

## ENGLISH JOB INTERVIEW ANALYSIS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS' PREFERENCES

*Analisis Wawancara Kerja dalam Industri Perhotelan: Preferensi Praktisi Sumber Daya Manusia*

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### Abstract

*This study aims to examine the nature of job interviews in the hospitality industry based on human resource (HR) practitioners in terms of interview preparation, interview types, interview-type questions, evaluation of the candidates, and interview etiquette. A qualitative research strategy was employed with 20 HR professionals in Bali through a validated questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The findings show structured interviews are the most preferred type of interview, followed by unstructured and behavioural interviews, respectively. Some of the most significant measured competencies are problem-solving, leadership, interpersonal, adaptability, and personal qualities. In addition to that, HR professionals emphasize professional interview etiquette, which involves punctuality, good appearance, attitude, and honesty. This study concludes that interviews are to be combined with other selection methods, which will lead to a more profound assessment of the applicants. These findings are applicable to the English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly in developing English job interview instructional materials for hospitality students.*

**Keywords:** business, English job interview, ESP, hospitality, human resource professionals

### Abstrak

Studi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis sifat wawancara kerja di industri perhotelan berdasarkan praktisi sumber daya manusia (SDM) dalam hal persiapan wawancara, jenis wawancara, pertanyaan dalam wawancara, evaluasi calon, dan etika wawancara. Strategi penelitian kualitatif diterapkan dengan melibatkan 20 profesional SDM di Bali melalui kuesioner yang telah tervalidasi dan wawancara semi-terstruktur. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa wawancara terstruktur adalah jenis wawancara yang paling disukai, diikuti oleh wawancara tidak terstruktur dan wawancara perilaku. Beberapa kompetensi yang paling signifikan yang diukur meliputi pemecahan masalah, kepemimpinan, interpersonal, adaptabilitas, dan kualitas pribadi. Selain itu, praktisi SDM menekankan etika wawancara profesional yang meliputi ketepatan waktu, penampilan yang baik, sikap, dan kejujuran. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa wawancara harus dikombinasikan dengan metode seleksi lain yang akan menghasilkan penilaian yang lebih mendalam terhadap calon karyawan. Temuan ini berlaku untuk Bahasa Inggris untuk Tujuan Khusus (ESP), khususnya dalam pengembangan materi instruksional wawancara kerja dalam bahasa Inggris untuk mahasiswa perhotelan.

**Kata Kunci:** bisnis, wawancara kerja dalam bahasa Inggris, ESP, perhotelan, profesional sumber daya manusia

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## INTRODUCTION

Job interviews are considered an important stage in the employee recruitment and selection process because they are one of the primary channels through which organizations can assess candidates' professional competence, communicative skills, and personal qualities (Biea et al., 2024; Hamza et al., 2021; Juicharoen et al., 2023). They are more than just administrative processes in service-based industries like hospitality, as they can be communicative experiences in which job applicants must communicate effectively in real-time, demonstrate practical awareness, and maintain professionalism (Happonen et al., 2022; Kandampully et al., 2024). Since English has become a common working language in the hospitality sector across the world, English job interviews have become influential in defining the employability of certain candidates (Krishnan et al., 2021; Nghia et al., 2024).

Job interviews have been studied in relation to hiring practices, interviewing strategies, and employability skills. In human resource management, job interviews are recognised as crucial mechanisms for evaluating candidates' skills, such as problem-solving, adaptability, and interpersonal skills (Biea et al., 2024; Hamza et al., 2021; Juicharoen et al., 2023). Similarly, recent research has also highlighted the growing use of online identity and communication in recruitment, such as social media presence and self-representation (Happonen et al., 2022; Kandampully et al., 2024).

In terms of language, various studies have addressed the role of English and communication skills in employability. For example, Krishnan et al. (2021) and Nghia et al. (2024) report that English language and communication skills in the workplace play a crucial role in employers' perceptions of employability. In applied linguistics, job interviews are also considered institutional discourse that requires strategic, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic skills (Dombi, 2020; Sharma, 2021). These studies imply that good job interview performance not only relies on knowledge but also on language skills.

