

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the research by presenting essential background information. It focuses on key points of the study called "The Integration of Culture into ESP Materials for Theater Arts Students". The research looks at how using materials that include cultural elements can help improve the speaking skills and understanding of theater arts students learning English. In this section, it explains the background, asks the main questions of the study, states what the research aims to achieve, and discusses why this study is important.

### **1.1 The Background of the Research**

The Research about "The Integration of Culture into ESP Materials for Theater Arts Students" explores the intersection of culture and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) within the context of theater arts education. The purpose of this qualitative study is to determine how using culturally relevant materials can help theatre students learning English with their speaking interest. The study focuses on how teaching ESP classes with culturally relevant content can encourage students to speak more and improve their language used in theatre. In order to better understand how cultural integration can improve learning effectiveness and engagement, the study employs analysis data of textbook and locally adaptive module materials combine with student interest questionnaire. It also seeks to demonstrate how this method can support students' language development and improve their artistic expression.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) represents a targeted branch of English language instruction that emphasizes the precise linguistic competencies, specialized vocabulary, and discourse patterns essential for success in distinct professional or academic domains, including fields like law, tourism, medicine, engineering, and the arts and culture. This approach fundamentally differs from traditional General English Language Teaching (ELT), which pursues broad communicative proficiency without

specialization, by anchoring every aspect of course content, methodology, and assessment directly to the learners' unique purposes and motivations for acquiring English. As Hutchinson and Waters (1987) articulate, ESP constitutes "an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method of learning are based on the learner's reason for learning," thereby ensuring instruction is purposeful, relevant, and immediately applicable rather than abstract or generalized.

To effectively blend English for Specific Purposes (ESP) materials with student interests, educators frequently implement content-based syllabi. This method brings in subject-specific tasks and presentations as part of teaching a second or foreign language. It helps language learning stay connected to real topics, which makes it more meaningful and keeps students interested and involved. The idea behind this approach is based on Krahnke (1987), who says that combining subject topics with language teaching improves the learning experience. Using real texts from everyday life is also very helpful for improving reading skills in ESP classes. These materials make students curious, help them understand better, and prepare them to use their language skills in real situations. When teaching is matched with students' real interests and needs, it makes ESP learning more effective, helping them use their specialized language skills better in different jobs.

Secondly, Cultural integration in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is essential for developing a well-rounded educational experience that goes beyond mere language instruction. The learning process is greatly enhanced by the inclusion of cultural components, especially in the theatre arts, where understanding diverse cultural narratives is essential for both professional and artistic growth. As Ennis (2020) points out, "cultural and intercultural learning should be part of traditional language learning activities that mainly take place in the target language" to help students be better prepared for their future jobs. This approach not only enhances students' engagement but also fosters a deeper understanding of the cultural contexts that inform their work in the arts. When educators integrate cultural components into their curriculum, they can

significantly boost student engagement and create a more immersive learning environment.

Moreover, Cultural integration transforms ESP from merely practicing language skills into a comprehensive process of intercultural preparation, which is essential in theater arts where performances engage with diverse cultural conventions and narratives. Agar's (1994) concept of "languaculture" highlights that language cannot be separated from the cultural norms embedded within it, such as the use of indirect politeness in feedback sessions among ensemble members. Building on this, the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, particularly its 4Cs framework developed by Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2021), provides a systematic way to embed culture within language learning. The framework includes Content, which refers to dramatic themes and subject matter; Communication, focusing on interactions during rehearsal dialogues; Cognition, involving critical thinking through script analysis; and Culture, encompassing comparisons across different theatrical traditions. This integrated model ensures that pragmatic language skills are developed authentically through exposure to real theater scripts and cultural contexts, preparing students to communicate effectively in multicultural performance settings.

One of the essential language skills in theater arts is the ability to speak effectively. Speaking proficiency involves several key aspects, such as pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pragmatic competence, which allow students to participate actively in meaningful discussions within specialized fields. Studies emphasize the complex nature of speaking skills for ESP learners and underline the importance of designing pedagogical approaches tailored to their professional needs. By incorporating culturally relevant content and real-world applications, educators can boost students' confidence and capability in spoken communication, ultimately preparing them for successful interactions in various professional settings (Hafiza Namira et al., 2023). Effective strategies include task-based language teaching, project-based learning, and the use of technology, all of which encourage active language practice and realistic

communication scenarios. Additionally, assessment methods are crucial for measuring students' speaking performance and identifying areas that require improvement.

