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Research Article

Teaching materials development of role-play game-enhanced English vocabulary acquisition in primary school

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Article Information	Abstract
	This research aims to develop teaching materials using role-play game-enhanced English vocabulary acquisition in primary school. This research was conducted in one of the outstanding primary schools in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. This study is formative research—developmental research to improve design theory for designing teaching practices or processes. The development of the material was based on three important steps: preliminary study, development, and validation by experts in learning and teaching materials. Before developing the teaching materials, the syllabus should be made to support the development of the teaching materials. The teaching material was developed based on the teaching objectives with the topics or themes related to the student's daily life. After developing the material, the material was evaluated by two experts in learning and teaching materials. The evaluation was done by giving the prototype of the teaching material and validation sheet to the experts. The result of the study is the teaching material of basic English vocabulary based on the role-play technique for the pupils. It was found that this developed material was categorized as good based on the evaluation of the experts of the learning materials. The basic English vocabulary teaching materials, lesson plans, and teaching materials were designed based on the needs of the students. It was discovered after analyzing the data. It is intended that because the contents of the materials apply to the student's everyday lives, they can read and comprehend them. Role-playing techniques are also used in the creation of instructional materials. For the pupils, this technique is engaging and enjoyable. However, the teaching material still needs to be developed regarding the content, language use, and appearance.

1. Introduction

English is one of the languages used as the language of communication internationally. In the 21st century, consciously, the era of globalization is growing inevitably. Children must learn to use English because they will be more easily accustomed if introduced from the beginning of school age, without losing the importance of regional languages. English as a global language is important, but the local language is also vital (Haidar & Fang, 2019). English, apart from being an international language used by many countries in the current era, English language skills can open opportunities for learners to prepare for the future, such as expanding career and study abroad opportunities, as well as broadening their horizons and knowledge about the world (Matear, 2008).

Children will more easily access information from various sources, such as books, movies, music, and the Internet. Training children to learn English will be easier. In this golden age, children's curiosity is more, so getting used to it becomes easier. Of course, some problems occur in elementary school-age children, namely the curriculum in

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Indonesia has changed, and changes always aim to improve the quality of better education. In Indonesia, English has entered the realm of local content (Zein, 2017), and almost all schools are competing to apply English, so it has been developed very quickly. However, the results of English learning are not satisfactory even though every level of education has used the method of developing the students' competence, indicating that there are problems, one of which is teaching material development (Tomlinson, 2012).

This study aims to develop a teaching material of basic English vocabulary based on the role-play technique. This product is expected to provide primary school pupils with learning materials that are joyful and fun for them because they will play their roles in the classroom. The materials concern basic English vocabulary items selected from the books for primary school pupils that require them to role-play. This approach is essential in enhancing social and emotional intelligence (Norris, 2003). In the effort to increase the pupils' social and emotional intelligence, it is important to find effective ways, which is, one of them is to develop their basic vocabulary knowledge of English. Social and emotional intelligence can foster students to be knowledgeable, responsible, and caring (Durlak et al., 2011; Elias, 1997; Humphrey et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2017).

Role-play in role-play games (RPG) enhances the English vocabulary acquisition framework (Lu & Chang, 2016). Vocabulary, as one of the important language elements, should be given great attention in teaching English. The students with many vocabulary items will be more successful than those with little vocabulary. Many pupils find it difficult to read and write or understand English texts because they have insufficient vocabulary knowledge. They are confused and cannot express their ideas orally or in written form because their vocabulary is limited. Of course, this condition is closely related to their limitation or failure to master the required words. Besides, many teachers complain about the failure of the students to master the required words, especially those from rural areas. Therefore, it is essential to address the vocabulary needs of English-language learners (Carlo et al., 2004).

