

## ABSTRACT

In the globalization era, theater arts students require intercultural communicative competence (ICC) for multicultural performances, yet ESP materials like the national textbook *Forward: An English Course for Vocational School Students Grade X* and local modules at SMKN 10 Bandung show superficial cultural integration. This qualitative case study addresses how such materials support speaking learning and boost student interest, drawing on theories like Hutchinson & Waters (1987) for needs-based ESP and Byram (1997) for ICC.

The study poses two questions: (1) How is culture integrated into ESP materials in “*Forward an English: Course for Vocational School Students Grade X* “ and “*locally Adaptive ESP Module*” to support students’ speaking skills? (2) How do ESP materials contribute to theater arts students’ interest in learning to speak English?.

Conducted at SMKN 10 Bandung with 27 Grade X theater arts students, the research employs rubric-based document analysis of textbooks and modules, plus a 15-item Likert-scale questionnaire grounded in theories of interest, motivation, interaction, and error learning. Data triangulation ensures validity, with qualitative interpretation of scores and patterns.

Cultural integration rates 2-3 (quite inadequate to adequate), featuring inconsistent native culture references, limited theater contexts (rehearsals), and minimal ICC activities. ESP materials significantly raise speaking interest (average 3.9/5), with high scores in daily interest (4.2), motivation (4.0), and understanding (4.1), though peer/group dynamics score moderately (3.6-3.9).

While superficial cultural integration in existing ESP materials limits full ICC development for theater arts students, vocationally relevant tasks effectively boost speaking interest and engagement. This study recommends deeper cultural embedding through immersive theater-based activities like script improvisation and cross-cultural role-plays to transform ESP instruction, better preparing students for multicultural performance demands and holistic vocational English proficiency.

**Keywords:** Integrating culture, ESP material, theater arts students, speaking interest, intercultural communicative competence, vocational English.