



Teachers' Roles as Facilitators of English Learning of SMA Negeri 8 Kupang Students

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article history Received : March, 27th 2026 Revised : April, 30th 2026 Accepted : June, 12th 2026 OPEN ACCESS	This study was conducted at SMA Negeri 8 Kupang City to investigate how teachers performed their roles as facilitators in the English teaching and learning process, the challenges they faced, and the strategies they used to overcome those challenges. The objectives were to describe teachers' facilitative roles, the difficulties encountered, and the strategies applied to support students' English learning. This research used a qualitative descriptive method. Data were collected through classroom observations and in-depth interviews with three English teachers. Observations focused on classroom practices, while interviews explored teachers' perceptions, experiences, and strategies. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns related to the research questions. The findings showed that teachers performed several facilitative roles, including acting as guides, motivators, resource providers, and creators of positive learning environments. They helped students build confidence, adapt materials to students' needs, and integrate technology such as Quizizz and Google Translate to enhance engagement. However, teachers faced challenges such as low student motivation, large class sizes, and limited facilities. To address these issues, they applied peer learning, positive reinforcement, and creative teaching strategies to support effective English learning.
Keywords:	<i>teachers' roles, facilitator, English learning, student engagement, qualitative study</i>

1. Introduction

In the era of globalization and 21st-century education, the role of teachers has undergone a significant transformation from knowledge transmitters to facilitators of learning. Contemporary educational paradigms emphasize student-centered learning, collaborative interaction, and the development of communicative competence, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. In Indonesia, despite the inclusion of English in the secondary school curriculum, many students still struggle to communicate effectively due to limited opportunities for authentic language use, low confidence, and insufficient instructional support. These challenges underscore the

importance of teachers' facilitative roles in fostering interactive, supportive, and meaningful learning environments.

The notion of teachers as facilitators is closely aligned with student-centered pedagogy and communicative language teaching. Richards and Rodgers (2001) assert that communicative approaches require teachers to guide learners in using language meaningfully rather than focusing solely on linguistic forms. Similarly, Hattie (2012) emphasizes that effective teaching is characterized by active student engagement, constructive feedback, and dynamic classroom interaction. These perspectives collectively highlight that facilitative teaching is essential for enhancing students' participation, autonomy, and overall learning outcomes.

A growing body of research has examined teachers' roles as facilitators in EFL classrooms. Previous studies consistently report that facilitative teaching contributes positively to students' learning. For example, Rahmawati (2018) and Kim and Kwon (2020) emphasize the role of teachers in increasing students' motivation, while Yunita (2020) demonstrates improvements in students' speaking skills through facilitative practices. In addition, Sihombing (2022) highlights the effectiveness of flexible and student-centered approaches in supporting successful learning outcomes. Despite these valuable contributions, most of these studies tend to focus on specific dimensions of facilitative teaching, such as motivation or speaking achievement, rather than examining the broader and more complex nature of facilitative roles in classroom practice.

Moreover, prior research has largely been conducted in generalized or different educational settings, with limited attention to specific local contexts, particularly in eastern Indonesia. There remains a lack of studies that simultaneously investigate how teachers enact their facilitative roles, the challenges they encounter, and the strategies they employ to address those challenges within a particular institutional context. This indicates a significant research gap in understanding the practical and contextualized implementation of facilitative teaching in real classroom environments.

Addressing this gap, the present study investigates teachers' roles as facilitators in English learning at SMA Negeri 8 Kupang City. This study not only explores the roles performed by teachers but also examines the challenges they face and the strategies they adopt to overcome these challenges. By focusing on a specific local context, this research offers a more holistic and context-sensitive understanding of facilitative teaching practices in EFL classrooms.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrated analysis of facilitative roles, challenges, and coping strategies within a single institutional setting using a qualitative descriptive approach. Unlike previous studies that predominantly focus on isolated outcomes, this research provides a comprehensive perspective on the practical realities of classroom facilitation and highlights teachers' adaptive efforts in dealing with contextual constraints such as large class sizes, limited facilities, and unequal access to technology.

This study is particularly significant in light of the ongoing need to enhance students' communicative competence and promote student-centered learning in Indonesia. Insights from this study are expected to contribute not only to the theoretical development of facilitative teaching in EFL contexts but also to practical improvements in English language instruction for educators, school administrators, and policymakers. Accordingly, this study aims to:

- (1) identify the roles performed by English teachers as facilitators in the teaching and learning process;
- (2) examine the challenges faced by teachers in carrying out these roles; and
- (3) analyze the strategies used to overcome those challenges.

In the era of globalization and 21st-century education, the role of teachers has shifted from being knowledge transmitters to facilitators of learning. Contemporary educational paradigms emphasize student-centered learning, collaborative interaction, and the development of communicative competence, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. In Indonesia, English is taught from secondary school level; however, many students still experience difficulties in communicating effectively in English due to limited practice opportunities, low confidence, and inadequate learning support. This situation highlights the importance of teachers' facilitative roles in creating interactive, supportive, and meaningful learning environments.

