



# Decoding Appropriate English for Flight Attendant Learning Materials for Gen Z Students: Insights and Preferences

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## ABSTRAK

Saat ini para pelajar tersebut masih belajar menjadi pramugari, mereka belum bisa memberikan data yang valid. Oleh karena itu, penyelidikan lebih lanjut sangat diperlukan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menilai secara sistematis materi pembelajaran bahasa Inggris yang dirancang untuk calon pramugari Gen Z. Penelitian ini menganalisis sumber belajar bahasa Inggris yang dirancang untuk siswa Gen Z yang bercita-cita mengejar karir sebagai pramugari. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan analisis kebutuhan, penelitian ini mengikuti model analisis situasi target. Penelitian ini dilakukan di salah satu sekolah penerbangan swasta di Bali. Metode pengumpulan data adalah wawancara dan kuesioner, dengan pemilihan sampel berpedoman pada purposive sampling. Dengan menggunakan model analisis data interaktif, analisis kualitatif diterapkan untuk menganalisis data yang dikumpulkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sesuai kebutuhan kurikulum, materi pembelajaran harus memfasilitasi keterampilan komunikasi efektif yang berguna dan penting bagi peran pramugari di dunia kerja. Pramugari senior tersebut menekankan pentingnya materi dalam meningkatkan rasa percaya diri siswa dan menumbuhkan sikap ramah dalam menggunakan bahasa Inggris, serta memahami cara berkomunikasi dengan penumpang yang baik dan terarah. Siswa juga lebih menyukai konten yang bervariasi seperti multimedia, seperti contoh video dan kuis online. Penelitian ini menekankan pada adaptasi materi pembelajaran bahasa Inggris bagi calon pramugari Gen Z untuk memfasilitasi komunikasi bahasa Inggris yang baik, ramah, dan percaya diri. Serta dengan meningkatkan pemahaman lintas budaya dan menyediakan sumber daya digital menarik yang dapat diakses melalui smartphone sesuai

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## ABSTRACT

Currently students are still studying to become flight attendants, they cannot provide valid data. Therefore, further investigation is urgently needed to systematically identify and assess English learning materials tailored for aspiring Gen Z flight attendants. This research analyzes appropriate English learning resources designed for Gen Z students who aspire to pursue a career as a flight attendant. Using a needs analysis approach, this research follows the target situation analysis model. This research was conducted at a private aviation school in Bali. Data collection methods are interviews and questionnaires, with sample selection guided by purposive sampling. Using an interactive data analysis model, qualitative analysis is applied to analyze the collected data. The research results show that, according to curriculum requirements, learning materials must facilitate effective communication skills that are useful and important for the role of flight attendants in the world of work. The senior flight attendant emphasized the importance of the material in increasing students' self-confidence and fostering a friendly attitude in using English, as well as understanding how to communicate with passengers in a good and purposeful manner. Students also prefer varied content such as multimedia, such as video examples and online quizzes. This study emphasizes adapting English learning materials for Gen Z flight attendant candidates to facilitate good, friendly, confident English communication. And by increasing cross-cultural understanding and providing interesting digital resources that can be accessed via smartphone according to developments in this century.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Currently, the aviation industry has experienced a real demographic change in its work phase; this shows the increasing interest of Generation Z (Gen Z) in a career as a flight attendant (Melizsa et al., 2021; Persada et al., 2019). This generation, born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, has a strong will to be independent and focused on their life goals, especially in the field of education, especially regarding language acquisition (Barhate & Dirani, 2022; Isaacs et al., 2020; Shorey et al., 2021). Since English is the main language in aviation, mastery of this language is very important for flight attendants. Language learning materials designed for flight attendants must evolve to adapt to the needs and preferences of Gen Z. Traditional teaching methodologies may fail to engage

this technology-savvy generation, requiring innovative approaches that utilize digital media and interactive tools (Barhate & Dirani, 2022; Isaacs et al., 2020; Shorey et al., 2021). In addition, the insight and knowledge of experienced flight attendants regarding the communicative challenges and cultural intricacies they encounter in their role in this profession provide invaluable input for compiling effective learning materials.

