



Developing an Interesting English Vocabulary Learning Material for Junior High School at Wangi-Wangi

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Abstract

This study aims to develop interesting supplementary vocabulary materials for grade 8 junior high school students in Wanci. This is a Research and Development (R&D) with the ADDIE model by Branch & Varank (2009). 82 8th-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Wangi-Wangi participated in the needs analysis. Then, at the implementation stage, 11 students participated in the small group try-out, and 40 students participated in the field test with a larger sample. Data were collected through interviews and questionnaires and then analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively using descriptive statistics. The results show that the materials developed follow the target students' needs in learning English. Students need structured vocabulary materials with 10-20 words per unit and interactive reading texts to improve comprehension and communication. The classroom environment is the top choice as it supports teacher focus and guidance. Books with attractive displays, animated images, and easy-to-read fonts are preferred, with Arial and Century Schoolbook being the top choices. Animated visuals were more appealing than realistic images, and picture elements helped with vocabulary comprehension. The product test results showed that the developed materials were interesting, suitable for students' needs, and relevant to students' lives. The developed products received positive responses from students and material development experts. With an average score of 3.25-4.00, the book is rated "Very Good" and worthy of being used as additional vocabulary material in the classroom.

Keywords: *Engaging Material; Junior High School; Learning Materials; Material Development; Research and Development; Vocabulary*

Introduction

Learning vocabulary is crucial for students, as it plays a significant role in their overall language development and academic success. It is essential for communication and overall language proficiency (Wu, 2024). Vocabulary refers to the collection of words and phrases in a language, including their meanings, usage, and relationships (Wang & Yum, 2022). A strong vocabulary allows students to understand better and communicate complex ideas, express themselves more effectively, and improve their reading comprehension skills. Additionally, a robust Vocabulary can enhance students' critical

thinking and problem-solving abilities, as well as their capacity to understand and analyze various forms of media, such as literature and news (Yousefi & Bonyadi, 2014).

However, learning English vocabulary presents several difficulties for students. It can be challenging for students to learn how to pronounce and spell new words correctly, especially if they are not familiar with the original accent or dialect (Mardonova, 2020). In addition to these difficulties, students also have trouble remembering terms for future usage and correctly utilizing them in context. Conventional memorizing methods frequently fail, leaving pupils with passive vocabulary comprehension. Their inability to interact with the language hinders their capacity to adequately express themselves and employ new terms with confidence.

The current situation in junior high schools underscores some common issues, such as vocabulary learning tends to be passive. The absence of effective learning strategies, misconceptions in vocabulary comprehension, and limited lexical utilization are the main challenges (Xiaolan & Kunmei, 2023). To address these issues, researchers and educators have begun to explore various methodologies and techniques, such as the incorporation of mnemonic devices and the application of more engaging instructional methods. These efforts aim to improve students' understanding of vocabulary and overcome existing learning challenges (Siregar & Zainuddin, 2023).

Limited and a lack of exposure to real-world vocabulary usage can restrict students' opportunities to solidify their understanding (Xiaolan & Kunmei, 2023). Additionally, Rajini & Krishnamoorthy (2020) state that anxiety surrounding vocabulary acquisition can impede communication and hinder progress. These combined challenges highlight the need for innovative and engaging methods to make English vocabulary learning a more successful and enjoyable experience for students. One important factor in the effectiveness of learning is the selection of vocabulary resources that match the needs and interests of students. According to Schmitt & Schmitt (2020), students are more likely to understand and use new vocabulary if they can see the connection between the material learned and their daily experiences.

Therefore, to increase students' participation and engagement in language learning, teachers need to organize materials that are not only challenging but also interesting and relevant to students' lives. This aims to make learning more meaningful and effective. In the early stage of English learning, junior high school students must lay a solid foundation and master effective vocabulary learning strategies. Some effective approaches include using practical and easy techniques such as checking if a word is also an Indonesian word, guessing its meaning from context, asking the teacher for a definition, studying the word with classmates, focusing on the spelling of the word, underlining the word, and using English media. These strategies are essential for improving their language proficiency (Xiaolan & Kunmei, 2023).

