and compared across participants, whereas the interviews generated qualitative accounts that enabled the researcher to explore issues that could not be fully captured through predetermined questionnaire items. The combination of these sources was expected to reduce the limitations associated with relying exclusively on either self-reported quantitative responses or qualitative narratives.

2.3 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was conducted systematically through several interconnected stages. The first stage involved determining the central focus of the investigation, namely the English language learning needs of Hospitality Department students. This initial stage was important because needs analysis must be anchored in a clearly defined educational and professional context. The researcher therefore considered the relationship between students' current English learning conditions, their academic requirements, and the communicative demands associated with future employment in the hospitality and tourism sector.

Following the identification of the research focus, the researcher reviewed relevant literature concerning needs analysis, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), syllabus design, language learning, and English for hospitality and tourism. This literature review served two purposes. First, it provided a conceptual foundation for identifying relevant dimensions of students' needs. Second, it informed us about the development of the research instruments, particularly the questionnaire and interview guidelines. The instruments were consequently designed to capture dimensions of language learning that were relevant to the specific characteristics of hospitality education rather than relying solely on general English learning categories.

2.3.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to Hospitality Department students to obtain quantitative information concerning their English learning needs. The questionnaire focused on several dimensions, including students perceived English proficiency, language skill priorities, learning interests, difficulties, preferred learning activities, communicative needs, and expectations regarding English instruction.

The use of a questionnaire enabled the researcher to identify patterns across the participant group and determine which aspects of English learning were perceived as most important by the students. Quantitative responses were particularly useful for establishing the relative importance of different language skills and learning components. For example, students' responses could indicate whether speaking, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary, pronunciation, or grammar was perceived as a higher priority. Such information provided an empirical basis for determining which language components should receive greater emphasis in the proposed syllabus.

Importantly, the questionnaire was not treated merely as a mechanism for collecting descriptive statistics. Rather, it functioned as a needs-mapping instrument, allowing the researcher to establish a structured profile of the students' current and target learning requirements. The resulting quantitative profile was subsequently compared with information obtained from the interviews to identify areas of convergence, complementarity, or potential discrepancy.

2.3.2 Interviews

Following the administration of the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected students and lecturers. Interviews were employed because questionnaire responses, although useful for identifying general tendencies, may not adequately explain the reasons underlying students' perceptions. Through open-ended questions and follow-up prompts, the researcher was able to explore participants' experiences, difficulties, expectations, and perceptions regarding English learning in greater depth.

The interviews with students focused particularly on their experiences in learning English, perceived challenges, preferred learning activities, communicative situations in which they needed English, and expectations concerning the content and delivery of English courses. Meanwhile, interviews with lecturers provided an additional pedagogical perspective concerning students' actual abilities, classroom difficulties, instructional challenges, and the types of English competencies considered necessary for hospitality-related contexts.

The qualitative component was therefore intended to contextualize and interpret the quantitative findings. Rather than simply repeating questionnaire questions, the interviews provided participants with opportunities to explain their responses and raise issues that might not have been anticipated by the researcher. This approach was important for ensuring that the resulting syllabus recommendations were grounded in participants' actual educational experiences and not exclusively in predefined assumptions about hospitality English.

2.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed according to the nature of each data source. Questionnaire data were analyzed quantitatively to identify the frequency and distribution of participants' responses. The quantitative analysis was used to determine dominant patterns in students perceived needs, learning preferences, language skill priorities, and expectations. The results were subsequently organized into meaningful categories that could be directly related to the objectives of syllabus development.

Interview data, in contrast, were analyzed qualitatively. The researcher first organized the interview responses and identified statements relevant to the research focus. The data were then classified into recurring themes related to students' English learning needs, perceived difficulties, communicative requirements, learning preferences, and expectations concerning English instruction. Relevant responses were interpreted in relation to the quantitative findings to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the participants' needs.

The integration of the two datasets occurred during the interpretation stage. Quantitative findings provided an overview of the prevalence and relative importance of needs, whereas qualitative findings explained the nature, context, and underlying reasons for those needs. This process enabled the researcher to move beyond a purely descriptive account and develop a more nuanced interpretation of the data.

For instance, if the questionnaire demonstrated that speaking was identified by a substantial proportion of students as an important English skill, the interview data could be examined to determine the specific communicative purposes associated with that preference. These purposes might include greeting and assisting guests, providing information, responding to customer requests, handling complaints, communicating with international tourists, or participating in workplace interactions. Consequently, the integration of quantitative and qualitative evidence allowed the researcher to translate broad learner preferences into more specific pedagogical and syllabus requirements.

