

## Developing a Local Genius-based English E-Module for Vocational High School Students in Jambi City

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to develop a local genius-based English e-module for vocational high school students majoring in hospitality at SMK Negeri 1 Jambi City. The development of this e-module was motivated by the need to provide contextual and culturally relevant English learning materials that align with the Merdeka Curriculum principles. The e-module integrates Jambi's local wisdom, such as tourism destinations, traditional cuisine, and cultural heritage, into language learning tasks designed for hospitality contexts. This research employed the Research and Development (R&D) method adapted from Borg and Gall (1983), involving six stages: needs analysis, design, development, expert validation, revision, and try-out. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and validation sheets. The e-module underwent validation by material and media experts and was tested with a group of Grade 10 hospitality students. The results showed that the developed e-module achieved a "Very Good" level of feasibility in terms of content, design, and practicality. Students reported higher motivation and engagement when learning English through local contexts. The findings indicate that integrating local genius into English learning supports students' communication skills and cultural awareness, while making learning more meaningful and enjoyable.

**Keywords:** *e-module, local genius, English for hospitality, Merdeka Curriculum, vocational education*

### INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English language learning has become an integral part of the primary and secondary education curriculum. However, even though it has been taught from an early age, many students still struggle to master English. This is caused by various factors, one of which is the lack of relevance of the learning materials to the local context and the students' daily lives (Febriani, R., & Sya, M. F., 2022). Modules are strong teaching materials that can be used as educational resources and one way to organize learning materials (Soeprajitno et al., 2019). A module is the smallest unit of the teaching and learning process (KBM). An integrated module will meet the criteria of 1) Various general instructional objectives being driven by achievements. 2) Topics that will serve as the basis for the teaching and learning process. 3) Various specific learning objectives that students want to achieve. 4) The role of the teacher in the teaching and learning process. 5) Learning activities that must be

completed and students' lives are organized, 6) Various worksheets that students must fill out, and 7) Evaluation activities will be conducted throughout the teaching and learning process (Gonzalez-Llorente et al., 2019). Therefore, the learning module serves as a guide in the development of learning by creating a module with content material needed by students, and is expected to improve their speaking skills. Teaching modules oriented towards local culture will greatly aid students' understanding in the learning process. Language is closely related to culture; understanding that culture will have implications for students' comprehension as they explore developing English language skills, particularly speaking skills.

Local wisdom, as a cultural heritage with noble values that have stood the test of time (Adam, A. (2022)), can serve as a source of inspiration and a rich context in English language learning. By integrating local wisdom into English language learning, it is hoped that students

can more easily understand and apply English concepts in their daily lives. In addition, this approach can also help preserve and promote the local wisdom present in the province of Jambi to the younger generation. The development of English learning modules based on local wisdom is one of the efforts to address that challenge (Muhammad, I., Gumindari, S., & Huriyah, H. (2020). This module is designed to facilitate more contextual, meaningful, and relevant English language learning for junior high school students in the city of Jambi. By using this module, it is hoped that students will be more motivated to learn English and at the same time deepen their understanding of local wisdom in the province of Jambi.

#### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

According to Johnson (2002), contextual learning involves seven main components of productive learning, namely: constructivism, discovery, questioning, learning communities, modelling, reflection, and authentic assessment. Meanwhile, local wisdom can be defined as a worldview and knowledge as well as various life strategies manifested in activities carried out by the local community in addressing various problems in meeting their needs (Fajarini, 2014). Local wisdom is the result of a long-standing process of generational adaptation to an environment that is usually inhabited or an environment where frequent interactions occur.

The integration of local wisdom in English language learning aligns with the principles of contextual learning. This is because local wisdom provides a relevant and meaningful context for students, thereby facilitating better understanding and mastery of English. In addition, the use of local wisdom in learning can also help preserve local cultural values and strengthen students' cultural identity. In the context of English language learning, the

development of modules based on local wisdom can be seen as a form of implementation of the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach. CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach where an additional language is used for learning and teaching both content and language (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). In this case, local wisdom becomes the content integrated with English language learning. Several previous studies have shown the effectiveness of integrating local wisdom into English language learning. One of them is the research conducted by Sudartini (2012) which examined the integration of Javanese culture in English language learning in secondary schools in Yogyakarta. The research results show that the integration of local culture can increase students' motivation in learning English and help them understand English concepts better.

