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**EFFECTS OF VOCABULARY LEARNING  
MATERIALS ON VOCABULARY  
DEVELOPMENT IN PROMOTING  
SPEAKING SKILLS AMONG  
MALAYSIAN POLICE  
TOURIST OFFICERS**



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**NURHAFEZA BINTI MOHD AKHIR**

**SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY**

**2025**



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**THESIS PRESENTED TO QUALIFY FOR A DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION  
SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY**

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the effects of using vocabulary learning materials in developing vocabulary skills and enhancing speaking skills. The study used the mixed-methods research approach. The quantitative data were obtained using English vocabulary tests using pre-test and post-test, speaking skills rubric, and the questionnaire. The qualitative data were obtained using semi-structured interviews. The quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. For the descriptive analysis, means, percentages, and standard deviations were used to analyse the data, while for the inferential analysis t-tests and ANOVA were used. The qualitative data were analysed thematically. Findings for quantitative analysis showed that the significant difference between pre-test and post-test was at 0.01 level. In addition, the relationship between vocabulary development and communication skills was at 0.02 level of significance. As for the qualitative analysis, the findings showed that the majority of the participants agreed vocabulary learning materials were effective in improving English vocabulary skills and speaking skills. Thus, it could be concluded that tourist police speaking skills improved when their vocabulary development improved. It is suggested that the use of vocabulary learning materials affects the development of vocabulary skills and enhances speaking skills.





**KESAN BAHAN PEMBELAJARAN PERBENDAHARAAN KATA  
TERHADAP PEMBANGUNAN PERKATAAN DALAM  
MEMPERKUKUH KEMAHIRAN BERKOMUNIKASI  
DALAM KALANGAN POLIS PELANCONG  
DI MALAYSIA**

**ABSTRAK**

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji kesan penggunaan bahan pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata dalam perkembangan kemahiran perbendaharaan kata dan kemahiran berkomunikasi. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan penyelidikan kaedah campuran. Data kuantitatif diperoleh menggunakan ujian kosa kata bahasa Inggeris menggunakan ujian awal dan ujian akhir, rubrik kemahiran berkomunikasi, dan soal selidik. Data kualitatif diperoleh menggunakan temu bual separa berstruktur. Data kuantitatif dianalisis menggunakan analisis statistik deskriptif dan inferensial. Analisis deskriptif, purata, peratusan, dan sisihan piawai digunakan untuk menganalisis data, manakala untuk analisis inferensial, ujian-t dan ANOVA digunakan. Data kualitatif dianalisis secara tematik. Hasil kajian analisis kuantitatif menunjukkan bahawa perbezaan ketara antara ujian awal dan ujian akhir adalah pada tahap kepentingan 0.01. Selain itu, hubungan antara perkembangan perbendaharaan kata dan kemahiran komunikasi adalah pada tahap kepentingan 0.02. Bagi analisis kualitatif, hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa majoriti peserta bersetuju bahawa bahan pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata berkesan dalam meningkatkan kemahiran perbendaharaan kata dan kemahiran berkomunikasi dalam bahasa Inggeris. Oleh itu, dapat disimpulkan bahawa kemahiran berkomunikasi polis pelancong meningkat apabila perkembangan perbendaharaan kata mereka meningkat. Bagi kajian lanjutan, dicadangkan bahawa penggunaan bahan pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata mempengaruhi perkembangan kemahiran perbendaharaan kata dan kemahiran berkomunikasi.



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|     |                               |
|-----|-------------------------------|
| ESP | English for Specific Purposes |
| EFL | English as a Foreign Language |
| RMP | Royal Malaysian Police        |
| SLA | Second Language Acquisition   |





## LIST OF APPENDICES

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- F Questionnaire towards English vocabulary materials
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- J Lesson plan
- K English vocabulary learning materials





## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study



Tourism has long been recognised as a fundamental pillar of Malaysia's economy, contributing significantly to the nation's growth and prosperity. In this extensive exploration, the researcher investigated the importance of tourism in Malaysia, focusing particularly on Pulau Pinang, one of the country's most iconic and popular destinations. Not to mention, the researcher elaborated on the historical and cultural factors that make Pulau Pinang an alluring attraction for tourists from around the world. Additionally, the researcher addressed the critical concept of sustainable tourism and the need to balance the appeal of tourism with the preservation of the region's unique heritage. Therefore, effective communication is crucial in guaranteeing a smooth and enjoyable experience for tourists. Subsequently, the researcher analysed the significance of the English language in this particular situation. This extensive investigation sought to provide





insight into the various complex aspects of tourism in Malaysia, particularly focusing on Pulau Pinang, and the necessary methods to improve this crucial industry.

