

Bridging Second Language Acquisition Theory and Pedagogy in English Education for TVET Learners

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Recibido / Received: 16/08/2025
Aceptado / Accepted: 28/12/2025

Abstract: This paper will analyze how Second language acquisition theories can be used in vocational English teaching, focusing on the input hypothesis by Krashen, the output hypothesis by Swain, as well as the sociocultural theory by Vygotsky. Since contextual learning is important to vocational learners, SLA-based methodologies such as task-based language teaching (TBLT) and communicative language teaching (CLT) are believed to enhance vocational learning of the English language. This study aims to analyze Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories and their relevance to vocational English education, identify effective pedagogical strategies that enhance language acquisition for technical learners, and evaluate challenges and best practices in implementing SLA methodologies in vocational learning environments. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted following the PRISMA framework. Literature was retrieved from JSTOR, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, with inclusion criteria focusing on peer-reviewed studies, SLA pedagogy, and vocational ESL contexts. Findings reveal that most of the strategies for SLA, such as peer learning, ESL, training and Development for specific sectors, and Multimodal tools and approaches, were found effective. The existing challenges include a lack of well-trained teachers, curricula incompatibility, and restrictions on exposure to learners. The research supports the need for teacher training, policy-based intervention, and curriculum implementation of SLA theories and ESL to improve the English language skills and workplace communication of vocational learners.

Keywords: Language Acquisition, English Education, Vocational Learners, Second Language.

1. Introduction

The research area of second language acquisition (SLA) has grown in terms of theory and practice, especially from English as a foreign language to technical and vocational learners. The theoretical framework employed in this research is the SLA theories, which are highlighted as Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Swain's Output hypothesis, and the sociocultural theory postulated by Vygotsky. These theories concern input, output, interaction, and sociocultural factors in language learning (Krashen, 1982; Swain, 1995; Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, its relevance to vocational education is critical for technical college students who need special language training or languages that allow them to communicate adequately within their chosen field.

The aspects of using English as a second language (ESL) are not limited to the level of communication in vocational education. For this reason, utilizing SLA theories for application is highly relevant, as discussed by Wu (2023), as it transforms into a means for employment progression and cross-sectoral communication in the English

language. Current studies have indicated that language teaching strategies must be aligned with the vocational needs of task-based language teaching (TBLT), and content and language-integrated learning (CLIL) might suit the population as recommended by Hardin (2023). On the same note, other theories, like the Cognitive Load Theory, are used in the vocational learning environment to enhance the learners' cognitive capacity during language acquisition, as noted by Li and Luo (2023).

Vocational learners are concerned with specific tasks and competencies relating to their fields of industry, and the enhanced element in the context is to develop linguistic skills that enable learners to communicate professionally in their areas of industry. Vocational learning students face challenges, such as Language differences, minimal or no contact with real-life language use, and cross-cultural studying, making it rather important to capture the SLA theories that factor in language acquisition and cultural understanding, as stated by Dong (2023). Such theories should be practiced in vocational teaching and learning environments to enhance understanding of vocational practices, as highlighted by Wang, Derakhshan and Pan (2022).

A study has highlighted the necessity of introducing new approaches in vocational language education that consider the principles of SLA, as noted by Feng (2017). For instance, such approaches as the adoption of contextual approaches, using real-life situations, and learner-centered approaches are deemed vital if vocational learners must be effectively engaged in English studies. Furthermore, it is evidenced that incorporating the SLA theories into improving curricula guarantees that theoretical knowledge is combined with practical acquisition of languages in specific contexts, as stated by Smith (2019).

Despite the rise in the demand for English proficiency in vocational education, technical and vocational learners often face significant challenges in acquiring the language. For this reason, some challenges are occasioned by language transfer, limited access and inadequate teaching and learning resources as noted by Soomro (2022). Indeed, studies have shown that learners from non-English backgrounds, especially from vocational schools, suffer from language anxiety, inaccurate grammatical use and limited opportunities for speaking. These are factors that compromise their ability to appropriately interact with English as a second language (ESL) within their working environments where communication is crucial. However, poor motivation and scarce opportunities to practice remain the main reasons for numerous gaps remain unfilled. Nevertheless, a number of these characteristics have been well documented in the literature, especially in the context of technical vocational learning environment, yet there is little attempt carried out to complement or direct the SLA theories to the identified conditions as noted by Milania, Wachyudi and Mobit (2022). Thus, the examination of those challenges from this perspective of the SLA theory could help enhance vocational English education.