In the area of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), several studies have examined needs analysis and curriculum design in alignment with industry needs. Earlier studies suggest that ESP materials are not always fully in line with actual workplace practices and stakeholder input (such as human resources practitioners) (Aziz & Anjaniputra, 2025; Nateghian, 2024; Ulyani & Anggraini, 2025). Likewise, hospitality education research in Indonesia stresses the need to develop learning materials aligned with workplace communication needs (Guntoro, 2021; Hidayat et al., 2023; Ma'fiah, 2023; Prima, 2022; Xenia & Indriyani, 2025).

Yet, despite these advancements, there is still limited research that specifically investigates English job interview practices in the hospitality industry based on feedback from human resource professionals, especially in an English as a foreign language setting like Indonesia. Most of the research either examines the general recruitment process or language learning without considering both.

Thus, this research seeks to address this gap by exploring English job interview practices in the hospitality industry through the lens of HR professionals to guide the development of ESP-based teaching materials.

This study expands applied linguistics and ESP studies by offering a thorough examination of real interview processes to determine the communicative requirements of job interviews in the hospitality sector, especially in the English language. Practically speaking, the results could be applied to a need-based framework to create teaching resources for English job

interviews and interview simulation exercises that may better prepare students studying hospitality for the realities of the job market.

## METHOD

### Research Design

This qualitative study was designed using the interactive model of qualitative data analysis that was developed by Miles and Huberman (Miles et al., 2014). They highlight that this model has four stages, namely data gathering, data condensing, data presentation, and conclusion. This model is characterized by all the phases of data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions occurring simultaneously. However, the conclusions made are constantly compared to the processes and results of data collection.

### Research Participants

A total of twenty HR professionals were selected as the sample using purposive sampling. All respondents met the criteria as follows: 1) were directly engaged in the recruitment and selection procedures, 2) held job interviews in English, 3) were employed in hospitality-related positions, and 4) had a minimum of two years of working experience in the human resource field. They were staff of hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, private firms, and banks. The diversity helped the research to obtain diverse perspectives on interviewing practices in service-based industries.

Table 1. Demographic Information of HR Professionals

| Category            | Details                                                               |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Total Respondents   | 20                                                                    |
| Gender Distribution | Male: 9, Female: 11                                                   |
| Type of business    | Hotels: 7, Companies: 4, Restaurants: 4, Travel agencies: 2, Banks: 3 |
| Work experience     | 2-5 years = 9, 6-10 years = 8, 11-15 years = 3                        |

### Research Instruments

A structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The questionnaire consisted of five questions asking for demographic data and 14 questions concerning interview preparation, type of interview, competencies measured, interviewer questions, evaluation of candidates, and interview etiquette. Two professionals, one in the field of education and the other in the field of hospitality, were asked to evaluate the questionnaire and gave it a content validity coefficient of 1.00. This ensured the trustworthiness of the instrument. The questionnaire responses were elaborated using semi-structured interviews.

### Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaire was distributed to respondents through printed copies or Google Forms, based on their choice. Ten of the respondents were interviewed to give more details on the interview practices. Interview durations ranged from 40 to 55 minutes. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed word-for-word with the permission of the interviewees before being analyzed.

### Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis was conducted according to the interactive qualitative analysis model that has been suggested by Miles et al. (2014), which comprised data condensation, data display, and the drawing of conclusions and verification. Data condensation was conducted through manual coding. After transcribing the interview data verbatim, the transcripts were read multiple times to identify meaningful units related to job interview practices. These units were then coded manually by assigning labels to relevant segments of the data. Similar codes were grouped into categories and subsequently organized into broader themes aligned with the

research focus, such as interview preparation, interview types, competencies assessed, interview questions, and interview etiquette.

The condensed data were displayed in the form of tables, figures, and thematic summaries. The identified themes were supported by representative excerpts from the interviews. During the analysis, initial interpretations were constantly contrasted with raw data, coded categories, and presented results up to the point that they became thematically saturated, and reliable conclusions were made.

### Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was ensured by using credibility, dependability, and confirmability strategies. Triangulation of questionnaire and interview data, as well as direct participant quotations, increased credibility. Reliability and confirmability were ensured by documenting research and analysis procedures and basing interpretations on participant responses rather than the researcher's assumptions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Interview Preparation

To illustrate the steps undertaken by human resource professionals in preparing for job interviews, Figure 1 presents the key stages identified in this study. These steps reflect common practices used before conducting interviews with candidates.