Tourism is undeniably one of the key drivers of Malaysia's economic growth. The tourism industry encompasses a wide array of attractions, including cultural, historical, and natural sites that appeal to a diverse range of visitors. In 2021, the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board reported a 43.3% decline in the number of tourists visiting Malaysia, with 20,060,819 visitors compared to 35,405,021 in 2020, attributed to the Movement Control Order (MCO). Although there was a significant decrease due to Covid-19, these statistics clearly indicated the strong appeal of Malaysia as a global tourism hotspot.

While tourism undeniably has a substantial impact on the Malaysian economy, it is crucial to prioritise the implementation of sustainable management practices. The objective of sustainable tourism is to minimise any negative impacts on the local culture and environment resulting from the influx of tourists. In the context of heritage tourism, such as in Pulau Pinang, it is imperative to strike a delicate balance between attracting tourists and safeguarding the distinctive historical and cultural resources that characterise the area. The proficient management and promotion of cultural tourism can enhance the long-lasting preservation and economic benefits of these unique destinations. Sustainable tourism encompasses conscientious actions that safeguard the environment and contribute to the well-being of local communities. Efforts to diminish plastic waste, advocate for environmentally friendly transportation alternatives, and bolster local artists and companies are crucial in attaining sustainable tourism objectives. Not only that, effective communication also serves as the fundamental





support for the tourism sector. In addition, effective and streamlined communication between tourists and service providers is crucial for providing an outstanding guest experience. Bobanovic (2011) emphasises that a common language is essential for achieving this goal. Considering the varied linguistic backgrounds of numerous visitors in Pulau Pinang, it is practical to establish a shared language to facilitate efficient communication, hence ensuring a seamless and enjoyable tourist experience.

According to Wong Hon Wai, the chairman of the State Tourism and Creative Economy Committee, there was a notable and positive rise in the number of tourists visiting Pulau Pinang from 2022 to 2023. This indicates that the region is becoming more appealing as a tourism destination (New Strait Times, 2024). The numbers released in 2023 demonstrated a significant rise in visitor arrivals, increasing from 4,242,997 in January-December 2022 to 6,979,748 in January- December 2023. These figures served as evidence of the growing appeal of the region among travellers. The increase in the number of visitors can be attributed due to several factors, such as Pulau Pinang's abundant cultural legacy, breath taking natural landscapes, delicious culinary options, and a wide variety of activities that cater to both history admirers and beach lovers.

Indeed, it is essential to prioritise instilling trust in travellers and effectively meeting their ever-evolving needs in order to sustain and grow the tourist industry in Pulau Pinang. Effective communication between the providers and consumers of this dynamic business is essential. Although Bahasa Melayu (Malay) is the designated language in Malaysia, its widespread use in Pulau Pinang may not fully accommodate the linguistic diversity of the region's tourists. English is widely recognised as the





second language in Malaysia and is commonly utilised and understood in Pulau Pinang. Consequently, it becomes an essential tool for overcoming linguistic barriers. Improving proficiency in the English language, specifically in terms of vocabulary, is a highly effective approach to better communication with tourists.

Creating materials in English language education and training, particularly for employees in the hospitality industry such as hotel staff, tour guides, and other professionals in the tourism sector, enhances the region's competitiveness and promotes a more inclusive and welcoming experience for tourists. Possessing a strong command of the English language not only enables the exchange of information and provision of services, but also fosters a feeling of hospitality and worth for visitors. As a result, this enhances a positive and memorable experience while being in Pulau Pinang, which may lead to returning trips and positive recommendations from others. Therefore, the need for effective communication, particularly in a language that is widely comprehended by international tourists, cannot be overlooked as Pulau Pinang continues to thrive as a renowned global tourism hotspot. This approach has the potential to significantly improve Pulau Pinang's reputation as a tourist-friendly destination, capable of satisfying the diverse wants and expectations of an increasingly international client base. By undertaking this action, Pulau Pinang can maximise the economic and cultural benefits of tourism in the region, while also showcasing its unique and varied culture to a worldwide audience.

