
Research Article

Contextualizing English Textbooks: Harnessing Sabang's Cultural and Natural Potentials

Cut Mulia Zuhra, Sabrina

Universitas Serambi Mekkah, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: cutmuliazuhra@serambimekkah.ac.id

Submitted: 23/12/2025

Revised: 24/01/2026

Accepted: 23/03/2026

How to cite this article: Zuhra, C.M., & Sabrina (2026). Contextualizing english textbooks: harnessing Sabang's cultural and natural potentials. *IJELR: International Journal of Education, Language, and Religion*, 8(1), 16-29. <https://doi.org/10.35308/ijelr.v8i1.13538>

Abstract

The integration of local culture and natural potential into English learning materials has gained attention in recent years, particularly as educators seek more contextually relevant resources. While English textbooks in Indonesia often rely a foreign content, there is a notable gap in materials that reflect students' immediate environment and cultural identity. Responding to this need, the present study focuses on developing an English textbook that incorporates the natural potential and local culture of Sabang Island, making language learning more meaningful and relatable for secondary school students. This study applied a Research and Development (R&D) methodology, which involved the following stages: (1) needs analysis, (2) data collection, (3) textbook design, (4) expert validation, (5) revision, (6) field testing, and (7) final product, English textbook integrated with Sabang's cultural and natural potential. The data were gathered through expert validation sheets, student questionnaires, and classroom observations. The research subjects included 20 eighth-grade students from SMPN 8 in Sabang Island. Classroom observation indicate that most English textbooks used in feature general content in nature. As a result, students often struggle to relate the material to their real-life experiences, since the content tends to feel unfamiliar or removed from their daily lives. Validation results from content and design experts indicated that the textbook is highly suitable in terms of content relevance, language appropriateness, and layout aspects. receiving validation scores of 96%, 92.72%, and 91.66% respectively. In addition, student feedback showed strong enthusiasm for the textbook, suggesting that integrating local culture and natural context into English learning significantly boosts engagement and comprehension.

Keywords

english textbook; sabang's cultural; natural potential.

Introduction

In the era of Fifth Industrial Revolution, the use of English has become increasingly common in the domain of English Language Teaching (ELT) and professional settings around the world. In Indonesia, a country known for its linguistic diversity, English holds a status as a foreign language, which is taught to help students communicate and participate as global citizens. The proficiency in English is deemed essential for preparing their future careers as well as facilitating their process to immerse in the social and professional life where English language is dominant in use.

However, authors' prior observation shows that the existing English textbooks in Indonesia mostly contain generic content or foreign culture. This presents difficulties for the students to draw connections between the content and their natural realities because the content is typically inaccessible or distant to them. In other words, the information and examples provided in the books are not directly relevant to their everyday contexts. They cannot see, feel, or experience them directly, which can result in limited understanding of the students and unachieved learning outcomes. This, as a result, creates the need to generate learning media or materials that are contextually relevant to the students.

Hitherto, media or materials that include local content or wisdom in the media for ELT are still very limited. Faizin et al. (2022) stated that the inclusion of local culture in ELT is mandated by national policy; however, its amount in the existing English textbooks is still minimal. Nabilla (2021) analysed an English textbook that has been commonly used for secondary students. She found that cultural representations have been present in the book but they did not encourage students to reflect on values or identities critically because the representations were mainly surface-level. In other words, they only involved physical objects, such as clothes, food, and other visible objects, and excluded deep-level aspect of culture, such as perspectives and values. These align with Nurhayati et al. (2023) who found that many English textbooks nowadays, especially those produced by global publishers, tend to show popular culture as everyday practices in the books and ignore representations that can improve students' cultural literacy and intercultural competence. Similarly, Sulistiyo et al. (2021) and Akmal et al. (2022) reported that many textbooks in Indonesian only show visible aspects of culture and neglect abstract ones. Mokoginta (2024) conducted a critical literature review of the current state of Indonesian ELT and discovered that students grew favour for Western culture over Indonesian culture. Sihombing & Nguyen (2022) reported the textbook analysis revealed a predominant focus on sources culture, followed by representations of target cultures and international cultures, and culture-neutral content. The interview data indicated differing teacher perspectives regarding the dominance of sources culture within the textbook. This reinforces the need for a local wisdom-based English textbooks that do not only introduce English and international culture to students but also invite them to get closer to their own cultural heritage.