These strategies can improve vocabulary acquisition and make the learning process more interesting and easily understood by students. A range of interactive media should be used to enhance vocabulary acquisition (Putra, 2023). Playing games like "find the words," "match the word with its definition," and "fill in the blanks," along with other creative and contextualized teaching techniques, helps students pick up new vocabulary and comprehend how it is used in a wider context. Adding collaborative components to the learning process not only makes the material more interesting but also enables teachers and students to actively engage with one another. Students can collaborate on projects, such as finding a picture and identifying new vocabulary related to it, or recounting an experience they had on a particular topic. This cooperative approach not only increases student engagement but also improves their thinking skills. As a result, students not only expand their English vocabulary but also develop valuable skills such as teamwork and build their confidence.

The junior high school in Wangi-Wangi faces a major challenge in acquiring English vocabulary. The current teaching methods are still traditional and less relevant to students' needs. This causes students to easily forget previously learned vocabulary, not know how to spell it correctly, and have difficulty

using vocabulary in sentences. As a result, they tend to be less interested and motivated to learn. The development of more innovative and interesting English vocabulary learning materials is needed to overcome this challenge.

Current materials are often considered boring and do not fulfill students' learning needs. Many learning materials are monotonous and less interactive, which makes students feel bored and lose motivation. Therefore, the development of more interesting, relevant, and interactive materials is crucial to increase students' engagement and motivation in learning. The researcher holds the belief that vocabulary stands as the foremost component in the process of learning English among all other elements. This assertion is rooted in the understanding that an individual must possess the most basic linguistic unit— words or vocabulary—before engaging in meaningful language construction. Without a sufficient vocabulary base, the ability to effectively communicate in English becomes significantly hindered. Consequently, the emphasis on expanding and mastering vocabulary remains paramount in the journey of English language acquisition.

Given these factors, creating dynamic and interesting English vocabulary materials is essential to raising student enthusiasm and improving learning results at Wangi-Wangi Junior High School. According to the study, vocabulary is an essential component of learning English as meaningful language production requires a strong vocabulary base. By creating interesting and relevant English vocabulary resources for junior high school students, this project seeks to advance the field of English language instruction, particularly in the area of vocabulary skills.

Interesting Vocabulary Materials

According to this study, items that successfully hold students' interest and encourage motivation are considered engaging. According to Davis (in Katz, 2024), materials are deemed interesting when they provoke critical thinking and curiosity by posing novel concepts and questioning accepted wisdom. Engaging materials for vocabulary training should encourage a change from passive learning to active, meaningful, and context-based experiences in addition to being aesthetically pleasing. By presenting novel techniques that increase the relevance and effect of learning, the vocabulary materials created for this study seek to embody this idea.

The materials use relatable situations, interactive exercises, and eye-catching visuals to accomplish this. Students are more engaged in the learning process and are more likely to pick up and remember new terms when vocabulary is presented in interesting ways. Interactive media can boost student enthusiasm and enliven the classroom, as noted by Laila et al (2023). Activities that encourage active involvement and enjoyment include word searches, fill-in-the-blank projects, spelling drills, and pronunciation exercises. Regular practice combined with vocabulary presented in real-life contexts helps students not only understand meanings but also use the terms successfully in context (Indriani et al., 2023).

Vocabulary materials can be improved by adding elements or experiences from students' personal lives, such as their interests, daily experiences, or interests, in addition to creative and engaging activities. Activities like fill-in-the-blank exercises, word searches, and spelling can be made more effective and entertaining for students by using these pertinent settings. Cooperation and active engagement in the learning process are encouraged by group activities such as group projects and discussions using recently taught vocabulary (Domingo & Aguilon, 2021). Additionally, by providing fun and interesting learning possibilities, the use of modern technologies, like Android-based instructional games, has been found to increase students' interest and comprehension of English vocabulary (Sari et al., 2022). These activities, which require students to match words with explanations or utilize them in phrases, foster a fun learning environment. This dynamic and realistic method guarantees that students not only learn language more successfully but also actively participate in their learning process.

Building on the benefits of engaging and relatable content, peer collaboration is another excellent vocabulary development technique that increases student engagement. Group activities, such as matching games or collaborative storytelling, supplement interactive technologies like instructional games by providing a social dimension to the learning experience. For example, teachers might assign groups to write a short story using a list of target words, fostering creativity while strengthening vocabulary recall. This collaborative method not only makes learning more pleasurable but also encourages students to experiment and utilize new phrases more confidently since they feel encouraged by their classmates in a cooperative and dynamic setting.