The development of English learning modules based on local wisdom for vocational school students in the city of Jambi has several challenges. First, it is necessary to identify and select relevant local wisdom that can be integrated into English language learning. Second, creativity is needed in integrating local wisdom into English language learning materials without diminishing the essence of language learning itself. Third, the developed modules must remain in line with the national curriculum and the established English language learning objectives. In facing these challenges, this research will adopt a systematic and research-based development approach. The module development process will involve needs analysis, identification of relevant local wisdom, module design, expert validation, limited trials, and evaluation. In addition, this research will also involve various stakeholders, including English teachers, local cultural experts, and vocational school students in the city of Jambi, to ensure that the developed

module truly meets the local needs and context. It is hoped that through the development of this local wisdom-based English learning module, a learning tool can be created that is not only effective in improving students' English proficiency but also contributes to the preservation and promotion of local wisdom in the province of Jambi. Furthermore, this research is expected to contribute to the development of a more contextual and meaningful English language learning model, especially in areas with diverse cultural richness like Indonesia.

Thus, the development of local wisdom-based English learning modules for vocational high school students in Jambi city not only serves as a solution to improve the quality of English learning in that school but can also become a model that can be adapted and implemented in other schools across Indonesia. Through this approach, it is hoped that English language learning can become more meaningful, contextual, and at the same time also contribute to the preservation and promotion of Indonesia's local wisdom.

#### **A. Content-based Instruction**

Content-based Instruction (CBI) is an important approach to language education designed to teach second-language learners content and language. It is intended to make learners independent so that they can continue learning even outside the classroom. Content-based Instruction is a powerful innovation in language education in a wide range of educational environments. The CBI has strong empirical support, and many well-documented programs have been successful, providing additional support for this approach (Grabe and Stoller, 1985).

In a content-based approach, language courses are oriented to specific subjects and stimulate students to think and learn using target languages. Such an approach is naturally suitable for the integrated

teaching of four traditional language skills. For example, authentic reading materials are used that require students not only to understand information, but also to interpret and evaluate it. It provides a situation where students can respond orally to reading and lecture materials. Recognizing that academic writing comes from listening and reading, students need to synthesize facts and ideas from multiple sources in preparation for writing. In this approach, students are exposed to their learning skills and learn various linguistic skills that prepare them for the range of academic tasks they will encounter.

#### **B. Material Development**

Material development refers to the process of creating and utilizing materials for language learning, which covers the evaluation, adaptation, design, production, utilization, and research of the materials (Tomlinson, 2012). Developing materials for a language course or language programme has some advantages compared to using commercial course books. Four advantages of the development of materials are as follows:

1. **Relevance**  
The materials will tend to be more relevant for students' needs and in line with the local content, issues, and concerns.
2. **Develop expertise**  
Developing materials benefit the material developer by improving their expertise, giving them a greater understanding of the characteristics of effective materials.
3. **Reputation**  
It will show the commitment to language teaching by providing relevant, specialised, and contextualised materials for the students.
4. **Flexibility**  
The produced materials can be revised or adapted as needed, giving them

greater flexibility than a commercial course book.

## METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative approach with the research and development (Research and Development/R&D) method. The R&D method was chosen because it aligns with the research objective of developing a product in the form of an English learning module based on local wisdom (Sugiyono, 2015). The development model used is the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation) adapted from Branch (2009). Therefore, this research is classified as Research and Development since the result is a finished product that can be used appropriately in an English subject (Gall, M. D., Borg, W. R., & Gall, 2002). The research was conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Jambi City, specifically in the Hospitality Department, during the academic year 2024/2025. The subjects of the study were 30 Grade 10 students. The school was selected because it implements the Merdeka Curriculum and emphasizes vocational learning aligned with the tourism and hospitality industries in Jambi. The selection of participants used purposive sampling techniques based on criteria relevant to the research objectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Needs Analysis Results

The first step in developing the local genius-based English e-module was to conduct a needs analysis. The purpose of this stage was to identify students' learning needs, teachers' expectations, and the relevance of English competencies required in the hospitality field. The needs analysis involved questionnaires and interviews distributed to 30 Grade 10 students and 2 English teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Jambi City. The findings revealed that the majority of students considered

English important for their future careers, particularly for communicating with guests, describing services, and promoting local tourism. However, most students expressed that their current learning materials were too general and did not reflect the hospitality context in Jambi.

Teachers also indicated that they relied heavily on national textbooks that lacked digital interactivity and local relevance. They desired materials that combined language skills, cultural awareness, and vocational competence, in line with the Merdeka Curriculum principles. Additionally, observation of classroom activities showed that students were more engaged when lessons included discussions about Jambi's local tourism, cuisine, and culture. Thus, it was concluded that integrating local genius—specifically Jambi's natural and cultural heritage—would make English learning more meaningful and motivational for students. Based on these findings, the module was designed to include topics that connect English language skills with real-world hospitality contexts in Jambi City, emphasizing cultural appreciation and professional communication.