1.1. Research Objectives

- To analyze Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories and their applicability to English education in technical and vocational learning environments
- To identify pedagogical strategies derived from SLA theories that effectively enhance English language learning among technical vocational learners

- To evaluate the challenges and best practices in implementing SLA-based English education in technical vocational contexts

The importance of using Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in vocational education cannot be ignored, especially because it only confines itself to the fact that most learners in these technical courses experience some challenges. The most important thing is to realize how the application of SLA theories will make it easy to develop communication skills applicable in business enterprises in foreign workplaces. The theory of SLA ought to be applied in the vocational environments to solve this issue because, as Dong (2023) argues, the following obstacles to language transfer exist: the inability to feel motivated and the inadequate quantity of practice. The result of this study will help in the proactive formation of suitable teaching strategies that will be adopted by vocational learners, thereby enhancing their performance and employment opportunities. In addition, interventions that involve SLA may allow learners to improve interactions in classroom lessons and accept the language and material of instruction, as mentioned by Ye (2024). It also determines the concerns that can ensure the improvement of the vocational ESL curriculum that addresses educational and realistic features.

2. Literature Review

2.1. SLA Theories and their Applicability to English Education in Vocational Learning Environments

The applicability of SLA theories in teaching English to vocational students constitutes important information relevant to education since such learners have different learning requirements. SLA offers factorial explanations of advanced notions for forming pedagogic approaches toward improving learning in technical-vocational education and training.

One of the most influential theories is the Input Hypothesis associated with Krashen, which claims that acquisition occurs if the input is slightly beyond the learner's current proficiency ($i + 1$), as stated by Wu (2023). This theory applies especially in vocationally oriented education, where learners require impractical, applicable English input rather than academic one. However, critics state that input constant and intake alone are insufficient for the need to be engaged by the language; creating output also plays an important role in language acquisition.

To address this limitation, Swain's Output Hypothesis focuses more on language production in SLA. Swain claims that learners must use the target language to attend to the gaps and make adjustments to the output, as stated by Wang, Yu and Wang (2024). This idea can be applied well when vocational education students engage in task-based learning and teaching (TBLT), which focuses on technical communication practice and language acquisition, as noted by Dong (2023). TBLT allows learners to use language skills to solve contextualized workplace tasks, enhancing language and workplace skills, as discussed by Ibrahim and Hamisu (2019).

Thus, students in vocational contexts or specific learning, which are collaborative learning websites like peer mentoring and cooperative projects, foster interaction in tune with the learning of English, as noted by Li and Luo (2023). Nevertheless,

peer-assisted learning should be undertaken under supervision since unmannered grouping might not always be helpful, as mentioned by Feng (2017).

Further, cognitive load theory is a relatively new perspective that is increasingly being introduced into vocational ESL practice. Eliminating the extraneous mental load means the learner will be confined to practicing the language steps, as stated by Wu (2023). For instance, multimodal resources that include visual aids, models, simulations, and interactive exercises assist vocational learners in comprehending linguistic features in the second language, as noted by Zhang (2024).

Regardless of the theoretical improvements, the only issue that remains is the integration of SLA-based strategies with vocational programs. According to Nurhidayah (2020), many vocational training courses do not include special English teaching that incorporates subject-area language requirements, which is the main problem. To fill this gap, the systematic reforms of the curriculum are necessary to introduce concepts of SLA to vocational English classes so that learners get the general level of proficiency and particular communicative skill required to work in the occupation.

2.2. Pedagogical Strategies Derived from SLA Theories for Enhancing English Language Learning among Technical Vocational Learners

It is necessary to use different pedagogical strategies in second language acquisition (SLA) approaches to promote English language learning among students in technical and vocational colleges. Likely, for learners in vocation-oriented education, approaches such as task-based learning, communicative approach, and technology-assisted language learning have become the identified methodologies to narrow down the implemented theory and practice divide, as stated by Ye (2024).

One of the most effective approaches is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), which is relevant to Swain's Output Hypothesis and places a significant focus on the communicative use of the language. In vocational education, TBLT provides learners with situated learning opportunities to develop English through meaningful and contextually related tasks, as discussed by Saputra and Rionaldi (2019). It is most useful for vocational learners since they only need to understand English as a working language in organizations. However, task-based instruction depends on the quality of the design for tasks such that poor-quality tasks may cause the students or the teachers to overload or merely disengage from the task as stated by del Pilar García Mayo (2021).