Many reasons they expressed concerning their failure to master the words, among others, are that they assume that learning English is difficult, pronouncing, spelling, and using words in contexts are difficult, and they also find problems reading and writing in English. These problems are also stimulated by the background of their parents, who are busy working and have no knowledge of English. In this relation, Wallace (1982) mentions many elements that students should possess to know a word. Knowing a term can mean having the following abilities in the target language:

- Be aware of it, whether it is spoken or written.
- Easily recollect it.
- Connect it to an applicable thing or idea.
- Apply the proper grammatical structure.
- Pronounce it clearly when speaking.
- Spell it correctly when you write it.
- Use it in the appropriate collocation—with the words it naturally pairs with.
- Apply it with the required formality.

- Recognize its associations and meanings.

For primary school students, the focus is only on some elements related to the role-playing technique: to understand the meaning of new words, pronounce, spell, and use them for playing their roles. To master these components, the role of teachers is crucially needed to motivate the pupils to be aware of the importance of English. They should convince their pupils that learning and mastering the basic vocabulary of English will assist them in understanding English orally and in written form. Vocabulary development is critical for English language learners (August et al., 2005).

In addition, another prominent factor that contributes to their mastery is the availability of teaching or instruction products, such as teaching material that can make them enjoy learning. In other words, they should be enjoyable for the students. Moreover, the words they learn by playing their roles make them more active and enthusiastic in learning and mastering them. For this reason, a study was conducted to develop the teaching materials of the basic vocabulary of English for elementary school pupils or students to fulfill their needs. Interesting strategies and fun materials based on students' needs can help them develop their literacy (Morrow, 2001).

In learning English, of course, one of the prominent language elements which the teachers should give much attention to facilitate the students to express their ideas and emotion and give information to people. Learning a foreign language is a matter of learning the vocabulary of that language, although the system language, i.e., its grammar or structure, is also important (Saville‑Troike, 1984). Moreover, it is impossible to learn a language without vocabulary—without words. She further mentions that language is "not dry bone. It is a living thing, a growing entity clothed in the flesh of words.

At primary schools, English is taught as local content, and its teaching depends on the school's policy, whether or not it is considered very important in that school, particularly in a big city like Makassar, Indonesia. The English subject in Indonesia is taught from grade 4 (Zein, 2017). In this context, the students need basic English vocabulary to learn the four language skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

To support the learning of the four language skills, it's important to introduce new words to students using fun techniques. According to Harmer (2010), when new vocabulary is introduced, there is always an opportunity for it to be familiar to some of the students in the classroom, so elicitation is important. In this respect, the teacher can show the students how to act out an activity, such as becoming a doctor who cures a patient. He or she plays the role of a doctor, uses some words that are already familiar to students, and introduces new words to them.

In introducing the new words, the teachers also teach the language structure, which the students very simply need to understand a short text, dialogue, or very simple sentences. In the syllabus, there is no special time allocated to teach vocabulary. Vocabulary is taught through language skills (Carter & McCarthy, 2014). Therefore, it is important to develop teaching material that can help them understand the text or the dialogue.

Many teachers suggest a standard of eight to twelve productive items representing a reasonable input regarding how many words the students can learn in one classroom meeting. How many words does it take to use English successfully? The answer will depend on how many words kids need to know. Teachers might assist students in learning (Miller & Gildea, 1987). At elementary school, students might learn six to ten productive items for a teaching period of a 35-minute lesson. Furthermore, besides word lists, the teachers may consider flexible content from various topics and themes, among others, numbers, common food, colors, the telling of time, days of the week, article of clothing, eating utensils, family relationships, and common occupations.

The words are practiced through role-play involving the students' roles in an imaginary situation to get students talking to each other (McDaniel, 2000). The students can play the role of a doctor or any other occupation in the classroom. The students can imagine curing a patient in a hospital; their other friends are their audience, and the teacher can act as a facilitator and motivator. Role-play effectively simulates a teaching and learning environment, engages students, and showcases superior language proficiency. Role play is essential for teaching evaluation (Alkin & Christie, 2002).

According to Harmer (2010), when we give students roles of completely different characters and express ideas and emotions they do not necessarily share is called role-play: The students in the classroom can do many kinds of role-playing activities—for example, imaginative interview role-play. One of the students can play the role of an interviewer, and another student can become an interviewee. This activity is interesting because the students actively use the words or expressions they know or memorize before acting the role out.