In conclusion, innovative and creative teaching strategies are needed to make language engaging for junior high school students. Teachers can create an engaging atmosphere that supports language acquisition by tying vocabulary to thematic units, including technology in the learning process, fostering peer cooperation, and using multimedia materials. Students will be more prepared for both academic performance and lifetime learning as their vocabulary grows in fun and relevant ways. Young learners' enthusiasm for communication and inquiry is sparked when the applicability of vocabulary in diverse contexts is emphasized, in addition to improving language competency.

Principles of Materials Development

According to Tomlinson (2020), the following rules can be used to create educational materials that are both useful and relevant:

1. Materials have to make an impression.
2. The materials are intended to make students feel comfortable.
3. Students should get confidence from the materials.
4. Students' self-investment should be required and encouraged by the materials.
5. Students should have opportunities to use the target language in the materials.
6. The benefits of instruction should be considered in the materials.
7. The fact that pupils have varying learning styles should be considered in the materials.
8. The fact that pupils have varying affective attitudes should be considered in the materials.
9. At the start of instruction, the materials should allow for a silent interval.
10. Materials shouldn't be very dependent on control procedures.
11. There should be opportunities for result feedback in the materials.

In conclusion, good learning materials are student-centered, build comfort and confidence, and encourage active engagement and real language use. They should also consider students' different learning styles and emotional attitudes, provide space for reflection, and provide feedback to support effective learning.

Creation of Vocabulary Materials

Materials development, which focuses on producing, modifying, and assessing educational materials that support efficient teaching and learning, is a crucial component of language instruction. Materials should be suitable and appropriate for junior high school pupils when they are being designed. When teaching English to junior high school pupils, the resources should complement the instructor and cater to the needs of the students. Everything a writer, teacher, or student does to provide a source of language input and use those sources in ways that maximize the likelihood of intake is considered materials development, according to Tomlinson (2023).

According to the description above, material development is a resource that a researcher or instructor creates and uses to aid learning. When creating content, many factors should be considered, including the students' needs and support for the learning process. Furthermore, the resources must be suitable for the students. The development of materials in this study is aligned with constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes student-centered learning through active engagement and contextualized experiences (Vygotsky, 1978).

Method

This research used the Research & Development model (Branch & Varank, 2009). This study employed a design model proposed by Sugiyono (2013), which is aimed at developing and evaluating the effectiveness of a specific educational product. The product produced in this research was English vocabulary learning materials for junior high school students. The goal was to create engaging vocabulary materials tailored to the needs of students at SMPN 1 Wangi-Wangi. The R&D approach enabled the researchers to analyze learners' needs, design and develop the materials, and assess their effectiveness through expert validation and field testing.

Population and Sample

The research was conducted at SMPN 1 Wangi-Wangi with participants from the eighth grade. There were five classes (A, B, C, D, and E), with approximately 20 students per class. These students served as the target users for the developed materials and were involved in the needs analysis and product testing stages.

Data Collection Techniques

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in this study. The data collection techniques included interviews and questionnaires. These tools were essential to ensure that the materials developed aligned with the students' actual learning needs and context.

Data Analysis Techniques

The qualitative data were obtained from interviews. These data were transcribed and analyzed to identify key themes related to student needs and learning environments. The quantitative data were collected through questionnaires administered during the needs analysis and expert judgment stages. Responses from the needs analysis questionnaire were analyzed by calculating the percentage of each option selected in each item using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{f}{n} \times 100\%$$

P: Percentage (%)

f: frequency

n: number of respondents

Data from Expert Judgment and Students' Response

The second questionnaire is for expert judgment and students' responses. The questionnaire on materials was adapted from BSNP, which assesses the appropriateness of content, language, presentation,

and graphics aspects. The questionnaire uses a four-point Likert scale, where an expert provides a rating by selecting options 1 for “strongly disagree”, 2 for “disagree”, 3 for “agree”, and 4 for “strongly agree”. Quantitative Data Conversion by Suharto (2006) is used; it is shown in the following table:

Table 1. Data Conversion Table

Scales	Interval	Categories
4	$3.25 \leq X \leq 4.00$	Very good
3	$2.50 \leq X \leq 3.24$	Good
2	$1.75 \leq X \leq 2.49$	Fair
1	$1.00 \leq X \leq 1.74$	Poor

Moreover, the expert judgment rating scale will be used to develop a questionnaire for the validator. Five aspects will be assessed in material development using BNSP (Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan) as a reference.