Another widely used technique, especially in pedagogical strategy learning and teaching, is the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) regarding Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory. CLT is based on equal participation, group work, and meaning-oriented tasks most appropriate for vocational students to develop acceptable language skills in their technical courses, as stated by Holbrook (2023). According to the literature review, it was ascertained that peer learning, role play, and collaborative discussions have positive impacts on vocational English learners' speaking skills, as discussed by Lucas (2022). Nonetheless, CLT has some drawbacks, such as a constructivist, teacher-directed approach to learning and examination-oriented curriculum and assessment that discourage using the target language, as noted by Nahoras Bona (2024).

Integrating digital tools and gamification into SLA-based pedagogy has proven highly effective. Studies have shown that game-pedagogical approaches increase

students' interest and learning, especially in a vocational learning atmosphere where subjects benefit from game-educative practices, as stated by Kacmaz (2023). Mobile applications, games, feedback, language practice, and language learning experiences advance with the integration of technology into applications of language learning, as discussed by Lubis (2024). Yet, there are obstacles to these benefits that are posed by the current assignments in infrastructure and the lack of digital competence of teachers, which prevent the achievement of these advantages in the vocational training.

In addition, metacognitive strategies training has been defined to be the key to promoting self-regulation in vocational learners regarding language learning. This method coincides with the important hypothesis offered by Krashen that the increase of awareness of language processes by learners results in a higher level of linguistic accuracy and confidence by learners. Reflective journals, checking assessment lists, and strategy-focused instructions are effective and hence influence the reading and writing scores of the learners.

2.3. Challenges and Best Practices in Implementing SLA-Based English Education in Technical Vocational Contexts

Teaching and adopting SLA-based English education is not easy, particularly in technical vocational learning environments. SLA theories provide the frameworks for improving language proficiency. Thus, vocationally oriented education and training must adapt to specific contexts while achieving the intended and successful language learning orientations. Barriers include reduced language input, teacher professional development deficit, the inappropriateness of curriculum, and lack of student engagement and main ideas, including communication through tasks, use of technology, and real-life business pedagogy approaches, as discussed by Kim (2023).

A significant challenge in vocational SLA implementation is the lack of language practice opportunities. This study notes that most vocational students have a low level of English language proficiency as they do not get to use English in a way that reflects what they learn in the classroom, as stated by Soomro (2022). This leads to a lack of practice problems concerning competency in using some key terms, especially in vocationally-related careers. However, language anxiety and self-efficacy problems are barriers to learning English, mainly for vocational learners, as discussed by Melak (2019).

Another challenge is the issue of the students' and teachers' curriculum and teaching approaches. Literature reviews show that most vocational English courses cover theories while lacking practical and specific skills required in a particular field, as stated by Chen-Worley (2023). Teachers in vocational ESL courses are not well-equipped with professional training that would enable them to teach language lessons adequate to professional students. In the same way, studies have shown that vocational learners learn better through prior interactive communicative instructions than grammar-based approaches, as noted by Scheffler (2019). Thus, the SLA-focused vocational education teacher training still lacks the necessary programs and frameworks competences, making it challenging for teachers to apply the best practices effectively.

Applying the principles to SLA-based vocational education, which involves

participation and the technological approach, has been seen as a practical solution. One such methodology is task-based language teaching (TBLT), which incorporates language teaching through tasks typically performed in occupational fields, as stated by Milania et al. (2022). TBLT increases the extent of group work, problem-solving, and professional-like communication, which in turn enhances the students' English learning. Other effective strategies include digital assistance learning, where elements of language learning applications, simulations, and online platforms are incorporated into vocational, as discussed by Dong (2023). Various studies prove that students who receive traditional classroom learning complemented with digital language learning techniques enhance their English language results as vocational students. In addition, peer group collaboration and journal writing have effectively facilitated learner independence and self-confidence in using English, as stated by Bandara (2024).

2.4. Literature Gap

Although extensive research on second language acquisition has been advanced and investigated concerning vocational English education, several research issues remain unaddressed. To be specific, Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Swain's Output Hypothesis, and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory offer suitable theories for vocational ESL teaching and learning, but their application in technical-vocational instruction is not effectively researched. Much research targets learning English in general, whereas vocational education learners need English for their particular fields for which they are not trained (Chen-Worley, 2023).