Several studies have been conducted regarding flight attendants' special English language needs. Previous study observed the importance of proficient speaking and listening skills (Setyaningsih, 2015). Other study further suggests using role-playing exercises and technology-based materials to improve these competencies (McLean et al., 2022). Other study advocates an extensive analysis of the language needs of prospective flight attendants, detailing their goals, challenges and chosen study topics (Supriadi & Purbani, 2019). The study found a need for a specialized English language curriculum focusing on practical communication skills and cultural awareness to ensure that flight attendants are ready to face the job demands. Although existing research has provided some insight into English language acquisition in various contexts, no research has been conducted to address the needs of aspiring Gen Z flight attendants. Previous study focused on identifying the efficiency of English textbooks designed by teachers for flight attendant services (Apsari & Acep Haryudin, 2017). In comparison other study only conducted a literature review emphasising developing role-playing as a teaching strategy and integrating technology in teaching English for flight attendant courses (Setyaningsih, 2015). Research conducted by other study used students as informants to identify needs (Supriadi & Purbani, 2019).

Because these students are still studying to become flight attendants, they cannot provide valid data. Consequently, further investigations are urgently needed to systematically identify and assess English learning materials tailored to aspiring Gen Z flight attendants. This research analyses appropriate English learning resources designed for Gen Z students who aspire to pursue a career as a flight attendant. The novelty of this study comprehensive needs analysis that combines curriculum specifications, insightful input from experienced flight attendants, and student preferences, researchers recommend guidelines that are valuable for educators and curriculum designers in developing English learning materials that suit the specific needs of Gen Z.

## 2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative methodology. Specifically, this study followed the target situation analysis (TSA) method. TSA represents a vital methodology within English for Specific Purposes (ESP), centred on identifying the specific language needs of learners in their anticipated professional settings (Rahman, 2015; Sanmugam et al., 2013). The main objective of TSA is to determine the linguistic demands that learners will need in their target environments (Benavent & Sánchez-Reyes, 2015). In this study, the researchers used TSA to identify and evaluate suitable English learning materials for Generation Z individuals who want to be flight attendants. This study was conducted at a private aviation school based in Bali. The study involved the school management staff, senior flight attendants, and students in the flight attendant program. The data collection methods were interviews and questionnaires. Semi-structured interviews with the school management staff aimed to identify the curriculum demands. The interviews with experienced flight attendants pinpointed the English language demands in real-world flight attendants' jobs. The interviews with the students were conducted to ascertain their preferences regarding English learning resources, including preferred formats, content types, and accessibility requirements.

Those informants were selected using purposive sampling with criteria principles, ensuring the inclusion of participants offering diverse perspectives and experiences relevant to the research objectives. The qualitative analysis followed the interactive data analysis model, which involved data reduction, data display, and verification/conclusion-drawing steps (Miles et al., 2014).

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### *Curriculum Demands*

The results of the interviews with the school management staff reveal that the curriculum for the flight attendant study program was designed to prepare the students to be flight attendants. Thus, the English language learning materials that they need are the ones that provide the students with samples of conversations that flight attendants normally do during their working hours. The curriculum requires the learning materials to be practical, authentic, and reflect real flight attendant communication. The school management staff also emphasized that the English learning materials should be beyond linguistics competence. They said the English learning materials should also help the students improve their interpersonal communication, build confidence, and understand various cultures of people from different countries to anticipate misunderstanding because of cultural differences or cultural values. Besides, since the students are all from Indonesia and come from various levels of English proficiency, the school management staff also said that the English learning materials should accommodate

students' English proficiency levels. The data that shows the result of the interview with the school management staff can be seen in [Table 1](#).