The questionnaire instrument for expert validation was developed based on five aspects that refer to the needs analysis model from Graves (2000), Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Nation (2004), and Nunan (2004). These aspects include: goal (to determine students' views on the importance of vocabulary), wants (to determine students' expectations of the material), lacks (to identify the obstacles students experience in understanding the material), input (to determine the type of input needed by students), and setting (to identify students' preferences for the learning environment). Meanwhile, material validation is conducted based on four aspects of feasibility according to BSNP, namely: content, language, presentation, and layout. The content aspect assesses the suitability of the material content, language assesses the language used, presentation assesses the method of presentation, and layout evaluates the layout and illustrations. The evaluation instruments for students also refer to BSNP standards, with the same aspects, but are focused on identifying students' perceptions of the content, language, presentation, and appearance of the developed material.

Result and Discussion

Analysis

The Result of Need Analysis from Students' Questionnaire

a. Target Needs

Based on the survey results, the majority of students (94%) learn English to improve communication skills, indicating their main focus on speaking skills and understanding English in daily life. The main obstacle faced was vocabulary limitation, as expressed by 39.3% of respondents. Nonetheless, 51.2% of students rated their vocabulary mastery as good, although others still felt it was lacking. To overcome this obstacle, vocabulary teaching is very important. In addition, students wanted an enhanced learning experience through understanding the meaning of words (66.7%), word usage (26.2%), and the function of words in sentences (19%). Many also wanted to learn vocabulary to describe a person (45.2%), introduce themselves (32.1%), and give directions (21.4%). This finding shows the importance of strengthening relevant and applicable vocabulary materials in the learning process.

b. Learning Needs

Based on the results of the survey, most students (48.8%) prefer to learn 10-20 vocabulary words in a unit, indicating their comfort with a moderate number. Others chose 20-30 words (23.8%) and more than 30 words (16.7%), while only 15.5% chose less than 10 words. In terms of learning procedures,

46.4% of students learn vocabulary through reading texts, followed by the use of dictionaries or translations (38.1%), music (19%), and media games (17.9%). The writing method (13.1%) and other methods (2.4%) were used by a small number of students. Regarding the place of learning, the majority of students (64.3%) are more comfortable learning vocabulary in the classroom, 33.3% choose outside the classroom but still in the school environment, and only a small proportion are comfortable in the computer laboratory (7.1%) or outside the school environment (16.7%). This data shows that vocabulary learning is most effective in the classroom with an approach that suits students' interests.

c. Media

According to the data, most respondents (69%) said that books were a better way to learn English vocabulary than websites (21.4%) and multimedia (36.9%). Additionally, the majority of students (83.3%) favor having a variety of images displayed on each page. The most popular fonts were Arial (36.9%) and Century Schoolbook (35.7%), with Comic Sans, Bradley Hand ITC, Datum, and Harrington following closely behind. While 22.6% of respondents favor uniform font sizes, up to 75% prefer font sizes that vary based on function. Just 3.6% of respondents believe that images are superfluous, compared to 54.8% who prefer animated graphics and 28.6% who choose realistic sights. Furthermore, 25% of respondents recommended using photos in the documents, whilst 15.5% believed that pictures were only occasionally required.

Result of the Interview with the Teacher

Interviews with Grade 8 English teachers show that vocabulary teaching aims to improve students' communication skills because, without adequate vocabulary mastery, students will have difficulty understanding texts, constructing sentences, and speaking fluently. The main challenges faced by students are difficulty in word placement, especially in the use of regular and irregular verbs, and forgetting the vocabulary they have learned. Teachers address this with reflection and feedback methods, using *English for Nusantara* books from the Merdeka Curriculum. However, learning is still traditional and monotonous, dominated by lectures and writing exercises without an interesting approach. Teachers felt that effective vocabulary materials should be interactive, relevant to students' lives, with pictures and activities such as quizzes, crosswords, or vocabulary cards to make it more fun. Teachers are also open to the development of teaching materials that are more interesting and suitable for students' needs, and are ready to provide support and input to improve the quality of English learning.