2.5 Needs Assessment and Syllabus Development

The final stage of the research involved synthesizing the findings into a needs assessment profile that could serve as the foundation for syllabus development. The assessment considered both students' present situation needs, and their target situation needs. Present situation needs referred to students' existing English proficiency, perceived weaknesses, learning difficulties, and current learning experiences. Target situation needs, in contrast, concerned the English competencies and communicative tasks that students would be expected to perform in their future academic and professional environments.

This distinction was essential because an effective Hospitality English syllabus should not merely respond to what students currently find difficult. It should also anticipate the linguistic and communicative demands they are likely to encounter in authentic hospitality workplaces. Accordingly, the findings were interpreted in terms of the relationship between students' current abilities, their learning expectations, and the competencies required for professional communication.

The assessment subsequently informed the formulation of syllabus components, including learning objectives, course content, language skills, topics, communicative functions, learning activities, and instructional strategies. Attention was given to authentic hospitality-related situations in which English is used as a means of professional communication. The syllabus was therefore intended to provide students with opportunities to develop English proficiency through contexts that reflect the realities of hospitality work.

The resulting pedagogical recommendations were based on the principle that syllabus design should emerge from empirical evidence rather than assumptions about what hospitality students need. By grounding syllabus development in systematically collected data from both students and lecturers, the research sought to increase the relevance, contextual appropriateness, and practical applicability of the proposed syllabus.

2.6 Methodological Rigor

The methodological rigor of the research was strengthened with data-source triangulation, whereby information obtained from students' questionnaires was examined alongside qualitative evidence from students and lecturers. Triangulation was particularly important because students' self-perceptions may not always correspond completely with their actual abilities or the expectations of instructors and professional contexts. Comparing different sources of evidence therefore provided a stronger basis for identifying recurring needs and interpreting potential differences in perception.

Furthermore, the systematic progression from research focus → literature review → instrument development → questionnaire administration → interviews → data analysis → needs assessment → syllabus recommendation ensured that each stage of the research was connected to the overall research objective. This methodological sequence enabled the researcher to establish a transparent link between the empirical evidence and the proposed pedagogical outcomes.

Overall, the methodology was designed to produce a context-sensitive and evidence-based account of Hospitality Department students' English learning needs. The integration of quantitative patterns with qualitative explanations provided a more comprehensive foundation for syllabus development than either method could provide independently. Through this approach, the research sought to bridge the gap between students' current English learning experiences and the communicative competencies demanded by contemporary hospitality and tourism workplaces.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Students' Preferences for Speaking Activities

The questionnaire findings indicate that Hospitality students demonstrate a strong preference for interactive, collaborative, and practically oriented speaking activities. As shown in Table 1, group discussion received the highest level of preference at 85%, followed by describing pictures or objects at 82.5%. Describing two different pictures or objects and explaining procedures each received 77.5%, while giving arguments about a particular case was preferred by 75% of the respondents.

Table 1. Students' Preferences for Speaking Activities

No.	Speaking Activity	% Yes	Preference Level
1.	Group discussion	85.0%	Very High
2.	Describing pictures or objects	82.5%	Very High
3.	Describing two different pictures or objects	77.5%	High
4.	Explaining the procedure of a particular task	77.5%	High
5.	Giving arguments about a particular case	75.0%	High
6.	Presentation practice	62.5%	Moderate
7.	Interview	62.5%	Moderate
8.	Role-play	60.0%	Moderate
9.	English debating	42.5%	Relatively Low
10.	Other activities	0.0%	None

The results demonstrate that students overwhelmingly favor activities that require active participation and interpersonal interaction. Group discussion, which obtained the highest percentage (85%), indicates that students perceive peer interaction as a particularly useful means of developing their speaking ability. Similarly, the high preference for describing pictures or objects (82.5%) suggests that visual stimuli may provide students with cognitive and linguistic support when expressing ideas in English.

The relatively high percentages for describing two different pictures or objects and explaining procedures (77.5% each) further indicate students' preference for task-oriented speaking activities. These activities require students not only to produce English but also to organize information, sequence ideas, compare objects, and communicate meaning clearly. Such competencies are highly relevant to hospitality contexts, where employees are frequently required to explain facilities, describe services, provide directions, explain procedures, and communicate information to guests.

Giving arguments about a particular case also received a relatively high preference (75%). This finding suggests that students are willing to engage in activities requiring opinion formation and verbal reasoning. Although slightly less preferred than descriptive and collaborative tasks, argumentation can contribute to the development of higher-order speaking abilities, including critical thinking, justification, and spontaneous response.