The student's language should be flexible if role-playing is to be useful for practical communication. Students will be more interested in an activity if it is close to life. Thus choosing the right roles and situations is crucial. Harmer (2010) further mentions three distinct advantages of simulation and role-play. First, they can be good fun and are thus motivating. Secondly, they let doubtful students be franker in their ideas and behavior without taking responsibility for what they say in the way they do when speaking for themselves. Thirdly, broadening the classroom world to cover the world outside allows students to utilize a much wider range of language than some more task-centered activities may do.

Therefore, it is essential to develop a teaching package/product that encourages the students to practice or use the words by playing their roles in the classroom. Until now, no special vocabulary teaching materials have been written or prepared in textbooks. The product development was based on the student's needs and interests. Moreover, the teachers also benefit from it because the vocabulary items have already been selected concerning interesting topics and themes. Hence, this research aims to develop teaching materials using role-play-based English basic vocabulary in primary school. This research proposes a research question: what aspects should be developed in teaching materials using role-play games for English vocabulary acquisition in primary school?

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study is formative research—a kind of developmental research to improve design theory for designing teaching practices or processes. Formative research is developmental research meant to enhance design theory for creating educational practices (Frick & Reigeluth, 1999). Formative research is a study undertaken before, during, or after a program's design and implementation. Formative research can be useful to identify and comprehend the populations that require interventions or public health initiatives and develop initiatives tailored to particular populations' requirements. The development of the material was based on three important steps: preliminary study, development, and validation by experts in learning and teaching materials.

2.2. Research Subject

The subjects of the study consisted of experts in teaching and learning materials, teachers, and students of one of the outstanding primary schools in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. This research was conducted in the 2022 academic year. The choice of this school was based on the consideration that it required them to learn English subject as the local content for many years, and this school is one of the outstanding primary schools in Makassar.

2.3. Research Object

The object of the study was the textbooks used by the students and the teachers of English at this school. There were three textbooks used. The three textbooks do not contain a specific list of vocabulary items the students should learn. As mentioned previously that the number of productive vocabulary that can be learned based on the level of the school ranged from seven to ten words, and the topics of the material were: "greetings, self-names, names of objects in the classroom, names of objects outside the classroom, I love my family, Nice to meet you, and about the occupation."

3. Results

3.1. Preliminary Study

Before developing the teaching materials, the syllabus should be made to support the development of the teaching material. The syllabus of basic English vocabulary was designed based on language skills because vocabulary is not taught as a separate language aspect, but it is integrated into the language skills, Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing skill. The lesson plans were arranged based on the free learning curriculum. Besides, student worksheets should also support the teacher's material's development. Student worksheets were written based on the teaching objectives in the lesson plans. The activities given in the worksheets were similar to those found in the teaching materials. The worksheets were given to the students to train them to pronounce new words, spell and use them in simple sentences. Moreover, they played their roles with their friends in front of the class.

3.2. Development of Teaching Materials

The teaching material was developed based on the teaching objectives with the topics or themes related to the students' daily life. There are ten familiar topics in it, they are as follows:

- Greetings
- How do you spell words?
- What is your name?
- I love my family
- Nice to meet you
- What color is your bag?
- Things in the classroom
- Things around school
- Close the door
- Please
- What do you do?

The development of the materials contained many different activities, as follows:

- Listen and repeat
- Act out the dialogues
- Read the dialogues
- Look and practice
- Practice the dialogues with a friend in front of the class.

The students learned eight to twelve words in each unit through role-play-game (RPG). In addition, the materials are provided with pictures, animation, and video, so the students are interested in and enjoy learning the words.

The product of this study was the teaching material of basic English vocabulary for being used in primary schools. This study was conducted at one of the outstanding primary schools in Makassar, Indonesia, which took English subjects as local content. The English subject was taught from the fourth grade until the sixth grade. The development of the product was based on a model of interaction and pedagogical principles that underlie its development. Its development involved the students and teachers' roles who were active in the learning and teaching processes. The product development used a more enjoyable and motivating role-play technique.