Effective communication in a setting marked by the convergence of people from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds is an enduring challenge. Graddol (1997) as cited by Bobanovic (2011) underscored the global prominence of





English as a linguistic bridge in a world characterised by linguistic diversity. In the Malaysian context, where a mosaic of languages and dialects coexist, English assumes a pivotal role as a second language, complementing the continued significance of Bahasa Melayu as the nation's official language. In formal situations, the strategic employment of both English and Bahasa Melayu is crucial for promoting comprehension and efficient communication. The deliberate incorporation of English aligns with Malaysia's broader commitment to inclusivity, recognizing the global interconnectedness that English facilitates, while simultaneously celebrating and preserving the rich linguistic and cultural diversity within the country. This linguistic duality not only reflects the pragmatic adaptability of the Malaysian communication landscape but also symbolises a nuanced approach to embracing the global without compromising on the local. The coexistence of English and Bahasa Melayu in various spheres exemplifies Malaysia's multifaceted linguistic tapestry, where these languages intertwine to create a harmonious platform for interaction, understanding, and cultural exchange among its diverse population.

Insufficient mastery of the English language impedes efficient communication, resulting in occasional misunderstandings and causing obstacles among personnel (Arumugam & Kaur, 2011). The English language is extensively employed and gaining expertise in this language has become a crucial skill for securing employment in the corporate sector. The attainment of linguistic proficiency entails more than merely the ability to compose grammatically precise sentences. Additionally, it involves the acquisition of job-related abilities such as proficient public speaking, influential persuasion and negotiation, and proficient interpersonal skills, all of which require the proper utilization of English vocabulary and expression (Arumugam et. al, 2020).





Furthermore, the authors emphasised that the need for English language ability is most likely due to the global marketplace.

The growing tourism business in Pulau Pinang has been accompanied by noticeable problems related to criminal activities targeting tourists. Hence, it is imperative to improve the communication between tourists and tourism police in order to establish efficient and proficient communication, thus ensuring the sustenance of this upward trend. This is due to the fact that the Tourist Police Unit frequently encounters individuals from diverse nations. Without a doubt, mastery of the English language is considered essential. Moreover, Khamkaew (2009) argued that a high level of competence in the English language is crucial for enabling effective communication between tourist police and international tourists. Bobanovic and Grzanic (2011) added that a high level of English language proficiency is essential for individuals working in the tourist and hospitality sectors. Therefore, it is crucial for all tourist police to have advanced English language abilities, especially when engaging with the public. Particularly, Tourist Police Unit must be able to communicate with international visitors who do not speak the local language by listening, understanding, and speaking in English. It should be noted that they need to have solid training in English vocabulary skills, which they may get at the police academy or in a separate course that is tailored specifically for the tourist police. The ability to properly interrogate, make reports, converse, and express oneself in English is a must for tourist police to do their duties when dealing with international visitors. As a result, it can be claimed that the requirement for English vocabulary skills among tourist police is quite high, especially in the state of Pulau Pinang given the tourism growth there. However, during the informal interview with the instructors at Maktab Polis Diraja Malaysia Kuala Kubu





Bharu, they did highlight that tourist police are having difficulty in finding the right vocabulary to explain their tasks. This has been supported by Aldohon (2014) who found that Jordanian tourist police are having difficulty communicating in English language due to lack of vocabulary knowledge. Rivers and Nunan (1991) argued that developing a strong English vocabulary is crucial for effectively using a second language. In the absence of it, individuals may encounter difficulties in utilising the learnt language structures and functions for the purpose of efficient communication.

Furthermore, the worldwide importance of English as a medium of communication has resulted in the development of several methods to English education. According to Ahmed (2014), the implementation of English for Special Purpose (ESP) offered a theoretical and practical solution to meet the immediate requirement for effective professional communication in these specific situations. In summary, the services offered by the tourist police unit can be regarded as a form of official communication. Oktarin and Harahap (2019) argued that English teachers should offer tourism students authentic resources pertaining to the tourism industry. This approach is necessary to adequately cater to the unique requirements and expectations of these learners. This will additionally bolster students in enhancing and refining their proficiency in the English language, hence fostering increased self-assurance in their professional aspirations once the culmination of their scholastic endeavours. Additionally, Lin and Huang (2013) argued that it is important to recognise the importance of providing specialised English courses in Taiwan for various sectors such as government officials, hotel businesses, educational institutes, students, and other professions that can benefit from the skills of hospitality students and the hotel industry.