Interest plays a crucial role as a psychological factor that greatly influences learners' success in developing speaking skills. When students find a speaking task or topic engaging, they are more inclined to actively participate, maintain focus, and immerse themselves in the learning process. This intrinsic interest acts as a motivational catalyst, prompting learners to practice speaking more often and to strive for improvement. According to Schunk and DiBenedetto (2020), interest encompasses several dimensions such as positive attitudes toward the activity, enjoyment, personal relevance, intrinsic motivation, and willingness to engage. These components collectively create a supportive learning environment that facilitates better speaking abilities. Consequently, students who exhibit higher interest levels tend to achieve more effective speaking performance due to their increased motivation and sustained engagement.

Speaking interest reflects a learner's motivation and enthusiasm to engage in oral communication, which plays a crucial role in fostering active participation and improving language skills. Speaking comprehension, on the other hand, involves the real-time ability to decode and interpret spoken language, encompassing not only word recognition but also understanding the speaker's intentions, meaning, and contextual cues. According to Goh and Burns (2012), speaking is an inherently interactive process where speakers and listeners alternate roles dynamically, incorporating both verbal and nonverbal forms of communication. Comprehension is a foundational component of speaking proficiency, as learners need to grasp incoming input accurately to generate coherent and contextually appropriate responses. Vandergrift and Goh (2012), highlight that effective speaking requires a combination of linguistic knowledge such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation and sociocultural competence, including pragmatic understanding.

This mastery of comprehension allows learners to negotiate meaning successfully and maintain effective communication even under challenging conditions. Furthermore, contemporary theoretical models posit that speaking proficiency arises from the dynamic interaction between motivational factors such as speaking interest and cognitive processes like comprehension, where sustained motivation drives engagement and cognitive processing ensures meaningful exchanges (MacIntyre et al., 2019). Thus, integrating both speaking interest and comprehension is essential for developing robust oral communication skills.

Lastly, the gap in this research highlights the need for tailored English for Specific Purposes (ESP) materials that align with the unique requirements of theater arts students. Current literature emphasizes the importance of learner-centered approaches and the integration of digital technologies in ESP materials (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Stoller & Robinson, 2018). However, there is a lack of comprehensive studies focusing specifically on theater arts, where students' interests and comprehension levels are critical for effective learning (Rauf, 2018). Basturkmen (2024) supports this notion by advocating for a focused investigation into how educational materials can enhance engagement and understanding in this field. Adding to this discourse, Kavalir (2020) underscores the potential benefits of integrating culture and literature through project-based learning in ESP classrooms. His findings suggest that such integration can significantly enhance students' intercultural communicative competence, which is crucial for theater students who often engage with diverse narratives and cultural contexts. Furthermore, Supriyadi (2022) explores the use of drama wayang as an innovative approach for ESP speaking activities, illustrating how culturally relevant practices can foster deeper engagement and comprehension among students.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This study focuses on two key research questions that aim to explore. How cultural elements are integrated into ESP materials and how ESP material contributes to students' interest in developing their speaking skills. The two research questions are as follows:

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?

By addressing these research questions, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of ESP materials in fostering both interest and skill development among theater arts students. Ultimately, this research will contribute to the creation of more engaging and culturally responsive ESP materials that better meet the needs of students in specialized fields such as theater arts.

## **1.3 The Purposes of the Study**

This study is designed with two main purposes that focus to explore the integrating of culture into ESP materials and how ESP materials contributed to theater arts students' interest in learning speaking. There following of two purposes:

1. To explore the 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. To explore how ESP materials contributes to theater arts students' interest in learning speaking.

#### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

This research focuses on the integration of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) materials and contribution on the interest of speaking skills among 10th-grade students enrolled in the theater arts program at SMKN 10 Bandung. By concentrating on this specific group, the study aims to explore how tailored ESP materials can enhance students' motivation and understanding in speaking activities related to their field of study. The scope is deliberately narrowed to the theater arts context to ensure a detailed examination of how subject-specific language learning can be effectively supported through culturally and contextually relevant materials. This focus aligns with the principles of ESP, which emphasize the importance of designing language instruction that meets the particular communicative needs of learners in specialized disciplines, thereby making the learning process more meaningful and applicable to their academic and professional goals.

In addition to examining the materials themselves, this study will evaluate the effectiveness of various teaching strategies employed by educators in delivering ESP content to theater arts students. The goal is to identify which approaches best foster students' interest in speaking tasks, providing practical recommendations for improving instructional practices. By assessing both the content and pedagogical methods, the research aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of how ESP can be optimized in a specialized educational setting. This includes considering how integrating cultural elements into ESP materials can enrich students' learning experiences, making the language more relevant and accessible. Ultimately, the study seeks to contribute to the development of more effective ESP programs that support students in acquiring the specific language skills necessary for success in their theater arts studies and future careers.