Moreover, existing pedagogical strategies like task-based language teaching (TBLT) and communicative language teaching (CLT) are highly recommended. However, there is still a lack of solid empirical evidence on the sustainable benefits when employed in a real-world vocational context, as stated by Milania et al. (2022). In addition, general applications of technology and the integration of gamification in vocational-ESL learning have brought significant improvements. However, structural barriers, lack of teachers' professional development, and methods of putting into practice have not been effectively addressed, as discussed by Lubis (2024).

Finally, vocational teacher training programs lack structured guidance on applying SLA theories effectively in technical education contexts, limiting their impact on practical language acquisition, as noted by Scheffler (2019). Addressing these gaps requires targeted research that aligns SLA-based methodologies with industry-specific vocational English needs.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Methods and Design

This research adopted a qualitative method, mainly the Systematic Literature Review (SLR), to achieve the research objectives. The SLR involved conducting the review using specific and well-defined inclusion and exclusion criteria for the studies to be included and quality appraisal to ensure quality data was used in the study. The selection of the literature was done systematically, and the PRISMA flowchart was

used to guide the process as recommended for such a review. The SLR approach was used due to its ability to find out the state of the field by reviewing the existing literature and creating a map of knowledge gaps.

3.2. Data Collection Methods

3.2.1. Searching Techniques

A keyword-based search strategy was used to identify relevant literature in alignment with the research themes. Keywords and phrases such as “Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in vocational education,” “SLA pedagogical strategies,” “SLA theories in English learning,” and “challenges in vocational English education” were employed.

3.2.2. Databases

Using relevant keywords, the search targeted multiple academic databases, including JSTOR, Web of Science (WOS), Google Scholar, and research Gate. These databases were selected because they contain extensive scholarly articles on the researched topics.

3.2.3. Boolean Operators

Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) were used to refine the search results. For instance:

- (“Second Language Acquisition” AND “vocational education” AND “English learning”)
- (“SLA” OR “language learning theories” OR “task-based learning”)
- (“Vocational English Education” NOT “General Education”)

3.2.4. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

A structured selection process was followed to screen the relevant literature, ensuring that only high-quality studies relevant to SLA in vocational education were included in Table 1.

Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.

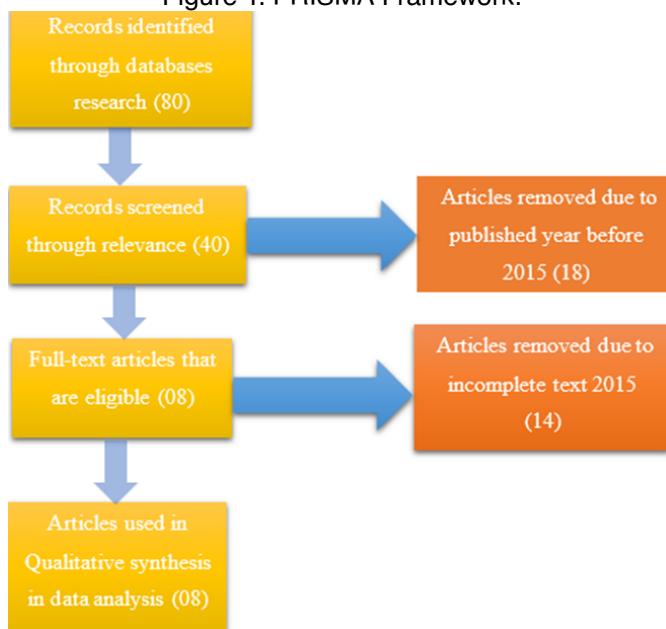
Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publications	Peer-reviewed journal articles, and conference papers after 2017	Non-peer-reviewed articles, blog posts, and opinion papers before 2017
Research Type	Systematic Reviews, Empirical studies, Case studies	Unverified, anecdotal studies, grey literature
Language	English-language studies only	Non-English publications
Focus	SLA theories, pedagogical strategies, vocational ESL	General language learning without vocational context

3.3. Selection of Papers through the PRISMA Framework

Eighty articles were selected for review after going through the specific inclusion and exclusion criteria. The abstracts and full texts were carefully and repeatedly

reviewed to identify papers reflecting the research goals. After this review process, eight studies were considered eligible to be included in the review (Figure 1). The purposive sampling ensured that only those studies that provided clear insights into SLA in vocational English education were selected.

Figure 1: PRISMA Framework.