**Table 1. Curriculum Demands**

Excerpt	Keywords
"Since all the students are native Indonesian speakers learning English as a foreign language, our lessons are tailored to address language gaps and build on their current knowledge."	Indonesian and English as a foreign language
"I recognize that the students' English proficiency levels vary, with some being quite fluent while others have intermediate or basic skills."	Varied Proficiency Levels
"Our curriculum focuses on practical language use in real-world aviation scenarios."	Career-Specific Skills (flight attendant)
"Effective Communication in English is vital for the students' future roles."	Effective Communication
"Interpersonal skills are just as important as language proficiency. We will practice role-playing various situations students might encounter on the job to help them interact smoothly and confidently with passengers and colleagues."	Interpersonal interaction and confidence
"In the global environment of aviation, cultural sensitivity is essential. Understanding and respecting diverse cultural backgrounds help students provide excellent service to passengers worldwide."	Cultural Sensitivity

### **Real-Life Situations**

From the real-life situation aspect, from the explanations given by senior flight attendants, it was found that flight attendants must provide clear and concise instructions to passengers before takeoff. Flight attendants must also communicate in effective English in an emergency, make routine announcements, communicate with passengers throughout the flight, communicate with other crews, and implement security procedures. Flight attendants must be able to explain the situation, provide necessary assistance, and coordinate with medical personnel. The senior flight attendants highlighted that effective communication ensures these situations are managed efficiently and compassionately. The excerpts of the interviews can be seen in [Table 2](#).

**Table 2. Real-Life Situations**

Excerpt	Keywords
"This involves delivering safety briefings, managing emergencies, making routine in-flight announcements, interacting with passengers, coordinating with crew members, implementing security procedures, bridging language gaps, and handling special circumstances."	Safety Briefings, Emergency Situations, Routine In-flight Announcements, Passenger Interactions
"Providing instructions, making requests, offering information, giving assistance, showing empathy and reassurance, handling emergencies, delivering announcements, managing conflicts, and establishing rapport."	Giving Instructions, Making Requests, Providing Information. Offering Assistance, Expressing Empathy and Reassurance, Handling Emergencies, Making Announcements, Managing Conflict, Building Rapport

### **Language Function**

The findings of this study highlight that flight attendants are required to perform a variety of language functions in order to carry out their role effectively (see [Table 3](#)). One of the primary responsibilities involves providing instruction. Making requests is also an important language function. The study explained that flight attendants often must ask passengers to comply with safety regulations, store luggage properly, or adjust their seats. Another language function, namely expressing empathy and reassurance, is very important in creating a positive travel experience.

Furthermore, senior flight attendants also underlined that handling emergencies is a vital language function that requires calm and precise communication. Apart from that, flight attendants are also expected to be able to manage conflicts. Flight attendants are expected to master language functions that can be used to reduce tension, resolve disputes between passengers or between passengers and flight crew, and maintain a peaceful environment on board the aircraft. Lastly, building rapport with passengers is also an essential function of language for a pleasant travel experience. This includes engaging in friendly conversation, showing genuine interest in passengers' wellbeing, and creating a friendly atmosphere. Language function is show in [Table 3](#).

**Table 3. Language Functions**

Excerpt	Keywords
"... providing instructions, making requests, offering information, giving assistance, showing empathy and reassurance, handling emergencies, delivering announcements, managing conflicts, and establishing rapport."	Giving Instructions, Making Requests, Providing Information, Offering Assistance, Expressing Empathy and Reassurance, Handling Emergencies, Making Announcements, Managing Conflict, Building Rapport

**Themes**

Based on the data obtained, several main themes emerged related to flight attendants' needs and responsibilities. These themes cover a wide range of skills and knowledge areas that are important to ensure overall passenger safety, comfort, and satisfaction. Those themes include safety and emergency procedures, customer service, routine announcements, interpersonal communication, collaborative communication, safety procedures needed in English learning materials for prospective flight attendants, cultural sensitivity, compliance with regulations, and promotional communications as show in [Table 4](#).

**Table 4. Themes**

Excerpt	Keywords
"Ensuring passengers' safety is our top priority as flight attendants."	Safety and Emergency Procedures
"Customer service is the cornerstone of our profession."	Customer Service
"Part of our responsibility involves making regular announcements to inform passengers about flight details, safety precautions, and onboard services."	Routine Announcements
"Interpersonal Communication is vital in our interactions with passengers and crew members."	Interpersonal Communication
"Collaborative Communication with the flight crew is essential for ensuring smooth operations."	Collaborative Communication
"Security is of utmost importance in aviation."	Security Procedures
"In a global industry like aviation, cultural sensitivity is essential."	Cultural Sensitivity
"Maintaining our health and wellbeing is crucial for performing our duties effectively."	Health and Wellbeing
"Compliance with regulatory standards is non-negotiable in our line of work."	Regulatory Compliance
"As ambassadors of the airline, we sometimes engage in promotional Communication to showcase our services and amenities.."	Promotional Communication

**Task Analysis**

Based on the data, students training to become flight attendants must complete several specific tasks categorized into pre-flight, in-flight, post-flight and additional special services as show in [Table 5](#).