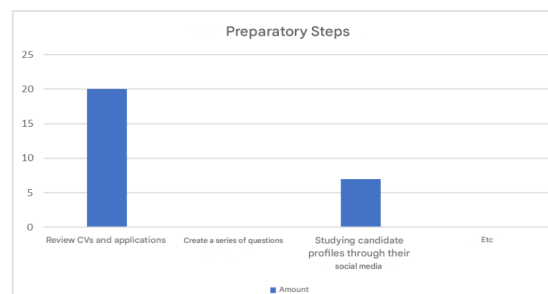


Figure 1. Steps to Prepare for Job Interviews for Candidates

As can be observed in Figure 1, two broad stages of job interview preparation are traditionally adopted by human resource professionals before interviewing the candidates, which include checking the CVs and the applications, as well as reviewing the social media profiles of the candidates. The majority of the twenty HR professionals claimed that the first and most crucial step would be the review of CVs and application documents, as it would allow HR professionals to get a first impression of the applicant's qualifications, work experience, and suitability for the position. One respondent noted that "The first step we always follow is to look through the CV and application letter since it is through this process that we immediately tell whether or not the candidate fits into the position or not" (HRP 3). The step enables interviewers to develop interview questions that are based on the backgrounds of the candidates and the needs of the organization. Along with document screening, seven HR professionals reported that they also assessed the social media accounts of the candidates during the preparation process. The rationale behind the practice is to learn more about the personalities of the candidates, their communication styles, interests, and their behavior outside the workplace. HRP10 noted that "Sometimes we monitor their social media to get an idea of their attitude and how they project themselves, particularly in a position that involves direct interaction with the guests." It was then followed by the statement of HRP5, which says that social media screening is the means of testing the cultural compatibility, meaning that it is not about the judgment of their

values, but the human resource professional wants to know whether the candidates can fit the company culture in their values and behavior or not.

Based on their statements, by going over the official documents and online profiles before the interview, they are better equipped to create more focused and appropriate interview questions. Preparation facilitates more informed decision-making and helps focus and optimize the interview process. One of the professionals mentioned that when the background of a candidate is already known, the interview is more effective since they can directly investigate the competencies of the candidates and their attitude (HRP8).

Overall, these preparation measures allow the HR professionals to perform the interview process more strategically and to find the candidates that best match the vacancy requirements and organizational culture.

### Types of Interviews Used in the Hospitality Industry

The results are based on a questionnaire completed by twenty human resource professionals regarding the type of job interviews for candidates.

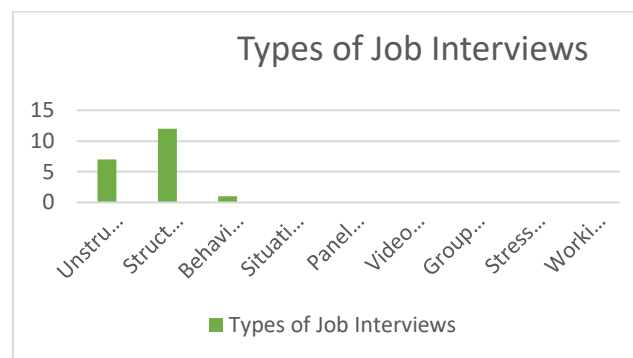


Figure 2. Types of Job Interviews

Regarding the forms of interviews applied, the statistics reveal that the structured interview is the most prevalent. Twelve of the respondents were using structured interviews, where all the candidates are interviewed using similar predetermined questions. HR professionals highlighted that this format could reduce the element of subjectivity and promote fairness and consistency during the assessment of a candidate. HRP4 emphasized that “Structured interviews enable us to treat all the candidates fairly since they all respond to the same or similar questions.” A different HR professional also observed the same thing by saying, “This kind of interview is objective, and it is also easy to compare the candidates, especially when we have many applicants” (HRP9).

Seven respondents expressed their preference for unstructured interviews, stating that this type of interview permits being more flexible in exploring the individual experience of the candidate and his or her communicative skills. One respondent said, “In the unstructured interviews, we can make the questions according to the candidate's response and watch them naturally discuss things” (HRP3). The other respondent also said that unstructured interviews were very informative regarding the candidates’ personalities, saying that it allows them more room to see the candidates’ character and their fluency in English (HRP2).

Only one of the respondents stated that they employed behavioral interviews as the main interview method, but many respondents admitted that in the real world, they tend to mix various types of interviews based on position, organizational needs, and responsibility. According to one human resource professional, when it comes to supervisory or managerial job opportunities, they tend to mix structured questions with behavioral ones to understand how the applicants or candidates dealt with real scenarios in the past (HRP7).