3.4. Data Analysis Methods

The study employed thematic analysis to identify and categorize key themes emerging from the literature. Thematic analysis was carried out in a stepwise manner, as detailed below in Table 2:

Table 2: Data Analysis Methods.

Steps	Description
Familiarization	The selected articles were read multiple times to gain an overview of key themes.
Coding	Key findings related to SLA theories, pedagogical strategies, and vocational education were assigned codes.
Theme Development	Similar codes were grouped into themes that directly aligned with the research objectives.
Reviewing Themes	The themes were cross-checked against the literature to ensure coherence and accuracy.
Finalizing Themes	The refined themes were used to structure the discussion and findings of the study.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

It is important to note that this paper followed the ethical standards when undertaking the Systematic Literature Review. As no participants are from the human population involved, there is no need to seek ethical approval from institutions. Nevertheless,

certain precautions were observed while choosing and analyzing the literature, such as being very transparent, accurate, and credible. To ensure that no cases of plagiarism were committed, proper citations and references were done in all writing. In addition, the bias problem while selecting articles was solved based on the PRISMA framework and the inclusion/exclusion criteria used in the study.

4. Results

This chapter presents the data collected in this study systematically in tabular form and the implications of each of the research objectives. Table 3 below shows the description of themes extracted for data analysis using NVivo Software used in the analysis of the data collected.

Table 3: Theme Extracted.

Themes	Description
Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theories	Analyzing major SLA theories (e.g., Input Hypothesis, Output Hypothesis, and Sociocultural Theory) and their applicability to English education in vocational learning environments.
Pedagogical Strategies in SLA	Identifying teaching methodologies derived from SLA theories, including Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and technology-assisted learning that enhance English proficiency among technical vocational learners.
Challenges in SLA Implementation	Examining barriers such as curriculum mismatches, language anxiety, lack of teacher training, and limited exposure to English that hinder SLA-based English education in vocational contexts.
Best Practices in SLA for Vocational Education	Exploring successful approaches such as peer-assisted learning, digital learning tools, industry-specific ESL instruction, and immersive language environments to improve English proficiency in vocational learners.

The table outlines key themes in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) for vocational education. It covers major SLA theories and their relevance, effective teaching strategies like Task-Based and Communicative Language Teaching, challenges such as curriculum issues and language anxiety, and best practices including peer-assisted learning and industry-specific instruction to improve English proficiency among vocational learners.

Table 4: Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theories.

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Wang et al. (2025)	To examine the relationship between social support and L2 learning engagement, exploring the mediating roles of L2 resilience and control.	Empirical study using a quantitative survey-based approach among L2 learners in vocational and academic settings.	Found that social support significantly enhances L2 learning engagement by fostering higher resilience and a greater sense of control in language learning. This was particularly beneficial in vocational contexts where peer and teacher support played a crucial role.	Emphasized that socio-emotional factors should be integrated into SLA-based pedagogy to improve motivation and engagement among vocational English learners.
Dong (2024)	To investigate how socioeconomic status (SES) influences self-regulated learning strategies and writing proficiency in English as a second language (ESL) learning.	Quantitative study analyzing correlations between SES, self-regulation strategies, and writing proficiency through a structured assessment.	Found that higher SES learners had stronger self-regulation strategies, leading to better writing proficiency. However, vocational learners from lower SES backgrounds struggled with self-regulation, impacting their SLA progress.	Suggested that vocational English curricula should incorporate self-regulated learning strategies to bridge achievement gaps in SLA education.

Wang et al. (2025) established that social support facilitates L2 learning participation, especially in vocational contexts highlighting the importance of socio-emotional aspects in instruction. Dong (2024) stressed that learning SES has a particular impact on self-regulated learning and writing performance, primarily pointing out that the lower SES vocational learners face more significant challenges in writing, so self-regulation should be introduced to the vocational English learning context to decrease the gap (Table 4).

Table 5: Pedagogical Strategies in SLA.

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Yaqobi (2022)	To evaluate the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Technology in improving international graduate students' communicative competence and willingness to communicate in English.	Case study using qualitative methods including interviews, classroom observations, and self-reported student reflections.	Found that CLT and task-based learning significantly improved students' fluency, confidence, and engagement in real-world English communication. Task-based technology (e.g., digital interaction tools) enhanced language practice opportunities.	Suggested that integrating task-based technology with CLT is highly effective in enhancing communicative competence in vocational and academic English learning contexts.
Abbuhi et al. (2018)	To explore how interaction-based approaches contribute to grammar learning and overall SLA pedagogy.	Systematic literature review analyzing research on interaction and learning grammar in SLA.	Found that interaction-driven learning, feedback, and collaborative tasks improve learners' grammar acquisition and retention. Highlighted the role of task-based and communicative approaches in vocational English education.	Recommended interaction-based approaches as a core element in SLA instruction, emphasizing collaborative learning and structured feedback to enhance language acquisition.