To conclude, this study investigated the effects of tourist police vocabulary development in enhancing speaking skills using vocabulary learning materials. The study was carried out in Maktab Polis Diraja Malaysia Kuala Kubu Bharu mainly because it serves as the training location for the tourist police. During this English course training, police officers will usually learn all detailed grammar known as parts of speech. Pulau Pinang tourism police received special attention due to its status as a popular tourist destination that attracts a large number of international visitors who are unfamiliar with the native language, Bahasa Melayu. The researcher applied andragogy theory in adapting and adopting vocabulary learning materials development to help adult learners to improve their vocabulary skills and speaking skills. Thus, this andragogy theory and ESP were included and stressed upon in developing the vocabulary learning materials. This was the first step towards improving adult learners in English vocabulary and speaking skills. Therefore, this study intended to explore the effects of tourist police vocabulary development in enhancing speaking skills using vocabulary learning materials.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to address a crucial gap within English for Specific Purposes (ESP) by identifying and analysing the specific language needs of tourist police, with a focus on creating vocabulary learning materials to enhance their speaking skills. In Malaysia, where tourism is a vital industry, the role of tourist police is essential in supporting public safety and providing guidance to both locals and international tourists. Effective communication in English is important to fulfilling these responsibilities, as tourist





police often interact with English-speaking tourists, convey directions, and ensure that both residents and visitors feel secure. By applying Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) Target Needs framework, which categorises learners' needs into lacks, wants, and necessities, this research aims to develop targeted vocabulary learning materials designed to improve tourist police officers' English-speaking proficiency and overall language competence.

The first component of the framework, necessities, refers to the essential language requirements dictated by the specific demands of a target situation. To elaborate, for tourist police, necessities are influenced by their job roles, which involve providing accurate and courteous information to tourists, understanding and interpreting legal documents, earning community respect, advancing professionally, and interacting with stakeholders like suspects, witnesses, and English-speaking civilians. The demand for proficiency in English is underscored by the officers' frequent interactions with foreigners in tourist hotspots, where clear and effective communication is paramount. Several studies on needs analysis among tourist police underscored that tourist police primarily use English in interactions with civilians and suspects, often involving directions, situational explanations, or legal information. These tasks underscore the necessity for a well-developed vocabulary, particularly focused on areas relevant to their daily tasks. In addition, in Promwatcharanon's (2016) study, he found that respondents in similar contexts recognised the importance of English when engaging with tourists, answering questions about tourist sites, and providing directions. This alignment further highlights the need for job-specific vocabulary development, as the language used in these interactions is often distinct from everyday conversational English and requires specialised training.





The second component, lacks, addresses the existing language proficiency of the learners and the skill gaps they need to bridge to fulfil their job requirements (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In the context of police patrol officers, feedback from police officers based on Halim and Husin (2019) revealed that English instruction was heavily focused on grammar, which they found was often disconnected from the practical language needs of their job. The grammar-heavy curriculum not only limited their ability to communicate in real-world scenarios but also contributed to a lack of confidence in speaking and public communication. Vocabulary limitations further complicated interactions, as officers struggled to find the correct words in English to express themselves accurately and professionally. These findings are echoed in Promwatcharanon's (2016) study of police in Northern Thailand, where insufficient vocabulary also led to significant communication barriers. This issue is exacerbated by the limited hours dedicated to English instruction within the police training curriculum.



Specifically, the Basic Police Training Programme for the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) allocates only 48 hours out of a total 1327 hours to English instruction, which accounts for a mere 3.62% of academic hours, whereas 189 hours, or 14.25%, are devoted to law subjects (Norashikin Ahmad et al., 2020). This imbalance illustrates a stark contrast between the amount of time dedicated to essential language skills and other aspects of police training, suggesting that English training within the curriculum is disproportionately low in relation to the demands of the role. This limited English instruction, combined with traditional, teacher-centered methodologies, has faced criticism for failing to provide practical language skills, such as vocabulary and conversational practice, that tourist police require on the job (Shipton, 2020). The result is that many RMP personnel lack confidence and proficiency in English, further





compounded by a lack of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses specifically designed to meet their unique communication needs (Norashikin Ahmad et al., 2020; Susan Shah et al., 2007). According to Rozana Sani (2019), these language deficiencies can obstruct the objectives of the RMP's Integrity Plan, especially as both locals and foreign tourists have expressed dissatisfaction with RMP officers' English proficiency (Bujang Samad, 2015). Effective communication is vital for tourist police to provide safety, support, and assistance, and a lack of vocabulary and confidence in English-speaking situations can inhibit their ability to fulfil these roles successfully.