In contrast, English debating received the lowest preference among the listed speaking activities, at 42.5%. This relatively lower percentage may indicate that formal debate is perceived as more demanding because it requires spontaneous speech, argument construction, vocabulary availability, confidence, and the ability to respond immediately to opposing viewpoints. Nevertheless, its lower preference should not necessarily be interpreted as evidence that debate is pedagogically ineffective. Rather, it may suggest that such activities require gradual scaffolding and appropriate preparation before students can participate confidently.

3.2 Students' Preferences for Pronunciation Activities

The questionnaire also examined students' preferences for different pronunciation-learning activities. The results demonstrate generally positive responses toward all the proposed activities, although the degree of preference varied.

Table 2. Students' Preferences for Pronunciation Activities

No.	Speaking Activity	% Yes	Preference Level
1.	Learning pronunciation through a dictionary	72.5%	High
2.	Imitating pronunciation modeled by lecturers/instructors	70.0%	High
3.	Learning pronunciation from native speakers through applications	70.0%	High
4.	Practicing conversational dialogues	65.0%	Moderate-High
5.	Practicing pronunciation through tongue twisters	60.0%	Moderate
6.	Other activities	00.0%	None

The findings show that dictionary-based pronunciation learning received the highest preference, with 72.5% of students selecting this activity. This result suggests that students value accessible reference tools that provide pronunciation information when learning unfamiliar vocabulary. Dictionaries may offer phonetic transcriptions, audio models, stress information, and examples of pronunciation, thereby allowing students to practice independently.

The second-highest preferences were imitating lecturers' or instructors' pronunciation and learning pronunciation from native speakers through applications, both of which received 70%. These findings suggest that students continue to value explicit pronunciation models. At the same time, the preference for native-speaker applications indicates an increasing openness toward technology-mediated pronunciation learning. Digital applications can provide repeated exposure to authentic pronunciation models and enable students to practice beyond the physical boundaries of the classroom.

Conversational dialogue received 65%, indicating that students also recognize the importance of applying pronunciation in communicative contexts. This finding is particularly relevant to hospitality education because pronunciation cannot be treated solely as an isolated linguistic feature. In professional hospitality interactions, pronunciation needs to support intelligibility, fluency, and effective communication with guests and colleagues.

The tongue-twister technique received 60%, which represents the lowest preference among the identified pronunciation activities. Although less preferred than dictionary-based learning, imitation, and technology-mediated practice, tongue twisters can still serve as supplementary activities for developing articulation, rhythm, and fluency. Their relatively lower preference may reflect the perception that they are more challenging or less directly connected to authentic hospitality communication.

3.3 Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that Hospitality students in Makassar show a strong preference for interactive, collaborative, and practically oriented speaking activities. Group discussion was identified as the most preferred activity, with 85% of the students selecting it. This finding suggests that students are more comfortable developing their speaking competence when they are provided with opportunities to interact, exchange ideas, and negotiate meaning with their peers. (amer & amer, 2023) argue that interactive speaking activities can increase learners' participation and confidence because students are directly involved in meaningful communication rather than merely receiving linguistic information from the teacher. Their argument supports the present finding because group discussion creates opportunities for learners to produce language actively and respond spontaneously to other speakers. Similarly, (DİLBER & KÖMÜR, 2022; Ekayanti et al., 2021) maintain that small-group interaction and task-based activities are particularly relevant for hospitality students because they allow learners to practice English in situations that resemble professional communication. Therefore, the high preference for group discussion found in this study reinforces the argument that collaborative interaction should become an important component of English instruction for Hospitality students.

The students also demonstrated a strong preference for describing pictures or objects, which received 82.5%, while comparing or describing two different pictures or objects received 77.5%. These findings indicate that visual materials may function as effective scaffolding for oral communication. (N. Farida et al., 2024; Hardiyanto, 2023) explain that visual learning resources can support learners in organizing information and generating ideas because pictures provide concrete

references from which language can be produced. This perspective is relevant to the present findings because students may find it easier to speak when they can observe a particular object, situation, or image before expressing their ideas (F. Farida et al., 2023; Qudsiana Nurul Arifah et al., 2025) further argue that visual and experiential learning activities can be particularly beneficial in vocationally oriented education because they connect language learning with recognizable situations. In the hospitality context, pictures of hotel facilities, restaurant menus, tourist destinations, guest-service situations, and tourism attractions can provide meaningful stimuli for speaking practice. Thus, visual-based speaking activities should not merely be regarded as supplementary classroom exercises but can be strategically used to bridge language learning and professional communication.