The concept of teachers as facilitators is closely related to student-centered pedagogy and communicative language teaching. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), communicative approaches encourage teachers to guide students in using language meaningfully rather than merely focusing on grammatical accuracy. Similarly, Hattie (2012) emphasizes that effective teachers create interactive learning environments, provide constructive feedback, and actively engage students in the learning process. In the Indonesian EFL context, several studies have reported positive impacts of facilitative

teaching roles. Rahmawati (2018) found that students' motivation increased when teachers acted as responsive facilitators. Yunita (2020) revealed that facilitative teaching significantly improved students' speaking skills, while Sihombing (2022) concluded that flexible and student-oriented approaches contributed to successful English learning outcomes.

Although previous studies have discussed teachers' roles as facilitators, most of them focus on general contexts and emphasize specific aspects such as motivation or speaking achievement. Limited research explores how teachers comprehensively perform their facilitative roles, the challenges they encounter, and the strategies they apply within a particular local context. Therefore, this study investigates teachers' roles as facilitators in English learning at SMA Negeri 8 Kupang City. By focusing on a specific Indonesian high school context, this research provides contextualized empirical evidence regarding facilitative practices, classroom challenges, and adaptive strategies implemented by teachers.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrated analysis of facilitative roles, challenges, and coping strategies within one institutional setting using qualitative descriptive methods. Rather than merely examining outcomes such as motivation or speaking performance, this study highlights the practical realities of classroom facilitation and the adaptive efforts of teachers in addressing contextual constraints such as large class sizes, limited facilities, and unequal access to technology.

This study is urgent considering the ongoing need to strengthen English communicative competence among Indonesian students and to promote student-centered pedagogical practices. Understanding how teachers enact their facilitative roles and overcome classroom challenges can provide valuable insights for educators, school administrators, and policymakers in improving English language instruction.

Accordingly, this study aims to:

- (1) identify the roles performed by English teachers as facilitators in the teaching and learning process;
- (2) examine the challenges faced by teachers in carrying out these roles; and
- (3) analyze the strategies used to overcome those challenges.

By addressing these objectives, this research contributes to the broader scholarship on facilitative teaching practices in EFL contexts and offers practical implications for improving English learning in Indonesian secondary schools.

2. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore teachers' roles as facilitators in the English teaching and learning process at SMA Negeri 8 Kupang City. The qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and classroom practices within their natural context. The study focused on describing and interpreting the facilitative roles performed by teachers, the challenges they encountered, and the strategies they applied.

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 8 Kupang City during the 2024/2025 academic year. The participants of this study were three English teachers who were actively teaching at the school. They were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in English instruction and their willingness to participate in the study. As a qualitative study, the emphasis was placed on obtaining rich and detailed information rather than generalizing the findings.

The instruments used in this study were classroom observation sheets and semi-structured interview guidelines. Classroom observations were conducted to examine teachers' actual practices in facilitating English learning, including classroom interaction, instructional strategies, and use of learning resources. Meanwhile, in-depth interviews were carried out to explore teachers' perceptions, experiences, challenges, and strategies related to their facilitative roles. The interviews allowed flexibility for participants to elaborate on their responses while still focusing on the research objectives.

The data collection process was conducted chronologically. First, the researcher prepared research instruments and obtained permission from the school administration. Second, classroom observations were conducted to gain initial insights into teaching practices. Third, interviews were carried out with each teacher to clarify and deepen the information obtained from observations. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

The data analysis employed thematic analysis. The researcher organized and transcribed the data, identified significant statements, coded relevant information, and grouped similar codes into themes corresponding to the research questions. The analysis focused on identifying recurring patterns related to teachers' facilitative roles, challenges, and coping

strategies. To ensure credibility, the researcher compared data obtained from observations and interviews through triangulation.

Through this qualitative descriptive approach, the study provides contextualized insights into how facilitative teaching roles are enacted and sustained in a secondary school EFL setting.

3. Research Findings and Discussion

Research Findings

This study examined how English teachers enacted their roles as facilitators, the challenges they encountered, and the strategies they implemented to sustain student-centered learning at SMA Negeri 8 Kupang City. The discussion interprets the findings in relation to existing pedagogical perspectives and highlights their contribution to the broader discourse on facilitative teaching in EFL contexts.

The findings indicate that English teachers at SMA Negeri 8 Kupang City enacted diverse facilitative roles in the teaching and learning process. The data reveal that teachers functioned as guides who directed students in understanding learning materials and completing assigned tasks. Rather than positioning themselves as the sole source of knowledge, teachers encouraged active participation by inviting students to ask questions, share opinions, and engage in collaborative activities.

In addition to guiding instruction, teachers performed motivational roles. They provided constructive feedback, encouragement, and positive reinforcement to enhance students' confidence in using English. Classroom observations further showed that teachers intentionally created a supportive and less intimidating learning atmosphere through friendly communication and appropriate humor, which helped reduce students' anxiety.

Furthermore, teachers acted as providers of learning resources by adapting instructional materials from textbooks and online platforms. They integrated digital tools such as Quizizz, Google Translate, and voice-recording activities to increase student engagement and promote autonomous learning. Teachers also mediated classroom interaction by organizing peer-learning and group discussion activities, thereby fostering collaboration among students.