## 1.5 Conceptual Framework

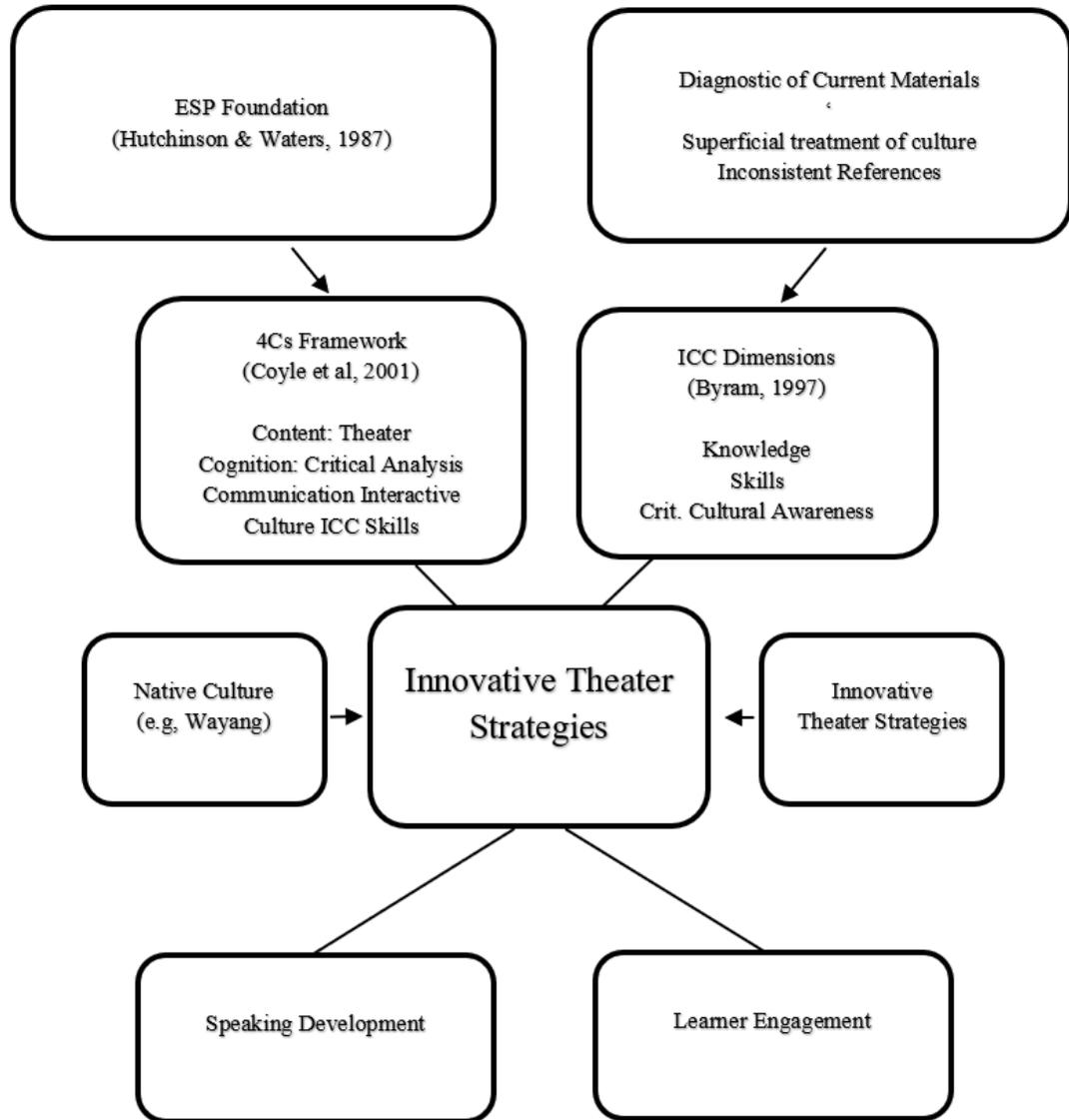


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework provides a comprehensive elucidation of how culture is systematically integrated into English for Specific Purposes (ESP) materials specifically designed for theater arts students, weaving together detailed narrative explanations with a visual diagram that illustrates the interconnected relationships among key concepts.