Another important finding concerns procedural explanation, which was preferred by 77.5% of the respondents. The relatively high preference for this activity is particularly sites explaining procedures that constitute an important communicative function in hospitality and tourism workplaces. (Marliana et al., 2025) state that hospitality education should integrate language instruction with practical workplace situations because students are eventually expected to use English when providing services, explaining facilities, giving directions, or assisting guests. Their argument strongly supports the present finding because procedural speaking requires students to organize information sequentially and communicate it clearly to an interlocutor. Similarly, (Deale, 2019) emphasizes that hospitality education becomes more meaningful when classroom learning reflects tasks that students are likely to encounter in their future professional environments. Therefore, activities such as explaining hotel check-in procedures, reservation processes, restaurant services, or directions to tourism destinations may simultaneously improve students' speaking ability and prepare them for professional communication.

The finding that 75% of the students preferred giving arguments about cases also demonstrates that Hospitality students are interested in speaking activities that require more than simple exchange of information. Such activities demand reasoning, opinion formation, and the ability to justify positions. (Sahib & Muchtar, 2026) contend that symbolic communication is a defining feature of human interaction, enabling individuals to convey abstract meanings, cultural values, and social identities through shared systems of signs. This argument is consistent with the present findings because case-based argumentation gives people opportunities to practice language while developing critical thinking. However, English debating received only 42.5%, substantially lower than case-based argumentation. This difference suggests that students may be willing to express opinions but may feel less confident when required to participate in more formal, competitive, and spontaneous argumentative activities. (Hattie & O'Leary, 2025) point out that learners differ in how they respond to instructional tasks, and activities that impose greater cognitive or performance demands may not be equally suitable for all students. Therefore, formal debating should not be eliminated from instruction, but it should be introduced gradually after students have developed confidence through less demanding activities such as pair discussions, small-group argumentation, and case-based problem solving.

The pronunciation findings similarly reveal students' preference for structured and guided learning. Learning pronunciation through dictionaries received the highest percentage, at 72.5%, followed by imitating pronunciation modeled by lecturers or instructors and learning from native speakers through applications, both at 70%. (Bashori et al., 2024; Iksora et al., 2022) argue that technology-assisted pronunciation learning can improve learners' pronunciation development because digital tools provide repeated exposure to pronunciation models and opportunities for independent practice. This argument supports the present finding concerning students' preference for pronunciation applications. (Indrayani et al., 2025) similarly explains that applications such as ELSA Speak can provide learners with immediate and individualized feedback on pronunciation, fluency, and speaking performance. The convergence between these previous studies and the present findings indicates that technology may become an important component of pronunciation instruction, particularly when students are given opportunities to practice independently outside the classroom.

Nevertheless, technology should not completely replace the role of lecturers in pronunciation instruction. The finding that 70% of students preferred imitating pronunciation modeled by lecturers demonstrates that teacher guidance remains important. (Khan & Haq, 2025) emphasize that effective instruction requires a balance between independent learning resources and direct pedagogical support from teachers. In the context of pronunciation, lecturers can provide explanations concerning articulation, word stress, rhythm, and intonation that may not always be fully understood through digital applications alone. Therefore, rather than considering teacher modeling and technology-assisted learning as competing approaches, they should be viewed as complementary. Lecturers can introduce and explain pronunciation patterns in the classroom, while digital applications and dictionaries can provide students with additional opportunities for repetition and autonomous practice.

Conversational dialogue was preferred by 65% of the respondents, indicating that a substantial proportion of students also recognize the value of practicing pronunciation within meaningful communicative contexts. (Muchtar, 2021)

argue that the language is a communication tool to express the idea and feeling to those invited to talk. Language skills are developed more effectively when students are given opportunities to use language in realistic situations rather than merely practicing isolated linguistic forms. This view suggests that pronunciation instruction should progress beyond the production of individual words and sounds toward connected speech. For Hospitality students, conversational dialogue can simulate authentic situations such as welcoming guests, making reservations, responding to inquiries, serving customers, or handling complaints. Therefore, pronunciation accuracy should ultimately contribute to intelligible and effective professional communication rather than remain an isolated classroom exercise.

In contrast, tongue-twister practice received a relatively lower preference of 60%. Although the percentage remains positive, the result suggests that students may perceive tongue twisters as more challenging than dictionary-based pronunciation practice, lecturer modeling, or conversational dialogue. (Puspita et al., 2023) argue that tongue-twister activities can improve learners' articulation and fluency because repeated production of difficult sound combinations trains the speech organs to produce sounds more accurately. Their argument indicates that tongue twisters still have pedagogical value even though they were not among the students' most preferred activities. However, such activities should be employed as supporting exercises rather than the primary method of pronunciation instruction. Students may initially practice difficult sounds through controlled tongue-twister activities before applying those sounds in words, sentences, dialogues, and eventually spontaneous communication.