Design

Creating a course grid was the next stage of the material development process. When developing materials, the course grid serves as a guide. This course grid was created using the highest proportion of participants and the needs analysis results. The researcher took into account the findings of teacher questionnaire interviews, including learning objectives for eighth-grade students. The unit name, title, learning objectives, input, and activities make up the course grid.



Figure 1. The Design of Units

Development

This unit's activities are designed to engage students by offering a range of hands-on, interactive tasks that support the learning goals. The activities' format and structure guarantee a methodical and transparent approach to accomplishing the unit's goals. Learning objectives are constructed using Bloom's Taxonomy, which covers everything from fundamental comprehension to critical and creative thinking. To increase their understanding and application of the material, students will work on different kinds of individual and group projects that emphasize vocabulary development, grammatical proficiency, and narrative writing skills.

Result

Results of Materials Developed by Expert Judgement

The material development was evaluated by a lecturer with expertise in material development from Yogyakarta State University's English Department. Data from judgments by experts was gathered via a questionnaire. The 24 elements in the questionnaire were divided into four categories: content, layout, language, and presentation.

Table 2: Content Feasibility Component

No	Statements	Score
1	The material developed is in line with the learning objectives.	2
2	The developed materials have themes that are appropriate to the context of students' lives.	3
3	The material includes pronunciation and spelling that are relevant to the topic.	3
4	The material is clear and specific.	3
5	The examples given are following the material.	3
6	The language used in this teaching material is easy to understand.	3
7	Learning activities in the materials are developed systematically, sequentially, and continuously.	3
8	The presentation of material helps to answer the questions of the tasks.	3
Total		23

Table 3: Feasibility of Presentation/Display

No	Statements	Score
9	The background color used is not too flashy.	4
10	Navigation in the material is clear according to the theme.	3
11	Navigation and layout displays attract attention.	3
12	The material is presented in the form of balanced text and images.	3
13	Learning activities in the material encourage students to understand easily.	3

14	The use of images/illustrations is relevant to the topic and content of the material.	4
15	The use of fonts and colors can be read easily.	4
16	The overall appearance of the material is attractive.	3
Total		27
Mean score		3,38

Table 4: Language Appropriateness

No	Statements	Score
17	The language used is generally appropriate for the student.	3
18	The messages delivered are clear and understandable.	3
19	The grammar is appropriate.	3
20	The spelling is appropriate.	3
Total		12
Mean score		3,00

Table 5: Layout Feasibility Component

No	Statements	Score
21	The colors used support readability and do not distract the reader.	4
22	The order of information on each page makes it easy for	3
23	Viisual elements such as headings, subheadings, paragraphs, and footnotes are well organized..	3
24	Visual elements such as headings, subheadings, and paragraphs are well organized..	3
Total		12
Mean score		3,00

Based on the results of the expert judgment evaluation, the assessed materials cover four main aspects, namely the feasibility of content, appearance, language, and layout. The assessment results showed that the content obtained an average score of 2.9 (Good), the display obtained 3.38 (Very Good), and the language obtained 3.00 (Good), and the layout obtained 3.25 (Very Good). Thus, overall, the material has met the eligibility standards on the aspects of substance, visual, readability, and information sequence with a total score of 3.132, so the developed material is classified as “Good”. Therefore, this material is suitable for implementation in learning because it can support students' understanding effectively. The suggestions from the validators were taken into account to revise the material. After the revision, the developed material was used in class.

Implementation

In this stage, after the material has been evaluated by expert judgment, some recommendations to improve the quality of the product emerge, and they are implemented. Two stages of testing are involved for implementation: small group (try-out) testing and field testing (large group testing). The small group trial aims to detect errors or parts that require improvement in the product, while the large group trial aims to assess the overall quality of the product.