The combination of these interview strategies allows human resource professionals to acquire a more extensive insight into the competencies, communication skills, and job preparedness of candidates.

### Competencies Assessed During Job Interviews

To present the distribution of responses related to the competencies assessed during job interviews, Figure 3 illustrates the key findings obtained from the participating HR professionals. The figure provides an overview of how frequently each aspect was mentioned during the data collection process.

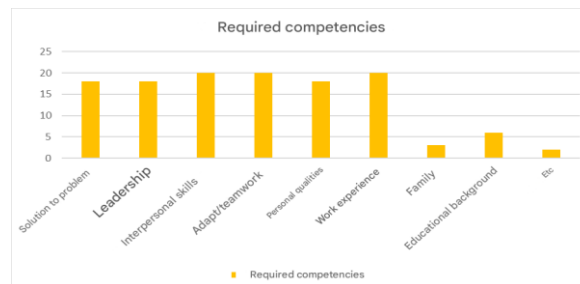


Figure 3. Competencies Required for Candidates

As shown in Figure 3, the numbers presented indicate the number of HR professionals who reported or referred to each aspect. These frequencies reflect how commonly each practice or perspective was identified among the participants. The results indicate that in the case of an English job interview, HR professionals focus on a combination of competencies, which are problem-solving skills, leadership, interpersonal skills, adaptability, teamwork, personal qualities, and work experience. These competencies were always emphasized as the needed ones in the hospitality sector, where the staff must deal with customers, peers, and supervisors in dynamic service-oriented settings. This is highlighted by one participant who said, “In hospitality, we consider more how the candidates resolve problems and how they interact with others than what they have on their certificates” (HRP1).

Problem-solving capabilities are analyzed to determine the way the candidates address challenges in the workplace, especially when it comes to handling guest complaints or operational problems. According to one human resource professional, “We usually ask the candidates how they would deal with a hard guest or unforeseen circumstance since it is part of this industry daily” (HRP4).

Leadership skills are evaluated in the case of supervisory or managerial roles, and help understand whether candidates have the skills of team leadership and decision-making. It was noted in the statement of one of the participants, who said, “In the case of leadership positions, we want to know how the candidates handled the department and how they made decisions when they were under pressure” (HRP7).

The importance of interpersonal skills and adaptability is also highly stressed because working in the hospitality industry entails continuous teamwork and the ability to interact with various people effectively. Two of the respondents mentioned that qualities such as teamwork and effective communication are greatly anticipated since employees are the ones who are going to have direct contact with the guests, and flexibility is needed to fit the working environment, which is dynamic and constantly changing, especially during peak seasons (HRP9, HRP10).

On the contrary, most human resource professionals attributed relatively low weight to family background and academic qualifications. This indicates a trend toward practical competence and workplace behavior as opposed to personal background. According to one of the

participants, they said that “We do not really care about their origin or their grade in school, but how they can perform and act at work” (HRP5).

On balance, these data suggest that HR professionals focus on those competencies that can directly lead to effective work and the quality of services in the hospitality sector.

### **Types of Interview Questions Asked in English**

This section presents qualitative data from open-ended questions. The respondents were not asked to report the frequency of their use of each question type, yet they were asked to describe their usual practices. Consequently, quantitative frequency data is not available. The analysis of the interview questions reveals that the competency and behavioural questions are predominantly used by human resource professionals in English interviews.

To assess problem-solving skills, the candidates are generally asked to explain how they solve problems, make decisions, or how they react to guests' complaints. HRP8 mentioned that they usually ask the applicants to answer the question on how they solved the problem with the guests or problems in the operation in their last job. HRP2 stated that the answer shows not only the resolution but also how they think and communicate. Based on their views, examples of problem-solving questions asked in the interviews include “*Could you give me an example of a problem that you have had at work or in your personal life and how you solved it?*” and “*If you were in a position where you had to make a decision, what would you do? What process did you follow to make that decision?*” These questions require the candidates to answer based on their experience, which also reflects their thinking and communication skills under pressure.