**Table 5. Tasks Analysis**

Excerpt	Keywords
"As a flight attendant, I handle pre-flight, in-flight, and post-flight duties. This includes ensuring safety before takeoff, assisting passengers during boarding, and attending to their needs throughout the flight. I'm also trained to handle emergencies and perform administrative tasks."	Pre-Flight Duties, Boarding Procedures, In-Flight Duties, Emergency Procedures, Post-Flight Duties, Administrative Tasks

Base on [Table 5](#), in Pre-Flight Assignments, students need to be taught to be responsible for carrying out thorough pre-flight checks to ensure that all safety equipment is functioning properly. While boarding the plane, the senior flight attendant also said that students need to be taught to communicate in carrying out their duties of helping passengers find seats, store their luggage and sit comfortably. This duty also includes ensuring all passengers comply with safety regulations, such as fastening seat belts and securing luggage. Once the flight is underway, it is explained that flight attendants will manage cabin activities and provide in-flight services. This includes serving food and drinks, meeting passengers' needs, and maintaining overall order in the cabin. Flight attendants also need to monitor the safety and comfort of passengers, ensuring that all safety protocols are followed during the flight. Furthermore, it was explained that an essential aspect of a flight attendant's role is preparation to handle emergencies. Students are required to be taught to communicate in English to undergo rigorous training to

respond effectively to various emergency scenarios, such as medical situations, evacuations or in-flight disruptions.

Students must also be taught to communicate in English to carry out Post-Flight Assignments. These duties include ensuring passengers disembark safely and retrieving lost items. Additionally, they will carry out final safety checks and prepare the cabin for the next flight. This phase also includes handling passenger input or complaints to continuously improve service quality. Apart from that, flight attendants are also said to have administrative responsibilities. Students must be taught to complete paperwork and record data, including documenting flight details, incident reports, and inventory management.

### ***Situation and Cultural Analysis***

The two senior flight attendants stated that, as flight attendants, English is indispensable in various professional contexts. In the workplace, English is the primary language for daily operations, ensuring effective communication between flight attendants and passengers and team members. They also explained that social interaction in the aviation community also relies heavily on English. Whether interacting with colleagues from their airline or mingling with colleagues from other airlines, flight attendants use English as a universal language that facilitates smooth communication and friendship.

From a cultural perspective, cultural influences significantly shape communication practices in the aviation industry. The senior flight attendants said one crucial factor is the diversity of language nuances and dialects encountered on board. Flight attendants must navigate these differences sensitively to ensure effective communication and accommodating passengers from diverse language backgrounds. Different cultures have different norms regarding how to convey courtesy and respect. Flight attendants must be culturally aware to interpret and use non-verbal cues appropriately, enhancing their ability to relate to passengers from different backgrounds.

Customer service expectations vary widely between cultures. Gender roles and social norms further influence passenger interactions. Perceptions of safety and security may also differ among passengers based on cultural background. Thus, flight attendants must communicate safety procedures effectively, considering cultural differences in understanding and attitudes toward safety protocols. Besides, dietary preferences and restrictions also vary widely between cultures. Accommodating these differences requires sensitivity and flexibility. The excerpts of the interviews can be seen in [Table 6](#).