According to Hasnah et al. (2024) and Nabilla (2021), cultural representations are crucial to yield a more holistic understanding of language and culture among students. Culture-based learning can improve learners' motivation and strengthen their cultural identity, yet teachers often feel unprepared because the media, especially in the form of textbooks, are still scarce (Dwiputra & Sundawa, 2023). Salam et al. (2023) also highlighted that EFL teachers need to be supported by sufficient media and teacher training, allowing them to embed local content into the learning effectively. Nambiar, et al (2020) conducted for Following three years of implementing the local content, a survey was conducted involving both teachers and students to assess its influence on students' language skill development and their confidence in using English. In addition, focus group interviews with teachers and students were held periodically throughout the three-year period. The results demonstrated a deeper insight into how the use of the module contributed to the improvement of students' reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities in English. Furthermore, Laila et al. (2021) found that textbooks incorporating local wisdom were more effective in enhancing students' reading and writing abilities compared to materials that did not include local wisdom. Moving forward, this study can serve as a reference for teachers to integrate local wisdom



into other learning topics. Oktarina et al. (2021) explored the effectiveness of embedding Palembang culture into reading materials, and discovered that learners engaged more when the texts discuss their immediate environment. They found them to be more relevant and motivating for learning. Priswanti, et al (2024) responded to the problems faced by students in English learning by designing an English textbook based on Situbondo's local wisdom with the goal of helping students recognize and understand various forms of local wisdom found in Situbondo, while Hasibin & Inayah (2021), developed English textbook based on Banyuwangi local wisdom.

This case is also particularly evident in Sabang, an island situated in the westernmost tip of Indonesia. This island is renowned for its rich local wisdom and great tourism potentials, making it a tourist destination for both the domestic and international visitors. This consequently urges the locals to develop their English proficiency to adjust with the situation and improve their economy; however, the English learning media and materials available for the learning here are still generic and far from contextually relevant, making them difficult to explain their local culture to visitors, particularly to English speakers. Zuhra et al. (2024) emphasised the importance of integrating local culture into English teaching and learning for a more relevant learning. They further created a local wisdom-based animated video to enable students in Sabang to learn English while improving their cultural literacy. Despite its effectiveness in enhancing the students' English proficiency and their learning motivation, the content has not been available in the form of a textbook yet. In fact, this English proficiency is highly crucial, as it can be a tool for the locals to promote Sabang tourism, prepare them to work in the hospitality or related industries, or improve their communication skill with international visitors or even with potential investors.

This study thus aimed to fill in the gap in literature by creating a contextualized English textbook that adapts the cultural and natural potentials of Sabang island. The novelties lie in the form of the learning medium, namely textbook, and the inclusion of both surface-level and deep-level aspects of culture. The surface-level aspect of culture includes traditional food, dances, historical landmarks, language, and other physical forms of culture while the deep-level aspect involves local perspectives, habits, cultural values, and other abstract elements of culture. The localization of this textbook will not only make the learning more engaging but also build the students' cultural pride by introducing them to their own cultural heritage encompassing physical and abstract objects. When the content is localized, it will become easier for the students to draw connections between the book content and their natural realities as the information and instances have become more contextually relevant and accessible to them. This book teaches to explain their own cultural concepts effectively in English language.

For Sabang, this contextualized English textbook has significant contributions. It will not only serve as a learning medium or pedagogical tool but also an effort to support cultural preservation as the Sabang local wisdom is documented in written form. This information will be useful for the current generations and many generations to come. Therefore, this book can serve as a valuable reference for ELT, especially within the context of Sabang Island.