3.4. Validation by Experts

The most important part of the study results is the basic English vocabulary teaching material developed based on the role-play technique. After developing the material, the material was evaluated by two experts in learning and teaching materials. The evaluation was done by giving the prototype of the teaching material and validation sheet to the experts. The category of the experts' evaluation is based on the following Table 1.

Table 1. Category of scores of the experts' evaluation

Mean Score	Range of Scores	Category of Evaluation
1	0 - 55	Poor
2	56 - 75	Enough
3	76 - 89	Good
4	90 - 100	Very Good

The results of the experts' evaluation of the teaching material are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Scores of evaluations of the experts on the teaching material

Expert	Format of Teaching Material	Content	Language	Appearance	Mean score
Expert 1	87	88	86	90	87.75
Expert 2	89	86	89	91	88.75

Based on the Table above, Expert 1 scored the four components. For the components of format, content, and language, the respective scores are 87, 88, and 86, which are categorized as good, while for the appearance of the teaching material, the score is 90, which is categorized as very good. The mean score of the evaluation given by Expert 1 is 87.75, which is categorized as Good. In addition, Expert 2 also gave scores to the four components which have similar results. For the components of format, content, and language, the respective scores are 89, 86, and 89, which are classified as good, while for the appearance, the score is 91, which is classified as very good. The mean score of the evaluation of Expert 2 is 88.75, which is categorized as Good. The two experts' evaluation results show that the teaching material's development is good so that it can be used, although there must be correction and revision based on their suggestions. The teaching material should be revised before it is tried out for limited use.

4. Discussion

The development of the teaching material for elementary school students was based on the students and teachers' needs. In the syllabus of English there is not a special material for teaching English vocabulary. Therefore, it is an urgent need to develop the material that can fulfill their needs and the material development is based on interesting and joyful technique, that is, through role play-game (Lu & Chang, 2016).

This study demonstrated that role-play game is an efficient method for enlivening the teaching and learning environment, stimulate learners' interests, and demonstrate astonishing language acquisition (Kingdon, 2018; Rogers & Evans, 2006, 2008; van Ments, 2015). After performing the role-play game, students consciously applied the vocabulary from the presentation of new words. Also, this research showed the contribution of memorizing new words is better than simply read the words (Gao, 2006). However, memorizing new vocabulary items is very difficult for children (Chen & Chan, 2019; Demircioğlu, 2010). Therefore teachers should develop the interesting teaching materials and comfortable approach to motivate students to learn vocabulary. Thus, developing teaching material based on role-play games is effective to encourage the students to learn and gives better results. Role-play enhances retention of information, provides vitality to the classroom, and encourages engagement from inactive students (DeNeve & Heppner, 1997; Stevens, 2015).

The teaching material developed in this study was categorized as good based on the evaluation results of the experts. However, they put forward some suggestions to improve the quality of the teaching material, for example, the content, language use, and appearance. Concerning the content of the teaching material, the researchers should add more interesting exercises, particularly related to the student's daily life or their environment. From the aspect of language, some words or expressions are still difficult to understand because of grammar and unfamiliar words. The researchers should use simple grammar and words which are not too difficult. Besides, the position of the pictures in each lesson should be revised so that the appearance will be better and more interesting.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the findings, it was found that the teaching material of basic English vocabulary covering the syllabus of English, lesson plans, and the teaching materials were developed based on the students' needs. The topics of the materials are related to the students' daily life, so it is hoped that they can read and understand them. In addition, the teaching materials are also developed using role-play techniques. This technique is interesting and joyful for the students.

The validation of the materials conducted by the experts is concerned with the format of teaching material, content, language, and appearance. The two experts had similar results of validation. The mean score of the evaluation of Expert 1 and Expert 2 is 87.75 and 88, 75, but the two mean scores are categorized as good. However, the teaching material still needs to be developed regarding the content, language use, and appearance.

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