Try Out

No	Evaluation of each aspects	Mean score
1	Content feasibility component	3.52
2	Presentation/Display feasibility component	3.5
3	Language appropriateness	3.75
4	Layout	3.72
Total		14.49
Mean Score		3.62

According to the table of student responses during the small group trial of the developed product, it can be concluded that students gave a very positive response. The results of student responses showed a score of 3.62, classified as 'Very Good for all aspects assessed according to Quantitative Data Conversion by Suharto. This indicates that the developed product has met students' expectations in terms of quality and usability. Thus, it can be said that the product is effective and suitable for further use.

Field Test

No	Evaluation of each aspects	Mean score
1	Content feasibility component	3.68
2	Presentation/Display feasibility component	3.7
3	Language appropriateness	3.75
4	Layout	3.8
Total		14.93
Mean Score		3.73

Based on the implementation results from various aspects of the field trial, it can be concluded that the developed materials received very good responses from students. This is indicated by the mean score, which ranges from 3.68 to 3.8, which falls into the 'Very Good' category according to the quantitative data conversion scale. The aspects assessed include material content, appearance, language features, and layout, all of which received high scores, indicating that these materials have met good quality standards in supporting learning. Students found the materials interesting, easy to understand, and helpful in improving vocabulary comprehension and overall learning.

The final product of this research is an interestingly designed vocabulary supplementary material for eighth-grade students at Wanci Junior High School. This product was developed based on students' needs with the aim of improving their English language skills. This is in line with the research conducted by Seliani et al. (2022) developed interactive cards that proved to be valid and feasible to use, with a score of 95.73%. Putri et al. (2024) showed that gamification-based instruction with an Articulate Storyline in a flipped classroom increased student engagement and vocabulary acquisition compared to traditional methods. Meanwhile, Bulan & Idhar (2021) rated the Noun Words Domino Card (NWDC) as a feasible learning medium with a material expert score of 3.7 and a media expert score of 3.5, as well as

students' positive response with an average score of 3.6, which proved to improve their vocabulary mastery. Moreover, the suitability of the developed vocabulary materials includes four main aspects, namely content, language, presentation, and display feasibility. The opinions and suggestions from experts and students are used as the basis for concluding the feasibility of this product. In terms of content, the materials developed have been tailored to the interests and needs of students.

Discussion

From the aspect of layout, this material is designed in a clear, systematic, and structured manner, making it easier for students to understand the learning content effectively. A good layout contributes to reading comfort and helps students access information more easily. In addition, the harmony between text, images, and other visual elements supports readability and enhances the attractiveness of the materials. Overall, these vocabulary supplementary materials have met a good standard in various aspects, including content, language, appearance, and presentation. By considering all these elements, this material can be categorized as a teaching material that is appropriate for use in English language learning, especially in improving students' understanding and mastery of vocabulary.

Conclusion

According to the findings of expert validation, the created materials were rated as "Good" or "Very Good" for every component that was evaluated. The average score was 2.9 for the content, 3.25 for the layout, 3.0 for the language, and 3.38 for the presentation/display. The materials were used in the classroom after being revised following the recommendations of the experts. With an overall average score of 3.62 and 3.732, respectively, the pilot and field test findings demonstrated extremely good student responses and were classified as "Very Good" on Suharto's scale. These findings suggest that the resources are useful for enhancing vocabulary acquisition and fostering student interest in their studies.

Key findings show that students' interest and comprehension are greatly increased when real-life situations, interactive exercises, and aesthetically pleasing designs are incorporated. Active, entertaining, and relevant learning environments are created using techniques including word-matching games, collaborative storytelling, fill-in-the-blank activities, and the use of multimedia technologies. These characteristics aid in vocabulary retention, spelling, pronunciation improvement, and contextual vocabulary use.

In conclusion, the English vocabulary learning resources created are practical, pertinent, and interesting for junior high school pupils. They provide creative and contextually relevant materials that effectively address the issues with traditional training that have been recognized. The tools so encourage broader language development, increase student motivation, and facilitate more successful English language education in junior high school contexts, in addition to improving vocabulary acquisition. This study supports the use of interactive methods in vocabulary instruction and offers insightful information on material development techniques.

End notes

- 1. Constructivist learning theory emphasizes that learners actively construct their own knowledge based on experience, not just receive information passively.*

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