Yaqobi (2022) found that incorporating Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and task-based technology enhances students' fluency, self-confidence, and motivation in realistic communication and/or interaction in vocational and academic domains. According to Abbuhi et al. (2018), interaction-based learning, feedback, and collaborative tasks enhance grammar knowledge; thus, the authors suggested that these interactional practices should be deemed essential components of SLA in vocational English education (Table 5).

Table 6: Challenges in SLA Implementation.

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Results	Findings
Ahmed (2019)	To examine psychological barriers affecting non-native learners in second language acquisition (SLA).	Qualitative study analyzing affective factors (e.g., anxiety, lack of confidence) through classroom observations and student surveys.	Found that anxiety, limited confidence, and social barriers significantly hinder SLA progress. Teacher attitude and lack of linguistic awareness contribute to higher psychological barriers.	Concluded that creating a positive, low-anxiety learning environment and instructor training in affective strategies are essential for overcoming SLA challenges.
Ameen and Mahmood (2023)	To explore the barriers to learning English as a second language in public high schools.	Empirical study involving 40 students from grades 10-12, using surveys and classroom observations.	Identified large class sizes, mother tongue interference, and ineffective grammar-based instruction as key barriers. Found low student engagement and dissatisfaction with traditional teaching methods.	Recommended student-centered approaches, smaller class sizes, and more communicative-based teaching methodologies to improve SLA outcomes.

Ahmed (2019) identified psychosocial factors like anxiety and self-confidence that may limit the progress of SLA, whereby it is imperative to encourage SLA in low anxiety and enhance teacher training on effective means. Ameen and Mahmood (2023) also

observed that large class size, interference from the mother tongue, and grammar-based instruction for second language acquisition as the factors associated with poor SLA while suggesting that new methods of instruction involving students, small classes, and functional approaches to teaching and learning of second language (Table 6).

Table 7: Best Practices in SLA for Vocational Education.

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Dizon Jr and Nanquil (2024)	To examine best practices of ESL teachers in facilitating effective second language acquisition among multicultural learners.	General qualitative inquiry design using structured interviews with eight ESL teachers.	Found that role-playing, task-based instruction, peer-assisted learning, and scaffolding techniques significantly enhance ESL learners' engagement and proficiency. Highlighted the importance of cultural responsiveness in language instruction.	Concluded that an eclectic, multicultural teaching approach combining Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is highly effective for vocational English learners.
Hardin (2023)	To explore the rise, decline, and potential resurgence of Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) programs in the United States.	Corpus study and policy analysis examining historical trends and policy changes affecting VESL programs.	Found that policy changes and workforce reforms led to a decline in VESL programs, despite their proven effectiveness in improving workplace communication skills for vocational students. Suggested that reviving VESL programs through policy support and targeted curriculum development could benefit vocational ESL learners.	Concluded that VESL remains a promising but underutilized approach in vocational English education, and recommends integrating workplace-oriented SLA methods to enhance learner outcomes.

Dizon Jr and Nanquil (2024) established that the use of a role-playing approach, task-based instruction, peer learning, and scaffolding enhance ELS learners' attitudes and achievement and support the integration of multicultural strategies of CLT, ESP, and TBLT. Hardin (2023) stated that VESL programs were under policy and should be revived with proper policies and specific curricula to enhance effective communication among vocational learners (Table 7).

5. Discussion

5.1. Interpretation of the Findings

5.1.1. Applicability of SLA Theories to Vocational English Education

This study has established that Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Swain's Output Hypothesis, and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory are applicable but with modifications for vocational learners. The results mentioned imply that input alone is not sufficient to support learning and concretize the function of output and interaction in a vocational context. Another issue was the limited combination of the English used in the course with English used at the workplace; peer tutoring and realistic workplace tasks were also found valuable. This is because theories that promote group learning were said to specifically favour vocational students as they learn much better under practical settings.