**Table 6.** Situation and Cultural Analysis

<b>Excerpt</b>	<b>Keywords</b>
"As a flight attendant, English is paramount across our professional landscape. It's the linchpin in our day-to-day operations, from engaging with passengers to coordinating tasks among our team. English is the go-to language for instruction and interaction among flight attendants in academic environments, like training sessions or workshops."	Workplace Academic Setting Social Interactions
"Cultural influences significantly shape how we communicate onboard. First, language nuances and dialects are crucial considerations. We must navigate these differences sensitively to ensure effective communication.	Language and Dialects Politeness and Formality Non-Verbal Communication
"Politeness and formality also vary across cultures, impacting our interactions with passengers."	Customer Service Expectations
"Non-verbal communication cues carry different meanings across cultures. Gestures or expressions that convey friendliness in one culture might be perceived differently in another."	Gender and Social Roles Safety and Security Perceptions
"What constitutes excellent service in one culture may not align with passengers' preferences from another cultural background."	Dietary Preferences and Restrictions
"Gender roles and social norms influence passenger interactions as well."	
"Safety and security perceptions differ among passengers based on cultural backgrounds."	
"Lastly, dietary preferences and restrictions vary widely among cultures."	

### ***Norms and Conventions***

From data obtained from interviews with senior flight attendants, it was found that the language norms and conventions observed in various communication scenarios encountered by airline staff showed a clear focus on professionalism, clarity and customer service (see [Table 7](#)). In safety demonstrations and instructions, the use of an imperative tone and emphasis on precision and consistency underscores the importance of ensuring passengers fully understand and comply with safety protocols. This formal and authoritative tone is essential to convey the importance of these instructions. In contrast, announcements and interactions with passengers at

airports and departure gates are more welcoming and inclusive. The language used aims to create a comfortable atmosphere, with polite requests and inclusive language so all passengers feel appreciated.

During in-flight service, the staff balances professional courtesy and attention to passenger preferences. Courteous food and drink offerings, as well as active listening and providing reassurance when dealing with complaints, demonstrate a customer-centric approach. In emergencies, staff training stands out, as they adopt a calm and authoritative demeanour, giving clear and direct instructions to ensure the safety of everyone on board. On the other hand, social interactions and networks within organizations and in professional contexts prioritize respectful and collaborative language to foster a positive work environment and represent the airline with professionalism and integrity. Norms and Conventions is show in [Table 7](#).

**Table 7. Norms and Conventions**

Excerpt	Keywords
"Safety is our highest priority when it comes to onboard the aircraft. So, during safety demonstrations and instructions, we ensure clarity and precision are at the forefront. We use imperative mood to emphasize the importance of following instructions, and maintaining consistency ensures that every passenger receives the same vital information."	Safety Demonstrations and Instructions (Clarity and Precision, Imperative Mood, and Consistency)
"Transitioning to announcements, it's crucial to maintain a formal and courteous tone."	Announcements (Formal and Polite Tone and Inclusive Language)
"Greeting and boarding passengers requires a warm and inviting approach. We emphasize politeness and make polite requests to facilitate smooth boarding processes."	Greeting and Boarding Passengers (Warm and Welcoming, and Polite Requests)
"In terms of assisting, being helpful and patient is paramount."	Providing Assistance (Helpful and Patient)
"Offering food and beverages entails making polite offers and acknowledging preferences."	Offering Food and Beverages (Polite Offers and Acknowledge Preferences)
"Dealing with complaints requires empathy and reassurance."	Handling Complaints (Empathy and Reassurance)
"In emergencies, ... We remain calm and authoritative, providing clear and direct instructions to ensure the safety of everyone onboard."	Managing Emergencies (Calm and Authoritative)
"Regarding training and development, our classroom sessions involve formal technical language."	Classroom Learning (Technical and Formal Language)
"Regarding social interactions and networking, interacting with colleagues is about being friendly and respectful."	Interacting with Colleagues (Friendly and Respectful, Collaborative Language)
"And in professional networking, we maintain a formal and polished demeanour, representing our airline with professionalism and integrity."	Professional Networking (Formal and Polished)

### **Gen Z Students' Preferences**

Based on student preferences, according to the data obtained, it was found that the English learning approach that students preferred revolved around interactive learning media. Students expressed that they preferred learning through online quizzes, e-learning platforms, and interactive smartphone applications as tools to help them learn languages. Student comments highlight the transformative impact of this interactive learning tool on their English learning journey. They describe these tools as learning media that make learning fun and accessible, allowing them to learn anytime and anywhere. Additionally, student preferences go beyond the interactive nature of the tool. They also emphasized incorporating vivid visuals and prioritizing conversational practice in learning modules. This shows that students value a holistic approach to language learning, where interactive elements are combined with engaging visual aids and opportunities for practical language application. Students' preferences is show in [Table 8](#).

