

## Developing English Vocabulary Materials Based on Moluccas Content for Elementary School Students

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### Abstract

This study aimed to develop English vocabulary materials based on Moluccas content for elementary school students. The research used a Research and Development (R&D) design, adapting the Borg and Gall model. The study was conducted in five main steps: research and information collecting, planning, developing a preliminary form of the product, preliminary field testing, and main product revision. The preliminary field testing involved expert validation, which resulted in a score of 76.6%, indicating the materials were appropriate for use. The developed materials covered vocabulary related to Moluccan themes such as traditional fruits (rujak), local animals, the World Peace Gong site, traditional Moluccan clothing, and Moluccan heroes. The study concluded that the English vocabulary materials based on Moluccas content were successfully developed and can be an effective teaching resource for elementary students in the region.

**Keywords:** *Material Development, Vocabulary, Moluccas Content, Elementary School Students*

### Introduction

Materials are an essential part of the language learning process, as they can significantly influence the way students acquire a language (Tomlinson, 1998). Vocabulary, in particular, is a critical component of English language learning, as it forms the foundation for effective communication (Hatch & Brown, 1995). Early language learning, or the "critical" or "sensitive" period for vocabulary acquisition, is a crucial time for young learners, as they can easily pick up and remember new words during this stage (Oyama, 1976).

Several studies have highlighted the benefits of incorporating local content into teaching materials. For example, Kailuhu's (2020) research on developing reading materials based on tourism spots in Maluku found that students gave positive feedback on the new materials. Similarly, Latumahina's (2017) study on developing English vocabulary materials based on songs for third-grade students in Ambon demonstrated that this approach could increase and improve young learners' vocabulary. These studies suggest that tailoring language learning materials to students' local environment and experiences can enhance their engagement and vocabulary acquisition. Building on these findings, the present study aims to develop English vocabulary materials based on Moluccas content for elementary school students. The Moluccas, also known

as the Maluku Islands, is a province in eastern Indonesia with a rich cultural heritage and unique local resources, making it an ideal context for this research.

Vocabulary is a crucial aspect of language learning, as it enables learners to express their ideas, communicate effectively, and understand others (Borisai et al., 2016). For young learners, vocabulary acquisition is particularly important, as it lays the foundation for developing other language skills, such as reading, writing, and speaking (Cameron, 2001). By incorporating vocabulary related to the learners' local environment and experiences, the materials developed in this study aim to enhance students' engagement, interest, and overall language proficiency.

The primary research question guiding this study is:

1. RQ1: How is the theoretical validity of the designed English vocabulary materials based on Moluccas content for elementary school students?

To address this question, the study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach, adapting the Borg and Gall (1983) model, which is a well-established methodology for developing and validating educational products. The significance of this study lies in its potential to provide a valuable resource for English language teachers in the Moluccas region.

## Literature Review

### *The Essence of Material Development*

Material development is a crucial aspect of language learning, as it can influence the way students acquire a language. According to Tomlinson (1998), materials are "anything that is used to help teach language learners." This includes textbooks, handouts, videos, and other resources used in the language learning process. Material development is an academic field that investigates the principles and procedures involved in the design, writing, implementation, evaluation, and analysis of these materials (Azarnoosh et al., 2016).

As material developers, teachers play a vital role in ensuring that the provided materials are effective and align with their students' needs. Tomlinson (in Azarnoosh et al., 2016) emphasizes that teachers should become material developers, continuously evaluating, adapting, and complementing the materials to find the most effective ways to implement them in the learning process. This approach is essential, as materials developers are responsible for providing language input and creating opportunities for language experiences that promote language learning.

Material development can also be a valuable tool for helping teachers understand and implement learning theories, as well as support their personal and professional development (Tomlinson in Azarnoosh et al., 2016). By engaging in the material development process, teachers

can deepen their understanding of language acquisition principles and apply them more effectively in their teaching practices.

### ***The Principles of Material Development***

According to Tomlinson (2011), there are several principles that should guide the development of suitable materials for language learning. While the author outlines 16 principles, this study will focus on the three most relevant to the current research.

The first principle states that materials should achieve impact, which means they should have a real effect on learners by capturing their curiosity, interest, and attention (Tomlinson, 2011). The second principle suggests that materials should help learners feel at ease, which can be achieved by creating a comfortable learning environment with appropriate text, illustrations, and references to the learners' own culture (Tomlinson, 2011). The third principle emphasizes that materials should help learners develop confidence, which can be accomplished by providing activities that challenge and stimulate them, encouraging the use and development of their existing linguistic skills (Tomlinson, 2011).

Additionally, Tomlinson (2011) emphasizes that the content being taught should be perceived by learners as relevant and useful, and that materials should require and facilitate learner self-investment, providing choices, topic control, and engaging learner-centered discovery activities. These principles are essential in ensuring that the developed materials effectively support language learning and meet the needs of the target audience.