5.1.2. Pedagogical Strategies Derived from SLA Theories

The study further explained that TBLT and CLT are the most effective SLA methods that can be employed to support vocational learners. TBLT helps develop English

language proficiency through the placement of tasks in the workplace, thus making it more realistic. Other studies have presented that the lack of task development and preparation or lack of training for the teacher in TBLT may cause learners' disengagement. Meanwhile, CLT promotes communication and learning, but it is not as beneficial when the curriculum is formal and exam-oriented. Leveraging mobile applications, AI, and games as key enabling factors for motivation was noted. However, a lack of digital skills among educators and inadequate infrastructure interfered with the deployment of technology tools. The combination of teaching and learning tools based on information technology with SLA in vocational education is among the areas that require further improvement.

5.1.3. Challenges and Best Practices in SLA-Based Vocational English Education

Results show that curriculum incongruities, exposure to the English language, inequity of teacher competencies and language anxiety are significant obstacles to the implementation of SLA in vocational education. Numerous vocational programs fail to incorporate industry-focused ESL training, and thus result in poor attentiveness of learners and less application. Peer-facilitated learning, language contextual learning environment, and ESL programs are considered best practices since they render student engagement and retention. Nevertheless, proper implementation of these measures will demand policy adjustments, effective design, teaching on SLA-related professional growth of the teachers, and education in changes to the curriculum in order to accommodate the needs of vocational students.

5.2. Comparison with Previous Studies

5.2.1. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theories

Wang et al. (2025) and Dong (2024) argue that social support and the development of self-regulated learning skills are beneficial to vocational learners to obtain second-language skills. Teng and Zhang (2021), as well as their findings, are consistent with this study, as self-regulation is one of the essential factors in acquiring a second language. The authors Viberg, Mavroudi and Ma (2020) suggest that the process of developing mobile-assisted learning using digital tools can allow students to gain mobile-assisted learning skills, and these findings are consistent with the theory used by Dong (2024) in explaining the relationship between the socioeconomic status and the development of SLA self-regulation.

Research findings from the study of Wang et al. (2025) confirm the study of Lei (2024) by showing that social support engages and enhances the resilience of L2 learners in L2 learning. Peer-to-peer support systems are structured, which is an advantage to the vocational learners as they aid in strengthening their language involvement, together with their retention rates. Technology in academic activities positively affects motivation to learn, as well as language skills, and active learners, as stated by Viberg, Wasson and Kukulska-Hulme (2020), ought to be motivated to participate in particular intervention programmes to counter the lack of self-regulation, as proposed by Dong (2024).

5.2.2. Pedagogical Strategies in SLA

Yaqobi (2022), as well as Abbuhl et al. (2018), are aligned with the existing studies regarding Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in the Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Karunanayake (2018) conducted research about the impact of TBLT methods on ESL classes to prove the hypothesis that these approaches can improve the communication skills of students and their knowledge of the language. The results of the research of Yaqobi (2022) are relevant to his study, which reveals the effectiveness of CLT and task-based learning in developing communicative competence and establishing student confidence. The findings of the research in these studies indicate that interactive teaching methods are based on tasks and result in enhanced use of language skills in real contexts.

Abbuhl et al. (2018) study confirms grammar learning with the help of interaction-based approaches, as Fithriani (2018) analyses grammar instructional teaching models based on TBLT. The results of both research studies affirm the fact that interactive instruction of teaching with structured feedback and communicative exercises will lead to the improvement of grammar mastery amongst students and grammar retention. Abbuhl et al. (2018) proved the advantages of learning grammar as background of interaction in their paper, but Fithriani (2018) focused on the advantages of TBLT in grammatical accuracy instruction at a smaller scale rather than SLA education at a larger level.

Yaqobi (2022) states that the reviewed literature incorporated in the research this study is an expansion of their study by applying TBLT in the context of technology-based learning tools. The article introduces the concept of digital interaction tools as the crucial elements of the contemporary SLA teaching practice, which Karunanayake (2018) and Fithriani (2018) have not discussed. The study examines the role of technology as far as communicative competence is concerned.

5.2.3. Challenges in SLA Implementation

The findings of Ahmed (2019) are in line with the findings of the study by Ameen and Mahmood (2023) on the psychological and structural barriers of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). According to Ahmed (2019), anxiety and self-confidence had their affective facets as critical issues with language learning concerns, and this result was the same as Sharmin (2019), who investigated psychological limitations to language acquisition by student learners. The findings of the research indicate that students experience challenges in studying languages due to fear of failure, a decrease in the level of confidence and high levels of fear in the classroom. The works by Ahmed (2019) and Sharmin (2019) differ regarding the potential obstacles that consider teacher attitudes along with linguistic awareness, whereas Sharmin (2019) puts the emphasis on previous learning experiences and motivation rates.