The leadership interview questions are generally focused on candidates' experience in leading a group, motivating team members, and overcoming resistance. To justify this, the HRP20, HRP15, and HRP11 said that in the case of leadership positions, they ask the candidates to share their skills on how they managed their team and how they handled difficult staff members. Similarly, another HRP10 commented that they do not ask them theoretical questions or answers, but rather examples to see if they are ready to take on the leadership role. Examples of questions asked in this category include “*What is an example of leading a team that is not keen on following your leadership?*” and “*From your previous experiences as a leader, how do you communicate the work goal of the team you lead?*” These are examples of questions that seek practical examples rather than statements of general leadership philosophy.

To evaluate interpersonal skills, the candidates are asked about their strengths, their ability to manage work-related stress, and how they manage difficult guests or team members. HRP14 said communication is vital for hospitality employees; hence, they often ask about the candidates' approaches to dealing with challenging guests or stressful situations. Interpersonal skill questions include “*Who is the most difficult person you have dealt with in your life, and what did you do to solve the problem?*” and “*Every job has pressure - what do you do to get this job done?*” These questions demonstrate how the candidates manage interpersonal conflict and stress in the workplace.

Flexibility and teamwork skills are also assessed by asking questions about working in teams, adjusting to a new environment, and managing conflict, as stated by one of the interviewers, who commented that in the hospitality business, flexibility is very important; that is why they ask about how the candidates deal with new teams and new situations (HRP18). Based on the interview, questions commonly asked in this category are “*How do you adapt to a new environment?*” and “*When working on a team, describe a time when one person was not doing their share of the work - what did you do?*” These questions assess the candidates' adaptability and teamwork.

Questions assessing personal qualities include questions about the candidates' strengths, weaknesses, accomplishments, and the times when they have met or exceeded expectations.

Two HR professionals concluded that they could see the candidates' attitude, honesty, and self-awareness with these questions (HRP5, HRP16). Questions assessing personal qualities include “*What are your weaknesses and what have you done to improve them?*” and “*Describe a time when you went above and beyond the call.*” These questions explore candidates' self-awareness and growth potential.

Through the interview results, it can be concluded that questions about work background allow the candidates to describe their previous jobs, responsibilities, and relevant technical skills. Questions such as “What were the two greatest accomplishments you achieved in your previous job?” (HRP6) and “Did you use Micros System before? How do you use it in your department?” (HRP9). Although the questions about family background and educational background are not asked frequently, some human resource professionals find them useful to get some contextual background information, as one of the interviewees mentioned, “Sometimes we ask about education or the family background to learn about their support system, but it is not the priority” (HRP15). Questions like “How has your education helped you in your previous jobs?” and “Can you explain your family background and how they have a strong influence on your job?” are sometimes asked in this category to gain information about applicants' background and support systems.

### Additional Selection Techniques

In addition to conducting the selection process through interviews, there are other selection techniques that are usually carried out by human resource professionals to complete the interview and select their candidates. These techniques are described in Figure 4 below:

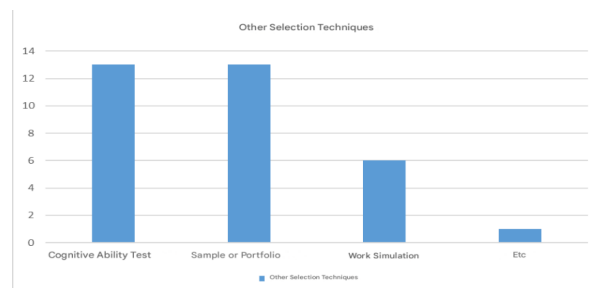


Figure 4. Other Selection Techniques Used in the Recruitment Process

As Figure 4 shows, there are other selection methods used by HR professionals to supplement the interview process. The most used ones were cognitive ability tests, sample or portfolio tests, as thirteen respondents reported using each of them, suggesting both are believed to be effective in assessing the potential and job-related skills of the candidates. Two HR professionals described the importance of cognitive tests. They said, “Cognitive tests are important to us because they allow us to determine how candidates analyze issues and make decisions (HRP02), and one of them added, “It allows us to determine how candidates think outside the scope of the interview” (HRP09). In the same vein, the utility of portfolio or work sample tests was highlighted by various participants, one of whom commented, “Portfolios provide actual evidence of their skills and experience in the job” (HRP1), and another, “Portfolios enable us to check on whether their competencies are in tandem with the requirements of the job” (HRP6).