The third component of Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) framework, wants, refers to the learners' desires for language improvement and their preferences in instructional focus (Nation & Macalister, 2010). Among tourist police, there is a clear preference for training that emphasises practical listening and speaking skills over grammar-focused instruction, which is perceived as less relevant to their daily job tasks. This perspective is confirmed by Zakaria and Abdul Aziz (2023), who found that most respondents preferred training that emphasised speaking and listening skills, deeming grammar instruction largely unnecessary for their practical needs. Halim and Husin (2019) also reported that police patrol personnel did not view extensive grammar training as relevant to their responsibilities and advocated instead for training modules that focus on simple, job-specific English expressions. These findings are consistent with a broader body of ESP literature. For instance, a number of international studies on the language needs of police officers, including those by Alhuqbani (2008), Khamkaew (2009), Alqurashi (2011), Qaddomi (2013), Aldohon (2014), Ulum (2016), Promwatcharanon & Chatreepinyo (2016), Madhavi (2018), Huong (2018), and Halim & Husin (2019), have highlighted the importance of prioritizing speaking and listening





skills for law enforcement personnel. However, the majority of these studies have primarily focused on the language needs of police officers while on the job, with relatively limited research addressing their specific needs during training (Alhuqbani, 2014).

In conclusion, this study reveals a clear and urgent need for tailored English vocabulary learning materials for tourist police in Malaysia, with a particular emphasis on enhancing speaking skills to improve their effectiveness in real-world communication. Given the limited English training within the current police education system and the predominant focus on grammar, many tourist police officers struggle with both language proficiency and confidence, resulting in challenges when interacting with English-speaking tourists. This lack of specific training in ESP-focused language skills can prevent tourist police from performing their duties effectively, which can affect the quality of assistance and service they provide to tourists and impact overall perceptions of safety and professionalism. This study helped to bridge this gap by developing and analysing vocabulary learning materials aimed at improving speaking skills, thereby contributing to a more effective ESP approach tailored to the real-world needs of tourist police. The research will not only provide insight into the linguistic demands placed on tourist police but also offer a framework for ESP training programs in Malaysia, potentially benefiting other law enforcement agencies with similar language requirements. This approach to ESP development will contribute valuable knowledge to the field by demonstrating the importance of need-based, practical language training in specialised contexts, ultimately empowering officers to fulfil their roles with greater competence and confidence.





### 1.3 Purpose of the Study

The responsibilities of tourist police extend beyond mere law enforcement, centring on the need for clear and effective communication that bridges language, cultural, and geographical differences. Tourist police often serve as the initial point of contact for international visitors, making their ability to convey clear, meaningful messages an essential requirement, not just a preference. In a 2007 study conducted by Susan Shah et al., it was shown that tourist police play a crucial role as first responders who safeguard the safety and well-being of tourists. Their effectiveness in building rapport and establishing clear communication with those they protect is fundamental to their role. When tourist police cannot communicate effectively due to language constraints, they risk hindering the flow of crucial information and fail to provide necessary support, guidance, and reassurance to travellers facing unexpected or potentially challenging situations. Such barriers can lead to significant repercussions, as they limit the tourist police's ability to respond to needs and prevent misunderstandings that could jeopardise tourists' safety and experiences.

Tourist police officers need not only a basic grasp of English but a high degree of proficiency that enables them to handle the variety of interactions required in their role. Language barriers present a substantial challenge, particularly in Malaysia, where the tourism industry plays a vital role in the national economy. Without sufficient English language proficiency, tourist police officers may struggle to fully execute their duties, potentially exposing tourists to various difficulties or misunderstandings. Recognizing these communication challenges, this study examines the specific difficulties posed by language barriers within Malaysia's Tourist Police Unit.





Additionally, it explores solutions aimed at enhancing the English proficiency of these officers, particularly through vocabulary-focused learning materials. Such efforts are intended to help officers interact more effectively, ensuring the safety and satisfaction of tourists and strengthening Malaysia's reputation as a welcoming and accommodating destination for international visitors.

In line with this, the findings of Alqahtani (2015) highlighted the vital importance of English language proficiency for non-native speakers, emphasizing the obstacles that arise from a limited vocabulary. Alqahtani explained that a restricted lexicon creates significant challenges in communication, as it limits one's ability to express ideas clearly, understand others' concerns and needs, and convey important information effectively. In the context of tourist police, having a broad and varied vocabulary is not only a practical tool but an essential one that allows officers to engage in clear, accurate, and meaningful communication with tourists. A well-developed lexicon provides the foundation for effective human interaction, and language acquisition remains challenging without a strong base of vocabulary. For tourist police officers, a robust English vocabulary enables them to address tourists' concerns, provide directions, and respond to emergencies, ensuring their safety and comfort. By enhancing their vocabulary skills, officers can bridge language gaps and facilitate positive interactions between law enforcement and people from various linguistic backgrounds.