Ameen and Mahmood (2023) studied classroom barriers, including large class numbers and ineffective grammar-based practices, supporting Makhathini and Mncwango (2020). Bilingual classroom studies demonstrated that the inability to use grammar teaching and numerous classroom students decrease student participation and educational results in second language acquisition. The research findings from both studies demonstrate that instructing through grammar causes language learning challenges and support methodologies that focus on student participation to help students improve their second language acquisition.

5.2.4. *Best Practices in SLA for Vocational Education*

The research conducted by Dizon Jr and Nanquil (2024), concurrently with Hardin (2023), supports earlier investigations into optimal practices for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in vocational education. Dizon Jr and Nanquil (2024) present a diverse, multicultural teaching approach that merges Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to enhance the engagement and language proficiency of vocational ESL learners. Wu and Chiang (2023) discovered that students involved in keyboard-based learning through technology demonstrated better English vocabulary progress and higher engagement in their research about vocational education. The findings of both research works emphasize task-oriented interactive instruction as fundamental to helping vocational students succeed in second language acquisition.

The evolution of Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) programs receives examination in Hardin (2023), and their findings correspond to Skarpaas and Hellekjær (2021), who studied English teaching strategies for vocational education in secondary schools. The research demonstrates that vocational instruction approaches in English language learning drive better student performance and professional learning outcomes. Hardin (2023) studied VESL policy effects, while Skarpaas and Hellekjær (2021) researched student learning tactics and attitude shifts partly from vocational orientation in secondary education.

5.3. *Theoretical Implications*

This study strengthens theoretical concepts in SLA about Krashen's Input Hypothesis together with Swain's Output Hypothesis and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory applied to vocational education according to Wu (2023) and Wang et al. (2025). The research demonstrates that input alone is not sufficient for vocational learners to acquire new language skills, thus requiring equilibrium between input and output, together with interaction (Dong, 2024); according to the Cognitive Load Theory, vocational learning benefits from well-organized multimodal training approaches which help students improve their language skills (Li & Luo, 2023).

The study enhances SLA theories by uniting practical workplace learning activities from TBLT and CLT in vocational environments (Feng, 2017). Research evidence presents peer-assisted learning strategies and digital educational tools as proven teaching methods suitable for vocational students (Ye, 2024). Implementing a new curriculum requires the resolution of programmatic alignment problems and teacher education deficiencies (Soomro, 2022). The study demonstrates how SLA applications require modification to succeed in vocational English education systems (Milania et al., 2022).

6. **Conclusion**

The research explores how Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories affect vocational English education by examining Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Swain's Output Hypothesis, and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory. The study reveals that input from language learning is inadequate for vocational students because they need balanced aspects of both output and social interaction to make progress. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) worked efficiently

for professional language education. The main obstacles to language learning for vocational students include mismatched curricula, teacher competencies gaps, and limited language exposure, which remain key barriers. The study reveals that vocational students' English proficiency and workplace communication abilities need policy support, professional teacher development, and technological tools to improve.

6.1. Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, this study has limitations. First, the reliance on secondary data through a systematic literature review (SLR) means no primary empirical data was collected. Second, contextual differences in vocational education across different countries and industries may limit the generalizability of findings. Third, teacher training gaps and pedagogical challenges were identified, but specific implementation strategies were not fully explored. Lastly, while technology-enhanced learning methods were emphasized, the study lacked empirical validation of digital learning outcomes in vocational ESL education. Future research should incorporate empirical studies to validate SLA-based pedagogies in technical and vocational contexts.

6.2. Future Work

Future research should consider the theoretical implications of applying SLA theories in vocational education training and using longitudinal studies to compare the students' language proficiency level improvements. Third, the suggested comparisons between experimental studies of TBLT, CLT, and digital-assisted SLA can help identify the best practices. There is also a need to consider the curriculum and tasks for practicing English in different occupational fields, using the tasks in real-life environments, the implementation of peer learning, and using multiple modals in instructional strategies. Therefore, training courses for teacher trainers were recommended to be reconceptualized to align with the principles of SLA to prepare vocational teachers for instruction for second language learners. Finally, studies should assess possible policy implications of adopting SLA-based curriculum change in vocational English education.

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