Around six respondents reported job simulations, which were reported to be especially effective in the evaluation of practical performance in close-to-real work situations. One of the participants reported, “Job simulations will give us an idea of how the candidates will handle themselves in the job” (HR4), and another participant said, “Job simulations will help us to understand how the candidates will handle themselves in the job” (HR1). These perceptions highlight the relevance of experiential assessment in the recruitment of hospitality personnel.

The least commonly used selection method was reference checks. However, there are HR professionals who still recognize their additional value. One of the respondents stated that reference checks help to know more about the background, yet it is not the primary consideration, which is the reason why another respondent stated, “We do not take final decisions based on reference checks. Instead, it is only used to verify information” (HR3). In general, the results suggest that organizations are more inclined to use multiple selection methods simultaneously to obtain a more comprehensive and accurate assessment of candidates' suitability for the vacancy.

### Interview Etiquette Expected from Candidates

This section of the questionnaire discusses interview ethics that human resource professionals expect from candidates when conducting interviews. The results are as follows.

Table 2. Interview Etiquette Expected of Human Resource Professionals

| No | Interview Etiquette                                                                                                          | Number of Respondents |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. | Have thorough preparation (understand the company background, the position being applied for, and other related information) | 20                    |
| 2. | Arrive on time or a few minutes early                                                                                        | 20                    |
| 3. | Dress neatly and appropriately                                                                                               | 20                    |
| 4. | Have a good attitude and body language                                                                                       | 20                    |
| 5. | Answer honestly and relevantly                                                                                               | 20                    |
| 6. | Do not criticize previous work                                                                                               | 18                    |
| 7. | Thank the interviewer after the interview                                                                                    | 19                    |
| 8. | Others                                                                                                                       |                       |
|    | Keep eye contact while listening                                                                                             | 1                     |
|    | Answer fluently without using too many fillers, which shows no confidence                                                    | 1                     |
|    | Asking questions to clarify                                                                                                  | 1                     |

Table 3 shows the different categories of interview etiquette that human resource professionals find significant and what they believe the best candidate conduct would be during a job interview. Respondents highly stressed proper preparation, which involves familiarizing oneself with the company background, the position being applied for, and job-related details. This fact is emphasized by two interviewees, who mentioned, “Candidates must be prepared and know what the company does and what the job involves” (HRP1) and “Being prepared demonstrates seriousness and respect to the interviewer and the company (HRP2). Moreover, punctuality, proper attire, professional attitude, and body language were always cited as the minimum expectations. According to one HR professional, arriving at the office on time and getting the right attire already gives a good first impression (HRP6), and the other one indicated that body language and attitude in an interview determine how the candidates will behave in the office (HRP7).

Being relevant and honest in answering the interview questions was also considered a significant aspect, as it demonstrates integrity and self-confidence in the candidates. This assumption was justified by the statements of the participants, such as “We like honest answers because it shows that the candidate understands what he or she is capable of” (HRP4) and “Relevant and clear answers help us to evaluate how well these individuals fit the vacancy” (HRP9). Respondents, in addition, stressed the need to avoid negative remarks about former employers, as this can be interpreted as unprofessional. One respondent said, “Talking negatively about past workplaces creates a bad picture of the attitude of the candidate” (HRP3), and another said, “Professional applicants are expected to say only good things about the past experiences they had, even though they might have had difficulties” (HRP5). It was also emphasized that expressing thanks is a simple yet relevant gesture to make after the interview, as one HR professional points out: “A polite and professional thing to do after the interview is to say thank you (HR8).

Beyond these main expectations, a few respondents identified additional aspects that may improve interview performance. It is important to note that only a minority of participants identified these behaviors, and they were not widely cited across the sample. For example, eye contact was noted as a behaviour that demonstrates attention and confidence (HRP10). As one respondent commented, “Eye contact shows the candidate is confident and interested in the conversation” (HRP10). Likewise, one respondent commented that respondents' ability to answer questions without prolonged pauses was an indicator of confidence and preparation (HRP1). Another participant noted the importance of asking questions to clarify information as an indication of interest in the role (HRP8). While these behaviours might be beneficial for interviewing, their low frequency indicates that they reflect individual views, rather than widespread expectations of HR professionals.

In summary, the results suggest that interview etiquette is largely defined by preparation, professionalism, and interpersonal etiquette, while other factors such as eye contact, fluency, and asking questions were less strongly emphasised.