Alqahtani's findings underscore the critical need for tourist police to continually build and improve their English vocabulary. An extensive and diverse lexicon allows officers to engage in more effective communication with tourists, attending to their





needs with precision, offering clear guidance, and ensuring their welfare. Vocabulary functions as a tool that facilitates mutual understanding, promoting favourable exchanges and building trust between law enforcement and tourists. In this way, a strong vocabulary doesn't just enhance an officer's capacity to perform their duties; it also contributes to the broader image of Malaysia as a friendly, safe, and accessible destination for visitors from around the world. In subsequent sections, this study examines into the specific linguistic challenges faced by tourist police, particularly in English. It then discusses strategies designed to address these issues by building officers' vocabulary and overall language skills, thereby reinforcing tourists' sense of security and satisfaction during their stay.

Furthermore, recent statements from high-ranking officials reflect a growing awareness of the importance of language skills within the police force. Datuk Seri Mazlan Lazim, the police chief of Kuala Lumpur, recognised this need in a 2020 statement reported by The Sun Daily, where he emphasised the importance of English proficiency among police officers stationed at tourist destinations. He proposed implementing rigorous language training programs to strengthen officers' communication abilities in English, acknowledging the central role that language plays in the effectiveness of police officers' duties. While such recommendations reflect a positive step toward improving language skills, it is clear that more focused efforts are needed to tackle the language barrier effectively. This includes developing specialised training programs tailored to the unique requirements of tourist police, as their interactions and responsibilities differ significantly from those of regular law enforcement officers.





Considering these insights, the current research becomes highly significant. This study investigates the impact of targeted vocabulary development on the speaking skills of tourist police, using specialised vocabulary learning materials. The study's primary objective is to address existing gaps in the language abilities of tourist police, particularly in English, and to explore the potential benefits of structured vocabulary training programs. The findings of this research have the potential to inform future language training initiatives and policies aimed at tourist police, as well as to contribute to broader ESP practices within law enforcement. By equipping tourist police with the necessary vocabulary skills, this study aims to improve overall communication, thereby enhancing visitor safety and enriching the tourism experience in Malaysia. Improved communication not only aids in providing direct assistance to tourists but also helps foster a more positive, welcoming environment that enhances Malaysia's international reputation.



Additionally, this study underscores the broader implications of language proficiency for law enforcement officers working in high-tourism areas around the world. Effective communication plays a critical role in maintaining public safety and facilitating positive interactions between tourists and law enforcement personnel. Tourist police are frequently called upon to provide reassurance and information to tourists, and their ability to do so depends significantly on their linguistic competence. Countries with high tourism rates can benefit from language-focused training for their tourist police, as this can directly improve tourists' perceptions of safety and hospitality. Ultimately, the ability of law enforcement to communicate well with international visitors supports stronger global relations, as tourists who feel welcomed and safe in a





destination are more likely to share positive experiences, fostering goodwill and encouraging future tourism.

Hence, the importance of language skills, particularly vocabulary, for tourist police cannot be overstated. Clear communication is essential not only for routine interactions but also for emergency situations where misunderstandings can have serious consequences. Tourist police are often the first point of contact for visitors, so their proficiency in English is a cornerstone of effective service delivery. By focusing on vocabulary development, this study provides valuable insights that contribute to ESP best practices for law enforcement. These findings can guide future training initiatives, informing the development of curricula that address the unique linguistic needs of tourist police.



In conclusion, language skills are more than a tool they are a necessity for tourist police. For Malaysia, enhancing the English proficiency of its tourist police can strengthen the country's appeal as a tourist destination, support public safety, and improve the overall quality of the tourism experience. This study highlights the critical role of vocabulary in facilitating effective communication, which is indispensable for tourist police officers. By addressing vocabulary gaps and promoting targeted training, the research aims to build a stronger, more responsive Tourist Police Unit that can serve tourists with confidence and competence, ultimately bolstering Malaysia's reputation on the global stage. Through dedicated efforts to improve the English language skills of tourist police, Malaysia and other tourism-centric nations can foster positive, secure experiences for visitors, enhancing international relationships and supporting the tourism industry's continued growth.





## 1.4 Objectives of the Study

In order to be able to respond to the creation of vocabulary materials and achieve the overall goal of this research, the purposes were as follows.

1. To measure the significant difference in the scores of vocabulary development between the pre-test and the post-test.
2. To measure the significant difference in the scores of speaking skills between the pre-test and the post-test.
3. To study the effects of vocabulary development towards tourist police speaking skills.
4. To examine tourist police's perceptions of the English vocabulary learning materials in promoting speaking skills.



## 1.5 Research Questions

To attain the main objectives of designing vocabulary learning materials and practice, the following research questions were proposed.