### Validation Results

The validation process was conducted to ensure that the developed e-module met academic, pedagogical, and technical standards. Two validators—one material expert and one media expert—were invited to evaluate the product based on its content quality, language use, cultural integration, layout, and technical functionality.

#### 1. Material Expert Validation

The material expert assessed the module for relevance, accuracy, and alignment with the Merdeka Curriculum and the

needs of hospitality students. The evaluation results are summarized below:

<b>Evaluation Aspect</b>	<b>Score (1–5)</b>	<b>Category</b>
Content relevance to curriculum	5.0	Excellent
Language appropriateness	4.6	Very Good
Communicative activities	4.5	Very Good
Cultural and local integration	4.8	Very Good
Grammar and vocabulary balance	4.5	Very Good
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.68</b>	<b>Very Good</b>

The material expert concluded that the e-module was appropriate for use in hospitality English learning. Some minor revisions were recommended, such as providing clearer instructions in speaking tasks and expanding the vocabulary list to include more professional expressions used in hotels and tourism contexts.

### 2. Media Expert Validation

The media expert evaluated the e-module from the perspective of digital design, user experience, and interactivity. The results are shown below:

<b>Evaluation Aspect</b>	<b>Score (1–5)</b>	<b>Category</b>
Visual layout and design	4.7	Very Good
Readability and typography	4.6	Very Good
Interactivity (links, QR codes)	4.5	Very Good
Technical accessibility	4.4	Good
Attractiveness and engagement	4.8	Very Good
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>Very Good</b>

The media expert suggested improving colour contrast and ensuring compatibility with various digital devices. After revisions, the e-module displayed consistent performance on both mobile and desktop platforms.

### 3. Overall Validation Conclusion

The combined validation score from both experts resulted in an average of 4.64, categorized as “Very Good”. This indicates that the developed e-module is valid and feasible for classroom implementation. The integration of local genius elements, such as Jambi’s tourism sites, cuisine, and traditional culture was especially praised for making English learning more contextual and culturally grounded.

### 4. Student Feedback Results

After completing the try-out, students filled out a questionnaire evaluating the e-module’s clarity, attractiveness, usefulness, and cultural value. The results are summarized below:

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Positive Response (%)</b>
The module is easy to use	93%
The design is attractive and motivating	90%
The local culture integration helps me understand the material	88%
The activities improve my speaking and writing skills	87%
The module helps me learn independently	85%
I feel proud learning English through Jambi culture	92%
<b>Average Positive Response</b>	<b>89%</b>

The responses show that most students found the module engaging and relevant. They enjoyed learning English expressions used in hospitality while simultaneously exploring Jambi's culture, such as describing *tempoyak* or explaining the uniqueness of *Muaro Jambi Temple* to foreign guests.

Several students commented that this approach "made English easier to remember" and "more enjoyable because it relates to our hometown." These responses confirm that contextual learning enhances both motivation and retention.

### **The Role of Local Genius in Motivation and Identity**

Integrating local genius helped bridge the gap between students' daily environment and global English communication. The use of familiar topics, such as *Gulai Tepek Ikan* or *Gentala Arasy Bridge*, made learning more relatable. According to the students' responses, local content increased their pride in regional culture and motivated them to present Jambi to an international audience. This finding supports previous studies (e.g., Rahman, 2022; Putri, 2021) showing that culturally relevant materials enhance student engagement and identity formation in EFL contexts.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

This research aimed to develop a *Local Genius-Based English E-Module* for Grade 10 students of the Hospitality Department at SMK Negeri 1 Jambi City, in accordance with the Merdeka Curriculum. The module was designed to integrate Jambi's local culture, values, and tourism potential into English language learning materials, thereby supporting both language competence and cultural awareness.

The development process followed the Research and Development (R&D) model adapted from Borg and Gall (1983). Based on the validation results from material and media experts, the e-module achieved an average score of 4.64, categorized as "Very Good." This indicates that the module met the academic and technical standards necessary for classroom application. The experts particularly appreciated the integration of *local genius* as a meaningful and contextually relevant component in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) education.

The results of the try-out at SMK Negeri 1 Jambi City involving 30 students revealed highly positive responses, with an average of 89% positive feedback. Students found the module attractive, easy to use, and highly relevant to their vocational needs. Moreover, they expressed enthusiasm for learning English through materials related to Jambi's culture, hospitality, and tourism. The findings showed improvements not only in language performance, especially speaking and writing, but also in students' confidence and motivation.

Overall, the *Local Genius-Based English E-Module* proved to be valid, practical, and effective as a supplementary learning material for hospitality students. The integration of local content enhanced contextual understanding, supported the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, and promoted cultural pride among learners.

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