### Candidate Assessment Practices

In addition to conducting interviews, here are some ways human resource professionals assess candidates in depth. This is a crucial step to ensure that the selected candidate is the best fit for the company's needs. The results of the questionnaire can be seen in Figure 5 below.

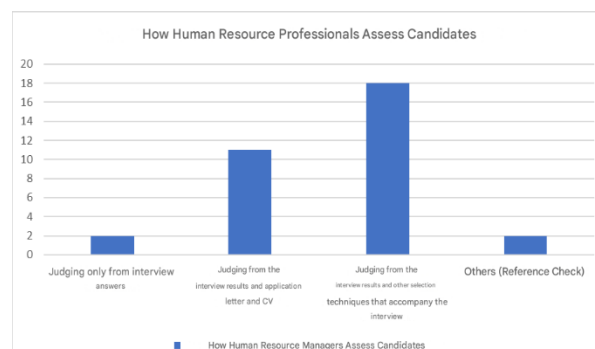


Figure 5. Other Selection Techniques Used in the Recruitment Process

Figure 5 shows how human resource professionals assess applicants during the hiring process. Eighteen human resource professionals reported that they base their evaluation on the combination of both the interview results and other selection processes. It was considered that the practice was more valid and holistic than employing one approach. One of the responders says that “Interviews do not work with only one single method. Therefore, we employ interviews along with other methods to provide a more accurate picture of a candidate” (HRP5). A different HR professional also commented that it is possible to reduce bias and make more accurate decisions with the assistance of several practices (HRP2).

Eleven respondents said that they examined the candidates using the results of the interview procedure, accompanied by any additional materials such as resumes and cover letters. According to the human resource professionals, these documents are utilized to provide context for the performance of the interviews. One respondent said, “The CV and cover letter help us to verify information given in the interview” (HRP3), and another said, “Supporting documents help us to verify information given between what the candidates say and how they will perform during the interview” (HRP9).

The other forms of assessment were not commonly applied. Two of the respondents highlighted that they were currently relying on interview responses, though they were aware of the weakness of the interview technique. As one of the participants noted, interviews are enough to form an idea about some of the positions, but not the whole picture (HRP7). The other two

respondents utilized the interviews along with reference checks that they deemed as a complement and not definitive. One of the human resource professionals stated that reference checks must be used to confirm information as opposed to being the main selection criterion (HRP5).

Overall, the findings indicate that an evidence-based assessment approach combined with other approaches is becoming popular among human resources professionals. Single-method approaches, including the application of interviews alone, are considered insufficient. Conversely, the interviews and technical examinations, combined with supporting documents and reference checks, are said to be more effective in determining the overall suitability of the candidate. This plan aligns with the present organizational requirements of employees who might not just be technically qualified but also culturally adaptive and strategically fit.

This article provides an in-depth examination of the English job interview processes applied in the hospitality industry, including interview preparation, types of interviews, required competencies, specific interview questions, assessment methods, and interview etiquette. The findings are relevant to applied linguistics theory and pedagogy, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and hospitality education, particularly in settings where English is not the primary language.

To begin with, the use of structured interviews is strongly connected to the enhanced objectivity, reliability, and equitable hiring methods, as structured forms provide uniformity in questioning and evaluation criteria of the candidates (Edenborough, 2005; Mondy, 2016). Meta-analytic research conducted in major international journals has persistently shown that structured interviews have much higher predictive validity and inter-rater reliability compared to those conducted through unstructured interviews, thus enhancing the accuracy and fairness of candidate assessment (McDaniel et al., 1994; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). Some studies also suggest that more elaborate interview designs minimize interviewer subjectivity and bias in responses since discourse structures, scoring guidelines, and evaluation methods are made equal (Huffcutt et al., 2014; Levashina et al., 2014). These results were based on previous studies conducted in human resource management and indicate that systematic discourse patterns that occur in structured interviews allow the systematic assessment of spoken English proficiency, pragmatic competence, and communicative clarity, in combination with the technical and job-related competencies of candidates (Campion et al., 2011; Huffcutt et al., 2001; Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Second, the phenomenon that HR professionals conduct social media screening before interviews reflects a broader shift in digital recruitment practices. While social media screening is increasingly used to assess personality traits and cultural fit (Kirk et al., 2023; Kong & Ding, 2024; Mönke et al., 2024; Roth et al., 2016), this current study adds a linguistic dimension by showing that online self-presentation itself has become a form of professional discourse with implications for communicative competence. This suggests that ESP pedagogy needs to expand beyond traditional spoken interaction to include digital communication skills and online professional presence as part of language and career readiness training. It supports the argument of Stewart (2022) in practical linguistics that structured questioning helps determine communicative competence more accurately in the workplace by standardizing the process and allowing candidates to demonstrate their language use.