### ***Vocabulary and Young Learners***

Vocabulary is a fundamental component of English language learning, as it forms the basis for effective communication and understanding (Hatch & Brown, 1995). Cameron (2001) defines vocabulary as "about learning words; children are not only learning expected to know the words, but also they have to know the meaning of the words." Without a solid vocabulary foundation, learners would struggle to convey their ideas and comprehend others (Borisai et al., 2016).

For young learners, vocabulary acquisition is particularly crucial, as it takes place during the "critical" or "sensitive" period, when children can easily pick up and remember new words (Oyama, 1976). This age-specific characteristic of language learning suggests that early exposure to vocabulary can have a significant impact on students' overall language development.

Moreover, the characteristics of young learners, such as their cognitive stage, language competence, and social awareness, should be considered when developing vocabulary materials

(Piaget, 1920; Scott & Ytreberg, 1990). By understanding the unique needs and abilities of young learners, material developers can create materials that effectively support vocabulary acquisition and facilitate language learning.

## Method

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) design, adapting the Borg and Gall (1983) model to develop English vocabulary materials based on Moluccas content for elementary school students. The Borg and Gall model is a well-established methodology in educational research, used to develop and validate educational products.

The study was conducted in five main steps. First, the research and information collecting stage involved gathering data on students' and teachers' needs, and selecting relevant topics based on the Moluccas content. Second, the planning stage focused on observing the chosen topics and developing pre-, while-, and post-activities. Third, the developing a preliminary form of the product stage involved creating the initial form of the materials.

The fourth stage, preliminary field testing, was crucial in validating the developed materials. In this stage, the initial materials were evaluated by an expert who is familiar with material development. The expert assessment covered four main aspects: content, language, presentation, and graphics. The expert used a 4-point Likert scale to evaluate each aspect, with 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 4 representing "strongly agree."

Finally, the main product revision stage involved incorporating the expert's feedback to improve the materials. The overall score from the expert validation was used to determine the theoretical validity of the developed materials.

To interpret the results of the expert validation, the following table was used:

**Table 1. Score Interpretation**

Score Range	Interpretation
0% - 25%	Highly Invalid
26% - 50%	Invalid
51% - 75%	Valid
76% - 100%	Highly Valid

The total maximum score that could be obtained from the expert validation was 60 (15 statements x 4 points). The researcher calculated the percentage of the obtained score using the following formula:

$$Result = (Total\ Score\ Result / Total\ Maximum\ Score) \times 100\%$$

## Findings

The research findings provide valuable insights into the development and validation of the English vocabulary materials based on Moluccas content for elementary school students. The expert validation of the developed materials yielded an overall score of 76.6%, as shown in the detailed table below:

**Table 2. The Results of theoretical Validation**

No.	Statement	Scale				
		1	2	3	4	
<b>Content</b>						
1	The developed material is relevant with the students' environment	-	-	-	✓	
2	The developed material includes activities which are relevant with the students' level	-	-	✓	-	
3	The developed material provides students activities to help them learn English vocabulary	-	-	✓	-	
4	The developed material includes vocabularies that related with topic	-	-	✓	-	
<b>Language</b>						
5	The instructions are relevant with students' cognitive level	-	-	✓	-	
6	The language used is appropriate with the rules of English language	-	-	✓	-	
7	The language used in all units are consistent	-	-	✓	-	
<b>Presentation</b>						
8	The activities of the developed material are presented in good order, from the easiest activity to the most difficult activity	-	-	✓	-	
9	The design of the material is interesting	-	-	✓	-	
<b>Graphics</b>						
10	The placement of title and text are appropriate	-	-	✓	-	
11	The use of font size is appropriate with the needs	-	-	✓	-	
12	The use of font variation (Bold, italic, capitalization, underline) is appropriate	-	-	✓	-	
13	The pictures help students to understand the materials	-	-	✓	-	
14	The pictures are related with the topic	-	-	✓	-	
15	The developed material is printed in good/standard paper	-	-	✓	-	
		<b>Score</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>4</b>

The content-related aspects of the materials received positive evaluations from the expert. The developed materials were deemed relevant to the students' environment, and the activities were considered appropriate for the students' level. The materials were also found to provide effective vocabulary learning activities and include relevant vocabularies related to the Moluccas content. This alignment with the students' local context and experiences is in line with the findings

of previous studies, which suggest that integrating local content into teaching materials can enhance engagement and vocabulary acquisition (Kailuhu, 2020; Latumahina, 2017).

In terms of language, the expert validated that the instructions were relevant to the students' cognitive level, the language used was appropriate to the rules of the English language, and the language used throughout the materials was consistent. These findings indicate that the materials were developed with a strong focus on ensuring the language was accessible and appropriate for the target audience of elementary school students.

The presentation of the materials was also well-received, with the expert finding that the activities were presented in a good order, from the easiest to the most difficult, and the overall design of the materials was considered interesting. This attention to the sequencing and design of the materials suggests that the developers prioritized creating an engaging and well-structured learning experience for the students.

The expert's evaluation of the graphics aspect of the materials was also highly positive. The placement of the title and text were deemed appropriate, the font size and variations were suitable, and the pictures used in the materials were found to be helpful for students' understanding and relevant to the topics. These findings indicate that the materials were developed with a strong emphasis on visual clarity and coherence, which can contribute to a more effective and enjoyable learning experience for the students.