These findings demonstrate that facilitative roles were implemented through instructional guidance, emotional support, resource adaptation, and interactive classroom management.

Challenges in facilitating their students' English learning

Despite their efforts to implement facilitative teaching practices, teachers encountered several challenges. A major issue identified was students' low confidence and motivation in learning English. Many students were hesitant to participate in speaking activities due to fear of making mistakes or being judged by peers. This condition limited the effectiveness of interactive classroom strategies.

Another significant challenge was large class sizes, which constrained teachers' ability to provide individualized support. Additionally, limited school facilities and unequal access to digital devices and stable internet connectivity restricted the consistent integration of technology into classroom instruction. These contextual constraints influenced the extent to which facilitative roles could be optimally implemented, requiring teachers to continuously adapt their approaches to classroom realities.

To address these challenges, teachers applied various adaptive strategies. Peer-learning activities were implemented to encourage mutual support and collaborative problem-solving among students. By working in groups, students felt more comfortable participating in English activities.

Teachers also used positive reinforcement and motivational language to build students' self-confidence. Instructional materials were adjusted according to students' proficiency levels to ensure better comprehension and participation. Although technological resources were limited, teachers maximized available tools creatively to maintain student engagement.

Additionally, teachers engaged in professional development efforts to enhance their pedagogical competence. These strategies reflect teachers' commitment to sustaining facilitative roles despite existing constraints.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the significant role of teachers as facilitators in promoting student-centered English learning. The identified roles such as guides, motivators,

resource providers, and mediators reflect a shift from traditional teacher-centered instruction toward more interactive and collaborative learning environments. This finding is consistent with the communicative language teaching framework proposed by Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers, which emphasizes that teachers should facilitate meaningful communication and guide learners in actively using the language rather than merely transmitting knowledge.

Furthermore, the motivational role performed by teachers in this study supports previous research highlighting the importance of affective factors in language learning. The use of encouragement, positive reinforcement, and supportive classroom environments aligns with findings by Rahmawati (2018) and Kim and Kwon (2020), who argue that facilitative teaching significantly enhances students' motivation and engagement. In this study, such motivational strategies were also found to reduce students' anxiety and increase their willingness to participate, indicating that facilitative roles extend beyond instructional support to include emotional and psychological dimensions.

In terms of instructional practices, the integration of digital tools and adaptive learning materials reflects the evolving nature of facilitative teaching in modern classrooms. This finding is in line with Lai and Hwang (2016), who emphasize that teachers play a crucial role in designing technology-enhanced learning environments. However, unlike previous studies conducted in more resource-rich settings, this study reveals that teachers in a local context such as SMA Negeri 8 Kupang City must adapt creatively to limited technological resources. This suggests that facilitative teaching is highly context-dependent and requires flexibility in its implementation.

The challenges identified in this study, particularly low student confidence and large class sizes, are also commonly reported in EFL contexts. These findings are consistent with Rahman and Sari (2021), who highlight that student reluctance to participate is often influenced by fear of making mistakes. However, this study extends previous research by demonstrating how teachers actively respond to these challenges through peer-learning strategies and personalized support. Such adaptive strategies reflect principles of collaborative learning as proposed by Johnson and Johnson (2019), where interaction among students can enhance both confidence and learning outcomes.

Moreover, the findings of this study suggest that facilitative teaching is not a static role but a dynamic process that requires continuous adjustment to classroom realities. While

previous studies such as Yunita (2020) and Sihombing (2022) primarily focus on the outcomes of facilitative teaching, this study provides a more comprehensive perspective by examining the interplay between roles, challenges, and strategies. This integrated approach contributes to a deeper understanding of how facilitative teaching is enacted in practice, particularly within the constraints of a specific local context.

Overall, this study reinforces the theoretical assumption that effective English language teaching requires teachers to function as facilitators who support both the cognitive and affective aspects of learning. At the same time, it highlights that the successful implementation of facilitative roles depends not only on teachers' pedagogical competence but also on their ability to adapt to contextual challenges. Therefore, this study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence of how facilitative teaching is practically implemented and sustained in a secondary school EFL setting in eastern Indonesia.

4. Conclusion

This study affirms that the implementation of teachers' facilitative roles at SMA Negeri 8 Kupang City reflects a meaningful shift toward student-centered English language learning. Teachers functioned not only as guides and motivators but also as adaptive resource providers and mediators of interaction, enabling students to participate actively and develop greater confidence in learning English. Despite contextual challenges such as low student motivation, large class sizes, and limited facilities, teachers demonstrated pedagogical flexibility and professional resilience through peer-learning strategies, positive reinforcement, material adaptation, and creative integration of available technology. These findings indicate that effective facilitative teaching is not solely dependent on institutional resources but largely shaped by teacher agency, responsiveness, and commitment. Therefore, strengthening teachers' professional competence and institutional support is essential to sustain student-centered practices and enhance the quality of English language instruction.

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