An important issue emerging from these findings is that students' preferences should not necessarily be interpreted as the sole criterion for determining instructional activities. For example, role-play received only 60%, whereas group discussion received 85%. Nevertheless, role-play may be highly relevant to the professional requirements of hospitality students because it can simulate authentic interactions between employees and guests. (Adhikari et al., 2026) argue that role-play and simulation are particularly suitable for hospitality education because these activities allow students to rehearse professional responsibilities within a controlled learning environment. Thus, although role-play was not among the most highly preferred activities in the present study, its occupational relevance justifies its inclusion in the English curriculum. This finding demonstrates that syllabus development should balance learner preference and professional necessity rather than simply selecting activities according to popularity.

This argument is also supported by (de la Mora Velasco et al., 2025), who explain that hospitality education requires a close connection between classroom instruction and the competencies expected in professional practice. Similarly, (Yusra et al., 2023) emphasize that English instruction for hospitality learners should accommodate students' characteristics while simultaneously preparing them to meet communicative demands in the tourism industry. Therefore, students' preferences should be regarded as an important source of pedagogical information, but they need to be considered together with curriculum objectives and target workplace requirements.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Hospitality students in Makassar generally prefer English learning activities that are interactive, collaborative, practical, visually supported, and technologically assisted. At the same time, the relatively lower preferences for role-play, debate, and tongue twisters indicate that pedagogical relevance cannot be determined exclusively by students' preferences. Therefore, an effective Hospitality English syllabus should integrate preferred activities with professionally necessary learning experiences. Such an approach can create a balance between learner engagement, communicative competence, and preparation for authentic communication in the hospitality and tourism industry.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that Hospitality students in Makassar demonstrate a strong preference for interactive, practical, collaborative, and contextually relevant English learning activities. Among the speaking activities examined, group discussion emerged as the most highly preferred activity (85%), followed by describing pictures or objects (82.5%), describing two different pictures or objects and explaining procedures (77.5%), and giving arguments about cases (75%). These findings indicate that students tend to favor learning activities that provide opportunities for active participation, peer interaction, visual support, and the practical use of English for meaningful communication.

The findings on pronunciation activities reveal a similar tendency toward guided, accessible, and technology-supported learning. Learning pronunciation through dictionaries received the highest preference (72.5%), followed by imitating pronunciation modeled by lecturers or instructors and learning from native speakers through digital applications

(70% each). Conversational dialogue (65%) and tongue-twister practice (60%) were also positively perceived, although to a relatively lower extent. These results suggest that students value clear pronunciation models, opportunities for repetition, and technological resources that allow them to practice pronunciation independently and repeatedly.

The relatively lower preference for English debating (42.5%) and tongue-twister activities (60%) should not be interpreted as evidence that these activities are unsuitable for Hospitality students. Rather, their lower preference may reflect the greater linguistic, cognitive, and affective demands associated with spontaneous argumentation and intensive articulation practice. Therefore, such activities should be introduced progressively through appropriate scaffolding, beginning with less demanding communicative tasks and gradually moving toward more complex forms of speaking performance.

Overall, the findings reinforce the importance of developing student-centered and industry-oriented English instruction for Hospitality students. Since hospitality professionals are required to communicate effectively with guests, colleagues, and international visitors, English learning should extend beyond grammatical knowledge and vocabulary acquisition toward the development of practical communicative competence. Activities such as group discussions, picture descriptions, procedural explanations, role-plays, interviews, case-based discussions, and technology-assisted pronunciation practice can provide meaningful opportunities for students to develop fluency, pronunciation, confidence, interactional competence, and professional communication skills.

Therefore, the findings provide an important empirical foundation for the development of a Hospitality English syllabus that integrates students' learning preferences with the communicative demands of the hospitality industry. The proposed instructional approach should prioritize highly preferred activities while gradually incorporating more challenging tasks to broaden students' communicative abilities. In this way, students' preferences can be accommodated without compromising the broader pedagogical objective of preparing them for authentic professional communication. Ultimately, an effective Hospitality English curriculum should strike a balance between learner preferences, linguistic development, experiential learning, technological support, and workplace relevance, thereby enabling students to become more confident, competent, and adaptable English users in the increasingly internationalized hospitality sector.

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