The incorporation of a variety of Moluccan-themed vocabulary, including traditional fruits (rujak), local animals, the World Peace Gong site, traditional Moluccan clothing, and Maluku heroes, further demonstrates the researchers' commitment to creating materials that are tailored to the learners' local context and experiences. This approach aligns with the findings of previous studies, which suggest that integrating local content into teaching materials can enhance students' engagement and vocabulary acquisition (Kailuhu, 2020; Latumahina, 2017).

The positive feedback from the expert validation, coupled with the thoughtful inclusion of Moluccan-themed vocabulary and the alignment with best practices in material development, suggests that the researchers have successfully developed a set of English vocabulary materials that are highly valid and appropriate for use in the elementary school context in the Moluccas region. The expert validation score of 76.6% indicates that the developed materials are highly valid and suitable for the target audience.

## Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate the successful development of English vocabulary materials based on Moluccas content for elementary school students. The expert validation of the materials yielded an overall score of 76.6%, indicating that the materials are highly valid and appropriate for use in the target context.

One of the key strengths of the developed materials is their alignment with the students' local environment and experiences. The expert validation confirmed that the developed materials are relevant to the students' environment and include activities that are appropriate for their level. This integration of local Moluccan content is in line with the principles of material development outlined by Tomlinson (2011), who emphasizes that materials should be perceived by learners as relevant and useful.

The expert's positive evaluation of the language used in the materials further supports the effectiveness of the development process. The instructions were found to be relevant to the students' cognitive level, the language used was appropriate to the rules of the English language, and the language used throughout the materials was consistent. These findings suggest that the materials were carefully crafted to ensure accessibility and appropriateness for the target audience of elementary school students.

The expert also recognized the strong presentation of the materials, commending the order in which the activities were sequenced, from the easiest to the most difficult, as well as the overall design, which was considered interesting. This attention to the structure and visual elements of the materials aligns with Tomlinson's (2011) principles, which emphasize that materials should help learners feel at ease and develop confidence.

The expert's evaluation of the graphics aspect of the materials was also highly positive. The placement of the title and text, the font size and variations, and the relevance of the pictures were all deemed appropriate and helpful for student understanding. These factors contribute to the overall quality and effectiveness of the materials, as Tomlinson (2011) suggests that materials should maximize learning potential by encouraging intellectual, aesthetic, and emotional involvement.

The incorporation of a diverse range of Moluccan-themed vocabulary, including traditional fruits (rujak), local animals, the World Peace Gong site, traditional Moluccan clothing, and Maluku heroes, further demonstrates the researchers' commitment to creating materials that are tailored to the learners' local context and experiences. This approach is supported by the findings of



previous studies, which suggest that integrating local content into teaching materials can enhance students' engagement and vocabulary acquisition (Kailuhu, 2020; Latumahina, 2017).

## **Conclusion and Suggestions**

### **Conclusion**

This study has successfully developed English vocabulary materials based on Moluccas content for elementary school students, as evidenced by the positive feedback from the expert validation process. The materials were found to be highly relevant to the students' environment, with activities that were considered appropriate for their level. The language used in the materials was also deemed accessible and consistent, while the presentation and graphics aspects were recognized for their engaging and effective design. The incorporation of a diverse range of Moluccan-themed vocabulary, including traditional fruits, local animals, historical sites, traditional clothing, and Maluku heroes, further demonstrates the researchers' commitment to creating materials that are tailored to the learners' local context and experiences. The expert validation score of 76.6% indicates that the developed materials are highly valid and suitable for use in the elementary school context in the Moluccas region. This study contributes to the growing body of research that highlights the benefits of integrating local content into language learning materials, as it can enhance students' engagement, vocabulary acquisition, and overall language proficiency. The successful development of these materials provides a valuable resource for English language teachers in the Moluccas and serves as a model for future efforts to create customized, culturally-relevant teaching materials in other contexts.

### **Suggestions**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, several suggestions can be made to further enhance the development and implementation of English vocabulary materials based on Moluccas content. Firstly, it is recommended that the researchers continue to collaborate with local teachers and stakeholders to gather feedback and refine the materials over time. This ongoing engagement with the target audience can help ensure that the materials remain relevant, engaging, and effective for the students. Additionally, the researchers could explore the possibility of expanding the materials to cover a wider range of vocabulary and language skills, such as reading, writing, and speaking, to provide a more comprehensive learning experience for the students. Further research could also investigate the impact of these materials on students' vocabulary acquisition and overall language proficiency, allowing for a more in-depth evaluation of their



effectiveness. The researchers may also consider developing digital or interactive versions of the materials, which could enhance the learners' engagement and facilitate more personalized learning experiences. Finally, the successful model developed in this study could be replicated in other regions of Indonesia or adapted for use in other contexts that seek to integrate local content into language learning materials. By disseminating the findings and sharing the developed resources, the researchers can contribute to the broader field of language education and inspire similar efforts to create culturally-relevant and effective teaching materials.

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