Third, the focus on soft skills, including problem-solving, leadership, interpersonal communication, and adaptability, is in line with the hospitality literature, which correlates service quality with interactive competencies of employees (Baum & Hai, 2020; Krishnan et al., 2021). The candidates must show proficiency in narrative, strategic discourse management, and pragmatic awareness to answer competency-based interview questions. This is in line with research studies that have revealed that the context of a simulated job interview reveals the areas of weakness in spoken grammar, fluency, and communicative clarity among students, and that

highlights the significance of the intensive training of real-time communication strategies (Shi & Li, 2024; Wilang, 2025). The results, consequently, affirm and build on earlier studies, proving that the successful performance of interviewing hospitality candidates entails combined linguistic competencies, as opposed to linguistic competence only.

Fourth, the idea that previous communicative behavior is a predictor of future performance at work is supported by the frequent use of behavioral competency questions (Conte & Landy, 2019; Janssen & Carradini, 2021). Employers can assess discourse structure, word choice, and pragmatic suitability simultaneously by using these questions as recruitment strategies. This supports the claims made in ESP research that the curriculum should incorporate language form, communicative functions, and professional contexts rather than relying solely on decontextualized grammar instruction. Instead, it should incorporate tasks that reflect actual workplace communication.

Fifth, this research indicates that interviews are not a single determinant of hiring decisions. They are supplemented with some other assessments like cognitive tests, work simulations, and portfolio assessments. This holistic approach is consistent with modern HR paradigms that suggest triangulating evaluation processes to increase the accuracy of decision-making (Armstrong & Taylor, 2021; Nankervis et al., 2017). Methodologically, the implication of such a finding is that interview performance must be viewed as an element of an overall competence assessment system that requires ESP teachers to train learners to complete various communicative tasks in multiple assessment formats (Fortanet-Gómez & Beltrán-Palanques, 2022; Sukying et al., 2023).

Sixth, human resource professionals highlighted the significance of interview etiquette, especially punctuality, dress code, body language, and professional courtesy. This aligns with the results of previous studies that have discovered the role of nonverbal communication in the framework of interviewer perceptions and general professional interaction (Heimann & Schmitz-Wilhelmy, 2024; Martín-Raugh et al., 2023), along with recent findings of nonverbal strategies in hotel interviews (Susanti & Nova, 2022). These results emphasized that communicative competence does not merely entail verbal production but also nonverbal and embodied communication, which means that nonverbal communication training, like body language and tone of voice, should be incorporated into professional communication courses in ESP instruction.

In general, the present study enriches the literature on ESP and applied linguistics by offering empirical data from a non-native hospitality environment. The research has had obvious implications for teaching practice, including English job interview simulation, competency-based speaking activities, digital communication courses, and professional etiquette training, which are to be incorporated in ESP courses in hospitality education. The necessity to synchronize the instructional materials with the real-world practice can enhance the employability and readiness of students to get involved in the English-mediated professional communication in the international hospitality industry.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study has demonstrated that English job interviews in the hospitality sector are complex communication processes rather than just administrative ones. The findings imply that abilities like problem-solving, leadership, interpersonal skills, adaptability, and professional behavior are valued more highly than education or life experience. Human resources professionals use a combination of interviews and other selection methods, such as cognitive tests, work samples, and job simulations, to evaluate candidates more accurately and fairly.

The findings indicate that English Specific Purposes (ESP) and hospitality training programs need to incorporate practical training related to the use of English in job interviews.

Pragmatic competence, professional discourse strategies, nonverbal communication, and behavioral response skills should be learned in line with industry standards to be prepared for an interview. School programs can use competency-based speaking exercises and interview simulations to better prepare students for the real-world hiring process in the hospitality industry. Further research on English job interview practice in diverse professional domains and contexts is recommended to enhance the applicability of the findings. Further research on ethical issues and potential bias in recruitment processes, like social media screening, can help make English-mediated hiring more transparent and equitable.

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