Method

The research method used in this study was research and development (R&D). This research conducted to design a student text book for the eighth grades of SMPN 8 Sabang. Research and Development (R&D) is one of the research designs that aims to develop and validate products (Sugiyono, 2016). Sukmadinata (2008) defined research and development as work done with the intention of creating new products or fixing ones that already exist. The result of the research could have been software or hard ware like a module or text book. In this research, the researcher employed a research and development method by Borg and Gall (1983).



Research Procedure

According to Borg and Gall (1983), there are 10 steps in research development to get the final product. However, in this research, the steps are limited to seven, as follows:

1. Problem analysis
2. Data Collection
3. Product Design
4. Validation of design
5. Revision
6. Product Trial
7. Final Product Revision

Due to the limited scale of R&D research (Borg and Gall, 1983), only a small number of participants were involved in this study. The original ten steps were reduced to seven, as these were considered sufficient to meet the objectives of the research. Time constraints also limited the study, preventing the implementation of all phases of development. The seven steps of product development are illustrated in Figure 1 below:

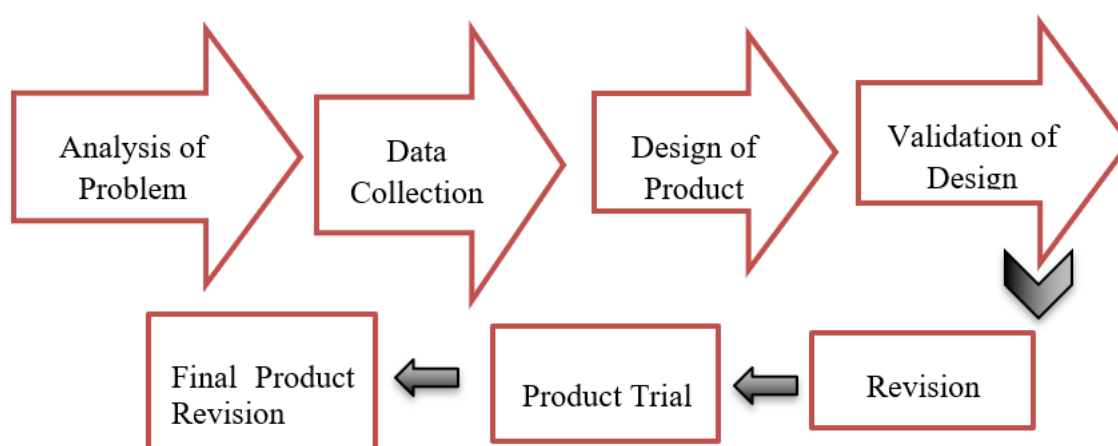


Figure 1. Steps of Research

This research was carried out in June 2025 with the eighth-grade students of SMPN 8 Sabang. The purpose of the study was to design English text book that is integrated with natural potential and local culture of Sabang Island. Data for the research was collected through observations, documentation, interviews, and literature reviews.

Data Analysis

The collected data was analysed to determine the feasibility of the feasibility of the revised English text book design based on natural potential and local culture of Sabang. The findings were used to enhance the media further. A descriptive approach was employed to evaluate the feasibility by calculating average scores. Since the data consisted of both qualitative and quantitative types. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistical methods, while qualitative was interpreted logically and meaningfully.

The result from this analysis were used to assess the appropriateness of an English text book design that integrates natural potential and local culture of Sabang Island for the eighth-grade students of SMPN 8 Sabang. The feasibility of this text book design was evaluated through expert assessments and is intended

to streamline the subsequent stages of development. Additionally, the analysis outcomes served as the foundation for revising the product. Data obtained from questionnaires, which gathered users feedback on the English textbook design were processed using descriptive statistics. The instrument used was a non-test questionnaire designed around a Likert Scale. In this research, a 5-point scale was implemented, where 5 indicated the highest rating and 1 indicated the lowest, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 1. scoring Rules (Sugiyono, 2019).