**Table 8. Students' Preferences**

Excerpt	Keywords
"I've discovered that my preferred approach to English learning revolves around interactive learning mediums. I gravitate towards online quizzes, e-learning platforms, and interactive smartphone applications."	Online learning Interactive media Online quizzes
"..... modules that prioritize conversation practice and include vibrant visuals. It makes learning more engaging and helps me naturally absorb the language."	Smartphones Colourful Module with a lot of conversation practices

## Discussion

Based on the study's results, flight attendants' curriculum demands for English language learning materials include linguistic proficiency, interpersonal interaction, and cultural sensitivity (Bystrova, 2020; Winarno et al., 2022). Flight attendants should be able to use English to communicate effectively with passengers throughout the flight, address their needs, answer questions, and provide assistance (Setyaningsih, 2015; Supriadi & Purbani, 2019). Those findings indicate that the learning materials should align with the student's targeted job. The targeted job demands strengthen those curriculum demands. From the targeted job demands, it is found that the learning materials should be able to make the students use English effectively and confidently in various situations and tasks as flight attendants. In general, the duties of flight attendants can be classified into three: pre-flight, in-flight, and post-flight duties (Jamrus & Razali, 2019; Supriadi & Purbani, 2019). Thus, they have to communicate in English during those duties. Pre-flight duties include safety briefings to ensure passenger safety and compliance, demonstrate the use of safety equipment, explain emergency procedures, and ensure all passengers understand safety protocols (Chang & Yang, 2011; Chen et al., 2023; Malakis & Kontogiannis, 2023).

During the in-flight duties, the role of a flight attendant is multifaceted, requiring various skills and knowledge, from safety and emergency procedures to customer service and cultural sensitivity. Flight attendants must make routine announcements, including flight status updates, weather conditions, and arrival information (Andesta et al., 2018; Chang & Yang, 2011). Specifically, in an emergency, flight attendants must provide instructions, calm passengers, and coordinate with crew and emergency responders to ensure everyone's safety (Chang & Yang, 2011; Chen et al., 2023; Malakis & Kontogiannis, 2023). Thus, effective English communication is paramount because, in emergencies, it requires clarity and conciseness to avoid misunderstandings (Mancheva & Dugdale, 2016; Tachaiyaphum & Sukying, 2017; Yu et al., 2021). During post-flight duties, flight attendants coordinate tasks, share information, and respond to problems with other crew members (Grogan et al., 2004; McKinney et al., 2004). Therefore, clear communication in English ensures all team members are on the same page and can work efficiently. Besides, the study findings also imply cultural factors greatly influence communication and service delivery in the aviation industry. For flight attendants, cultural competency is critical to navigating these complexities and providing inclusive, respectful and high-quality service to passengers from around the world (Aimoldina et al., 2014; Merkin et al., 2014; Szkudlarek et al., 2020). Furthermore, from the students' preferences, the study findings suggest that the optimal English learning experience for students involves a combination of online and mobile-based interactive tools, such as quizzes, e-learning platforms, and smartphone apps, that provide a visually engaging and conversation-focused learning environment. This finding aligns with the characteristics of Gen Z, who learn better through current technologies (DiMattio & Hudacek, 2020; Santosa, 2017; Szymkowiak et al., 2021).

The job demands also require the learning materials to build students' understanding of cultural differences, norms, and appropriate nuances of communication. Besides, according to the student's preferences, English learning materials should provide multimedia such as online quizzes and videos that can be accessed via smartphones and suit Gen Z's characteristics. Since this study was only conducted to identify the student's needs, a further study that develops the English learning materials based on those students' needs needs needs to be conducted.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This study focuses on identifying the appropriate English learning resources tailored for Gen Z students who want to work as flight attendants. From the interview results, this study concludes that the curriculum requires English learning materials that suit Indonesian learners with various English language proficiency levels and help students communicate in English for flight attendants' duties. Specifically, from the perspective of job demands, the learning materials should improve students' English proficiency to communicate effectively and confidently during pre-flight, in-flight, and post-flight duties.

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