1. What are the effects of the English vocabulary learning materials on the tourist police's vocabulary development?
2. What are the effects of the English vocabulary learning materials on the tourist police's speaking skills?





3. How does English vocabulary development affect tourist police speaking skills?
4. What are the tourist police's perceptions of the English vocabulary learning materials in promoting speaking skills?

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

### **1.6.1 Tourist Police**

The results of this study have the capacity to greatly influence the field of police enforcement and policing practices, specifically in relation to the tourist police unit in Pulau Pinang. By using English vocabulary learning materials, tourist police will improve their vocabulary development hence their speaking skills will also improve.

### **1.6.2 English Police Curriculum**

Through an in-depth exploration of English vocabulary proficiency in this particular sector of police enforcement, the research provides valuable insights that can revolutionise the way police departments approach language training and curriculum development. Moreover, the study not only investigates the lack of information on the English language proficiency of tourist police, but also emphasises the limited





availability of customised language study programmes within the Malaysian police force.

### 1.6.3 Global

Furthermore, this research has the potential to make a significant influence not only within Malaysia but also in other countries. It can function as a paradigmatic model for police agencies and organisations in other countries that are also struggling with the difficulties posed by language diversity in their tourist locations. The methodology and insights derived from this study could be utilised to design language training programmes for tourist police in different areas, enhancing their ability to cater to the requirements of international visitors and guaranteeing their safety and contentment.



### 1.6.4 Research and Academics

This study contributes to the body of knowledge about using vocabulary learning materials to improve vocabulary development and speaking skills which in turn helps further enrich the existing findings for vocabulary learning. This research has the potential to revolutionise the comprehension and approach to language proficiency in police enforcement, namely in the area of tourist police. The implications of this have a wide reach in academia, practical application, and international significance. It has the ability to establish a standard for improving the training and skills of police enforcement agents globally. The study's significance rests in its capacity to promote





safer, more hospitable, and more streamlined encounters between tourist police personnel and overseas visitors.

## 1.7 Definition of Terms

For this study, there are four terms which have been defined to help understand the focus of the study. They are tourist police, vocabulary skills, speaking skills, and vocabulary learning materials.

### 1.7.1 Tourist Police

According to Khan and Buhalis (2022), the tourist police is a specialised unit of the general police force responsible for investigating crimes against tourists and providing security in tourist areas. Specifically, for this study, tourist police is a group of Pulau Pinang Tourist Police whose responsibility is to ensure the safety of both domestic and foreign tourists around the nation.

### 1.7.2 Vocabulary Skills

Hornby (1995) emphasised the extensive scope of vocabulary, characterising it as a collection of words and their meanings that encompasses all the words in a language. In this study, vocabulary skills are referring to the list of words that needed by the tourist





police in learning English language that comprises of four main topics 1) Asking and offering help, 2) Expressing feelings and describing a person, 3) Asking and giving directions, and 4) Asking and reporting information.

### 1.7.3 Speaking Skills

The term "speaking ability" refers to an individual's capacity to communicate clearly, effectively, and appropriately in various real-life situations. It encompasses not only the act of expressing thoughts and ideas but also the ability to engage in meaningful dialogue with others, adapting one's language and tone to fit the context. According to McKay (2018), speaking involves the oral conveyance of information, which requires an understanding of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and intonation, as well as the social and cultural cues necessary for respectful and effective communication. In this sense, speaking ability goes beyond mere verbal expression, involving the ability to listen actively, respond thoughtfully, and adjust communication strategies to ensure mutual understanding.

### 1.7.4 Vocabulary Learning Materials

Vocabulary learning materials are materials that focus on learning meanings of words (Khamkaew, 2009). In this study, vocabulary learning materials is referred to the adaptation of vocabulary learning materials based on Sritoklin (2006) to serve the needs of Pulau Pinang tourist police in English language. The materials consist of four main





topics (1) Asking and offering help, (2) Expressing feelings and describing a person, (3) Asking and giving directions, and (4) Asking and reporting information.