Category	Score
Very Good (SB)	5
Good (B)	4
Enough	3
Not Enough	2
Poor	1

The following calculation formula by Sugiyono (2019) was used:

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

Where:

- P = Percentage Number.
- f = Frequency for percentage is being sought
- n = Maximum number of frequencies/scores

The following steps were carried out to analyse validation data from English textbook design experts, as outlined by Sudijono (2012):

1. Converting qualitative data into quantitative form based on validation by applying the established indicators and assigning scores according to predetermined weights.
2. Determining the percentage of eligibility.

$$Mx = \frac{\sum fX}{N}$$

Where:

- Mx = The mean.
- $\sum fX$ = Sum of existing scores.
- N = The number of scores.

In order to assess the suitability of the textbook, the researchers employed validation research as a framework for analysing expert feedback. The assessment indicators are outlined as follows:

Table 2. Product Quality Assessment Criteria.

Qualification	Rating Category
81-100%	Highly Appropriate
61-80%	Appropriate
41-60%	Fairly Appropriate
21-40%	Less Appropriate
0-20%	Not Appropriate

(Source: Sugiyono, 2019)



A response questionnaire was used to analyse data from student's questionnaire; the responses obtained were then given a score (Habiby, 2017). If the answer is Yes = 1 and No = 0 then the score is tabulated and calculated using following percentage:

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

Where:

P = Percentage number or assessment score.

f = Frequency for which the percentage is being sought.

N = Maximum number of frequencies/scores.

Table 3. Questionnaire Assessment Criteria.

Percentage Rate %	Description
81-100	Strongly Agree
61-80	Agree
41-60	Neutral
21-40	Disagree
0-20	Strongly Disagree

(Source: Rukajat, 2018)

Results

The objective of this research was to develop a product in the form of an animated video to serve as an English learning medium for secondary school students in Sabang. The video was thoughtfully designed by integrating moving visuals, colours, audio elements, and aspects of local wisdom to create an engaging presentation that enhances students' understanding.

Observation and Interview Results

The result of observation indicate that most English textbooks used in feature general content emphasize foreign cultures. As a result, students often struggle to relate the material to their real-life experiences, since the content tends to feel unfamiliar or removed from their daily lives. In essence, the information and examples presented are not closely aligned with the students' local contexts. Hence, it is necessary to create an English textbook that is integrated with natural potential and local culture of their island.

English Text Book Design Results

In response to the issues identified in schools, the researchers recognized the need to designed An English text book for English Learning that's incorporates elements of natural potential and local culture of Sabang Island. This English textbook design aimed to help students acquire both English language skills and an understanding of local culture and natural potential of their island. The book designed by the researcher was titled "Discover Sabang: An English Language Journey".

This development research produced an integrated natural potential and local culture into English text book. This text book consisted of six chapters, including: a hidden paradise, local food and recipes, Historical places in Sabang island, local legend and folk stories, Lets promote Sabang, and Local Culture of Sabang. The initial draft of the textbook spans 105 pages. Below is a description of developed textbook.



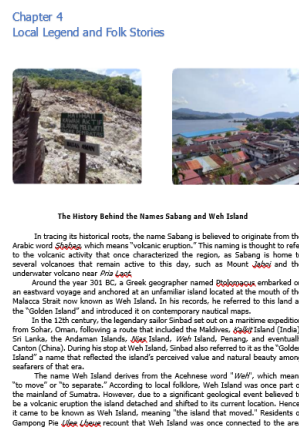
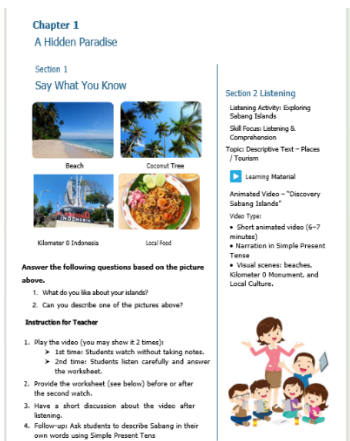


Figure 2. Overview of the Content of English text book based on natural potential and local culture of Sabang Island.