The framework starts with the core ideas from Hutchinson and Waters (1987) on designing ESP materials. They emphasize instruction tailored to learners' real needs, carefully matching language goals to job-related communication like giving stage directions, reviewing performances, or teaming up in diverse rehearsals.

This solid base naturally leads into cultural integration, which covers several key areas: genuine nods to students' own culture think Indonesian wayang kulit or group rituals, purposeful exposure to other cultures such as Broadway manners or worldwide experimental theater, and strong strategies for cross-cultural exchanges. Together, these pieces strengthen speaking skills by rooting language practice in real theater situations, turning dry vocab exercises into lively experiences like reading scripts, improvising, or simulating audience Q&A that feel just like the pro world.

Further enriching this structure is the 4Cs Framework proposed by Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2021), which creates dynamic interconnections across content specialized theater terminology and dramatic discourse, Cognition critical analysis of cultural nuances in performance texts, Communication interactive speaking tasks such as ensemble discussions or character monologues, and Culture development of Intercultural Communicative Competence or ICC skills as defined by Byram, 1997, including attitudes of curiosity, skills of discovery, and critical cultural awareness. This integration forms a cyclical, self-reinforcing model visualized through directional flows and bidirectional arrows: ESP needs analysis feeds into cultural embedding, which in turn amplifies speaking fluency, motivation, and proficiency, while feedback loops from practical theater tasks continually refine cultural relevance. By operationalizing these theories, the framework not only addresses the superficial cultural treatment observed in existing materials but also posits that such holistic embedding fosters deeper learner engagement, making speaking practice not merely functional but profoundly identity-affirming for theater arts students pursuing global artistic careers.

By conducting a detailed diagnostic mapping of superficial gaps prevalent in current materials, such as inconsistent native culture references, limited target culture exposure, and inadequate intercultural activity depth, and proposing a systematic embedding strategy grounded in Byram's (1997) Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) dimensions. Specifically, it operationalizes ICC through knowledge (factual understanding of native Indonesian theater traditions like wayang versus global forms, skills interpreting and relating cultural performances, such as comparing local ensemble dynamics to Broadway hierarchies, and attitudes (fostering curiosity and openness via comparative role-plays, thereby transforming token cultural mentions into structured scaffolds that enhance speaking fluency, pragmatic negotiation, and contextual authenticity in theater scenarios like rehearsals, critiques, and cross-cultural collaborations.

Moreover, the framework establishes a direct causal linkage between vocational relevance script-based discussions mirroring professional auditions and heightened emotional engagement, evidenced by pathways where culturally resonant tasks boost intrinsic motivation, persistence despite errors, and peer interaction enjoyment. This comprehensive approach fills a critical research gap by bridging the predominantly general ESP focus of prior studies, such as Dudley-Evans and St. John's (1998) needs analysis models that overlook discipline-specific cultural dimensions, with the theater arts context conspicuously absent in recent works like Zaman (2024) on cultural inclusivity and Fatima (2024) on communicative strategies. By synthesizing these, the framework offers actionable, practical guidance for developing culturally responsive vocational curricula that elevate speaking from mechanical rote practice characterized by generic dialogues to profoundly identity-affirming artistic expression, empowering students to navigate multicultural performance industries with confidence, creativity, and communicative prowess.

## 1.6 Previous Study

This study contributes to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) materials by investigating how cultural integration in materials *Forward: An English Course for Vocational School Students Grade X* and locally adaptive modules at SMKN 10 Bandung supports theater arts students' speaking skills, while also examining these materials' role in boosting their interest in English speaking. The findings may provide insight into the cognitive and emotional dimensions of language learning, highlighting the importance of aligning educational materials with students' interest and cultural backgrounds.

### 1. Teacher Perspective

Teachers using ESP materials like *Forward: An English Course for Vocational School Students Grade X* and the local modules from SMKN 10 Bandung often stick to standard needs analysis approaches. The catch is, the cultural elements in these materials feel surface-level, which doesn't quite cut it for helping theater arts students nail their speaking skills during rehearsals or performance critiques. This research shows how that shallow approach holds back students' deeper thinking like negotiating pragmatics and their emotional buy-in, pushing teachers to tweak materials to better fit students' cultural roots and job-specific needs for real speaking motivations.

### 2. Student Perspective

From the students' viewpoint, these ESP materials offering practical tasks that spark interest in English speaking, such as role-plays that echo real performances. However, spotty cultural references get in the way of building the strong intercultural skills needed for diverse theater work. The findings point to real cognitive and emotional wins when materials click with their interests think turning basic drills into engaging script sessions which really drives home why culturally smart design keeps motivation alive and skills growing.