## 1.8 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

In conducting any research, it is acknowledged that certain limitations are inevitable. These constraints often arise from the nature of the research design, methodology, and context, and may influence the applicability and generalizability of the findings. This study, designed specifically within a Malaysian context and focusing on a particular subset of participants, is no exception. Several factors restrict the scope of the study, which could impact the interpretation and application of its findings. The primary limitations identified in this research are as follows:



One of the main limitations of this research is its localised context. The study was meticulously designed for the Malaysian setting, with data and analysis that are highly relevant to this specific geographical and cultural environment. Consequently, the findings are best suited for situations or settings that are analogous to Malaysia, such as regions with similar linguistic and cultural characteristics or a comparable demographic makeup. This focus on the Malaysian context means that the insights generated may not be directly transferable to different cultural or geographical contexts. For instance, language proficiency challenges or the dynamics of English usage in Malaysia might differ significantly from those in other countries. English, in Malaysia, often functions as a second language or a lingua franca in certain professional settings, especially within tourism and law enforcement, as seen in this study. Hence, while the





findings provide valuable insights for similar English-as-a-second-language (ESL) environments, applying these findings to countries with different language ecosystems, such as those where English is the primary language, could yield different results. Furthermore, the study was conducted using a non-randomised sample, with participants selected based on specific criteria relevant to their roles. In this case, the participants were individuals in the tourist police force in Pulau Pinang. Their experiences, linguistic backgrounds, and exposure to English language usage in a professional setting reflect the Malaysian context, which might not align with those of similar groups in other regions. Due to these localised factors, it is important to approach any attempts to generalise these findings with caution.

The second limitation of this study pertains to the choice of the sampling method. The participants in this study consisted solely of tourist police officers stationed in Pulau Pinang, Malaysia. This group was selected not only for their relevance to the study's objectives since they interact frequently with international tourists and need English communication skills but also based on specific statistical criteria that sought to ensure some level of representativeness within this professional group. However, despite this careful selection process, the sampling method introduces certain limitations. The selected participants differ in their levels of professional experience, as well as their proficiency in English communication. This range of experience and language skills among participants, while reflective of real-world diversity, may contribute to varied outcomes in the study. Officers with more experience or greater fluency in English might have an advantage when engaging with the study's vocabulary learning materials compared to their less experienced counterparts. As a result, this variation could have a significant influence on the study's





findings, especially in terms of the effectiveness of the training materials and techniques tested. In studies involving language proficiency and skill acquisition, individual differences play a crucial role. The variability in English skills among participants may introduce biases in data interpretation, as the results could be skewed by the higher or lower proficiency of certain individuals. Although this diversity reflects the reality of skill variance within professional groups, it could limit the reliability of the findings when applied to a more homogeneous population. To obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how the studied training materials impact English proficiency across a wider range of skill levels, future research might benefit from stratified sampling or the inclusion of control groups with similar proficiency levels. This approach would help control for the influence of individual proficiency differences on the study outcomes.



Another significant limitation of this study lies in its narrow focus on vocabulary and speaking skills within the vocabulary learning materials. The primary objective was to investigate how these specific skills vocabulary acquisition and spoken communication are influenced by targeted instructional materials and activities. However, this narrowed focus inherently excludes other critical language skills, such as listening comprehension, reading proficiency, and writing skills, which are integral to holistic language acquisition and may also impact overall communication effectiveness in professional settings. Focusing exclusively on vocabulary and speaking skills provides a limited perspective on language learning, particularly in the context of professional communication. For tourist police, effective communication extends beyond spoken exchanges; it includes the ability to understand tourists' inquiries, interpret written information, and perhaps even generate written reports or directions.





By concentrating solely on vocabulary and speaking, this study overlooks these other essential language components, which could also contribute to an officer's capacity to communicate effectively in English.

This limitation highlights an opportunity for further research. Future studies could adopt a more comprehensive approach by incorporating additional language skills into the curriculum and examining their impact on the communication abilities of tourist police. This broader focus would provide a more nuanced understanding of how each language skill contributes to professional interactions and would enable researchers to develop training materials that address the full spectrum of communication needs in tourist-facing roles.

## 1.9 Outline of the Thesis



Following this introductory chapter that discusses various aspects of the research, Chapter Two will deal with the theoretical foundations comprising a theoretical perspective of andragogy theory and vocabulary acquisition and speaking skills. It also reviews relevant literature on andragogy theory as well as research that relevant to tourist police. Chapter Three addresses basic but pertinent issues which are applicable to the research design. These issues are related to sampling procedure, instrumentation and data collection as well as analysis procedure. Quantitative research tools include, quasi-experiment, survey questionnaire. Qualitative research tools deal with interviews with selected subjects. Next, Chapter Four presents the results of the study for discussion. It includes the outcome of the questionnaire survey, the results of the experiment and the discussion on the interview. The quantitative analysis will be





discussed first and will be followed by qualitative analysis of the data obtained from the interview. Lastly, Chapter Five will present the conclusions which are derived in the study, discuss the implications of the findings and will also include suggestions for future research.