Result of the Development Phase

Following the design of the English text book based on natural potential and Sabang local culture, the next step was the development phase, which involved conducting validity of the design. The outcomes of the development process for the component are described below. And the evaluation results for each aspect are as follow.

1. Material Expert Validation Results.

The English text book developed in this study was reviewed by a material or content expert for validation. The material was evaluated based on five main aspects: Material relevance (4 criteria), Accuracy (5 criteria), Level of sophistication (3 criteria), Evaluation System (3 criteria), and material quality (3 Criteria). The evaluation outcomes are detailed in Table 4.

Table 4. Material Expert Validation Results.

Assessment Aspects	Assessment Criteria	Validation Score
Suitability of Material	1. The materials align well with the intended learning objectives.	5
	2. The complexity of the material presented in the textbook is appropriate for the students' level.	5
	3. The examples given correspond to the material	5
	4. The material in the textbook is explained systematically, and the illustration are clear and attractive.	4
Accuracy of Material	5. The accuracy of the concepts sequence and theories presented in the text book is arranged from basic to complex.	4
	6. The examples provided are directly related to the subject matter.	5
Sophistication of Material	7. The theories and concepts featured in the text book design are connected to real-life situations and everyday experience.	5
	8. The images and illustrations used in the text book reflect scenarios from daily life, natural potential and local culture.	5
	9. The materials presentation supports the students to obtain information that they want to know.	



Evaluation System	10. The question items correspond to the material explained in the textbook design.	5
	11. The questions provided are suitable for the students' level of education.	5
	12. The assessment material is capable of evaluating students' mastery of knowledge competencies.	5
Material quality	13. Systematic material explained in the text book.	5
	14. Clarity of the material explained in the textbook.	4
	15. The depth of the material explained in the textbook	5
Maximum total amount		75
The total number of scores obtained		72
Percentage		96%
Percentage rate		85-100%
Criteria		Very appropriate

The overall score achieved was 96%, indicated that the material in the English textbook design is highly appropriate in terms of relevance, accuracy, complexity, assessment system, and material quality.

2. Language Validation Results.

Language validation was conducted by a linguist, referred to as validator II. The evaluation covered three main aspects: compliance with proper language usage (6 criteria), Accuracy and effectiveness (2 criteria), and Dialogic and interactive elements (3 Criteria). The outcomes of this validation are presented in table 5 below:

Table 5. Results of Language Validation.

Assessment Aspects	Assessment Criteria	Validation Score
Conformity with good and correct language rules	1. The grammar used in the text book is accurate	5
	2. The spelling throughout the textbook is correct.	5
	3. The question-and-answer options in the evaluation section are written in proper and standard English.	5
	4. The language used in the textbook matches the students' level of intellectual and cognitive development.	5
	5. The language used is clear and easily understood by students	4
	6. The sentences structures follow proper English grammar rules.	5
Correctness and effectiveness	7. The sentence construction is grammatically correct.	5
	8. The sentence explaining the material are concise and effectively convey the intended meaning	4

Sophistication of Material	9. The language used stimulates students' curiosity and interest in learning the content.	5
	10. The wording of the evaluation questions is straightforward and easy to comprehend.	4
	11. The sentence formulations in evaluation questions are unambiguous and do not lead to misinterpretation	4
Maximum total amount		55
The total number of scores obtained		51
Percentage		92.72
Percentage rate		85-100%
Criteria		Very appropriate

The language validation yielded a score of 92.72% indicating that the textbook employed clear and suitable language that adheres to standard English conventions

3. Layout Aspects.

The validation of the layout aspect was conducted by experts in the field, including one lecturer from informatics engineering. The informatic engineering lecturers were chosen for their expertise in design and layout techniques. The validation results for the layout aspect of the English textbook are presented as follows:

Table 6. Results of Layout Validation Aspects.

No.	Assessment Criteria	Validation Score
1.	The layout components-such as titles, introductory paragraphs, and images are arranged using a consistent design across all units.	5
2.	Each page within the units follows a uniform and structured layout pattern.	4
3.	The closing paragraphs are clearly separated and well- organized within the layout	4
4.	The illustration helps clarify and enhance understanding of the material.	5
5.	The materials avoid excessive use of different font types, maintaining a clean and cohesive design.	5
6.	Variation such as bold, underlines, and capitalized text are used effectively to emphasize important information.	5
7.	The text is aligned properly to support readability.	5
8.	Margin and spacing between sections and paragraph are consistent and visually balanced.	4
9.	Each unit starts with a clear and identifiable title and end up with a summary or reflection section.	4
10.	Font size and style are appropriate for the target students age group, ensuring ease of reading.	5
11.	The textbook cover is visually appealing and relevant to the content and audience.	5
12.	Graphic element such as arrows, highlights, or callout boxes is used meaningfully to guide student focus learning.	4
Maximum total amount		60
The total number of scores obtained		55
Percentage		91,66
Percentage rate		85-100%
Criteria		Very appropriate



Based on table above, it is evident that each statement received a score above 85% indicating a very High level of validity. As a result, the overall average is also classified as very appropriate. This suggest that the developed textbook aligned well in term of font size and type selection, colour use, image presentation, and the relevance of the images to the content. The validity test results for these three interrelated aspects are summarized in Table 7 below.

Overall validation results

Table 7. Overall Validator Results.

No.	Validator	Score obtained	Maximum Score	Percentage
1.	Validator I	72	75	96%
2.	Validator II	51	55	92.72%
3.	Validator III	55	60	91.66%

4. Students' Responses on the English Text Book Design based on Natural potential and Local Culture. Students' Responses to the English text book design Following the product trial, students were asked to complete a questionnaire containing 10 items aimed at assessing their responses to the product. A score of 1 was assigned for each "Yes" response, while a "No" response received a score of 0. The outcomes of this questionnaire result are presented in table 8 below:

Table 8. Students' responses to the English text book design.

NO.	INDICATORS	YES	NO
1.	This English-text book can give me motivation to study English and local wisdom independently.	20	0
2.	The English-textbook aroused my curiosity about English and local wisdom material.	20	0
3.	The English and local wisdom presented in the English text book makes me feel happy in learning.	20	0
4.	By using this English-textbook, I understand English and local wisdom better.	20	0
5.	The examples shown in the textbook are accurate;	20	0
6.	The use of pictures and illustrations related to everyday life	20	0
7.	The colour design used in this textbook visually appealing.	20	0
8.	The animation design used in the English-textbook is interesting.	19	1
9.	The image illustration displayed is in accordance with the content of the material explained in text book	20	0
10.	The language used in the animated video is easy to understand;	20	0
Frequencies		199	
Total Score		200	
Rate		10	
Percentage		99.5%	

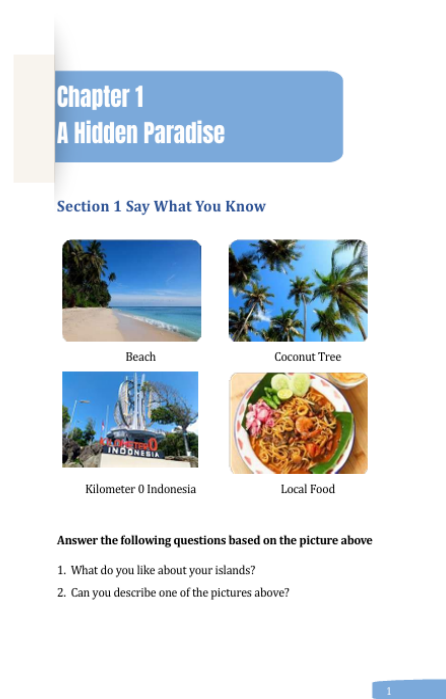
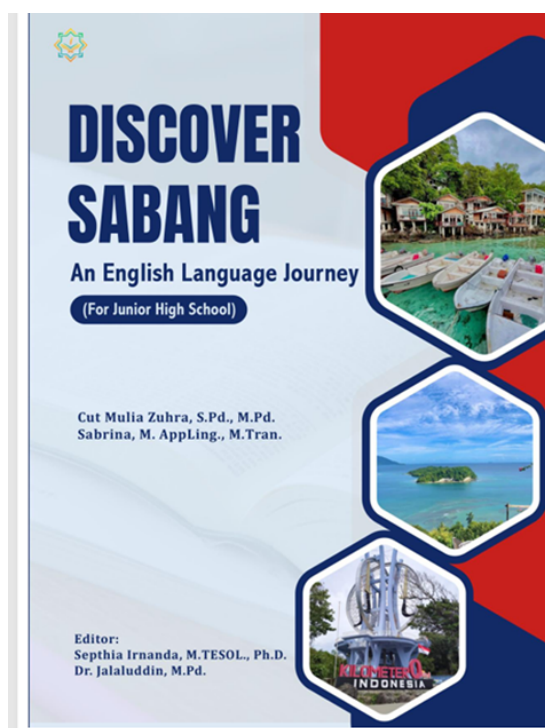


Based on questionnaire analysis, students' responses to the English textbook design based on natural potential and local culture of Sabang Island resulted in a total score of 199, representing 99.5% and falling under the "Strongly Agree" category. This indicates that the English textbook was positively received by all students.

Final Product Revision

Based on the validation results from experts, including content experts, language experts, design and layout experts. As well as trials conducted at SMPN 8 Sabang, it can be concluded that the English textbook, which integrates local culture the natural potential of Sabang, is highly suitable for use.

The final product, resulting from improvements made in the previous Revision, is an English learning textbook entitled *Discover Sabang: An English Language Journey*. This book can be used as a learning medium for educators and students at the junior high school level, particularly for 8th grade students. The book contains materials integrated with local culture and the natural potential of Sabang Island. It consists of 6 chapters covering topics such as: A Hidden Paradise, Local Food and Recipes, Historical Places of Sabang Island, Local Legends and Folk Stories, Let's Promote Sabang, and Local Culture of Sabang



Discussion

The English text book design developed through this R&D process proved effective in enhancing students' interest in learning and their understanding of natural resource and local culture of Sabang Island including the local food of Sabang, the historical place, dance, local legend and folk stories. Utilizing the Borg and Gall's (1983) development model contributed to the efficiency and quality of the video, as continuous formative evaluations were conducted at each stage for refinement. The text book

design received strong validation results 96% for material, 92.72% for language, and 91.66 for layout demonstrating its high level of appropriateness.

In addition to receiving positive evaluations from the validators, the English text book design was also well-received by students during the product trial phase. Almost all students reported that the textbook enhance their motivation to learn bot English, natural resources, and local culture of Sabang Island. In teaching and learning process, the student's enthusiasm encouraged them to further explore both English, natural resource, and local culture independently outside the classroom. The findings are consistent with previous studies conducted by Hasnah et al. (2024) and Nabilla (2021) emphasized that incorporating cultural element is essential for fostering a more comprehensive understanding of both language and culture among students. The finding also in line with Oktarina et al. (2021) investigated the impact of integrating culture into reading materials and found that students were more engaged when the content related to their local environment. The text was perceived as more relevant and motivating for the learning process.

Conclusion

The development of English textbook has proven to be an effective approach for enhancing students' environmental literacy. Validation result from experts, product trials, and student questionnaires provide strong support for this. The material expert rated the textbook 96%, classified as very appropriate, while the language expert gave a score of 92.72 also considered very appropriate. The layout expert rated it at 91.66%, placing it in the very appropriate.

Student feedback showed a high approval rating of 99.5% categorized as highly feasible, and combining the results of all validation processes and questionnaire after trials, the English textbook indicating it is highly suitable for classroom use. Particularly at the junior high school level. Although this study showed immediate improvements in student engagement and understanding, future research should examine the long-term impact of using localized learning materials on students' language skills, cultural awareness, and motivation over an extended period.

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