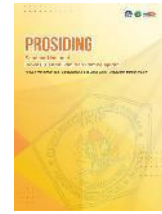




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Students' Strategies in Learning English Vocabulary through the "Hello English" Application

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abstract – This study aimed to investigate how students learned English vocabulary through the Hello English application and identify the factors affecting their choice of learning strategies. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed involving 19 students in observations and 12 students in interviews at MTs Al Marzuqy Information was obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation, then examined using the data analysis framework developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The results revealed that students employed repetition, contextual guessing, translation tools, and interactive activities such as quizzes and games to support vocabulary learning. Their strategy choices were influenced by learning motivation, application usability, available features, and learning difficulties. The study suggests that the Hello English application can support vocabulary learning by increasing student engagement and encouraging more independent learning.

Keywords – Vocabulary learning strategies, Hello English application, Vocabulary learning

Abstrak – Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana siswa mempelajari kosakata bahasa Inggris melalui aplikasi Hello English serta mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi pemilihan strategi pembelajaran mereka. Penelitian ini menerapkan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif yang melibatkan 19 siswa dalam kegiatan observasi dan 12 siswa dalam sesi wawancara di MTs Al Marzuqy. Data penelitian diperoleh melalui observasi, wawancara, serta dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis dengan mengacu pada model analisis data yang dikembangkan oleh Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña. Temuan penelitian memperlihatkan bahwa siswa memanfaatkan berbagai strategi, seperti pengulangan, penafsiran makna berdasarkan konteks, penggunaan fitur terjemahan, serta aktivitas latihan melalui kuis dan permainan. Penggunaan strategi tersebut dipengaruhi oleh motivasi belajar, kemudahan penggunaan aplikasi, fitur yang tersedia, dan kesulitan belajar yang dihadapi siswa. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa aplikasi Hello English dapat mendukung pembelajaran kosakata dengan meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dan mendorong pembelajaran yang lebih mandiri.

Kata kunci – Strategi pembelajaran kosakata, Aplikasi Hello English, Pembelajaran kosakata

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary plays a central role in learning English because it serves as the foundation for developing language skills. Without adequate vocabulary knowledge, students frequently face challenges in comprehending spoken and written materials, conveying their ideas, and engaging in communicative interactions. Vocabulary learning is also considered an important element in language development because it supports students in using English more effectively in various contexts (Nuha, Tirtanawati, & Prastiwi, 2024). In EFL settings, vocabulary knowledge plays a significant role in helping learners improve their listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities. As stated by Nation (2013) vocabulary knowledge is one of the key elements that contributes to successful language learning.

Despite its importance, vocabulary learning remains a challenge for many students. In classroom practice, many learners struggle to retain unfamiliar vocabulary, comprehend its meaning accurately, and apply it appropriately across various situations. Therefore, teachers need to employ appropriate strategies to help students improve vocabulary mastery and make learning activities more meaningful (Sari, Prastiwi, & Tirtanawati, 2024). Traditional vocabulary learning activities that rely heavily on memorization can reduce students' interest and involvement in learning activities. Consequently, learners require appropriate strategies that can help them acquire vocabulary more effectively and independently. Oxford (2017) emphasizes that learning strategies enable learners to become more responsible for directing and enhancing their own language learning experiences.

The advancement of digital technology has created new opportunities for language learning. One approach that has gained considerable attention is Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) which utilizes mobile devices as learning tools. Through mobile applications, students can access learning materials beyond classroom boundaries and study according to their own pace and needs.

Miangah and Nezarat (2012) explain that mobile learning promotes flexibility and learner autonomy because learning activities can be carried out at any time and in various settings. Previous studies also showed that virtual learning environments may support students in accessing English learning materials more flexibly

(Tirtanawati & Susilo, 2020). Among the many language learning applications available today, Hello English has become one of the platforms designed to support English learning through interactive activities. The application offers various features, including vocabulary exercises, pronunciation practice, translation tools, quizzes, and educational games. Interactive learning activities can increase students' engagement and support vocabulary acquisition more effectively (Kurniawati, Tirtanawati, & Prastiwi, 2025). These features provide opportunities for students to engage with vocabulary in different ways, making learning more interactive than conventional methods.

Earlier research has highlighted the beneficial impact of the Hello English application on English learning. Research has shown that the application can contribute to vocabulary development and increase students' learning motivation because its interactive features encourage active participation. However, most previous studies have focused on measuring learning outcomes or the effectiveness of the application itself. Comparatively less attention has been given to how students actually learn vocabulary while using the application and what strategies they employ during the learning process.

In response to this gap, the current study examines the vocabulary learning strategies employed by students while using the Hello English application. In addition, the study explores factors that affect students' decisions when choosing specific learning strategies. Through an exploration of students' firsthand experiences, this study aims to offer broader insights into vocabulary learning practices within a mobile-assisted language learning setting.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a qualitative descriptive design to investigate how students utilized vocabulary learning strategies while using the Hello English application. This approach was chosen because it helped the researcher gain a deeper understanding of students' experiences and learning behaviors during the learning process.

The research was conducted at MTs Al Marzuqy. The participants consisted of 19 students who took part in the observation activities and 12 students who were involved in the interview sessions. They were selected because they participated in learning activities using the Hello English application. Since students were not allowed to use personal smartphones at the boarding school, the researcher provided mobile devices during the implementation of the study.

Research data were gathered from classroom observations, interview sessions, and supporting documentation. Observations were conducted to examine the vocabulary learning strategies demonstrated by students during their interaction with the application. Interviews were undertaken to obtain deeper information regarding students' learning experiences and the factors affecting their selection of strategies. Documentation was used to support and strengthen the findings obtained from the other data sources.

The gathered data were analyzed following the framework introduced by Miles et al. (2014) which includes data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion verification. Initially, the researcher identified and arranged information that was relevant to the objectives of the study. Subsequently, the findings were organized and presented descriptively to make interpretation easier. The final stage involved formulating conclusions based on recurring patterns identified throughout the analysis.

To strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings, triangulation was employed by cross-checking information derived from observations, interviews, and documentary evidence. This process helped the researcher confirm the consistency of the findings and provide a more complete understanding of students' vocabulary learning strategies.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

The results revealed that students utilized a range of strategies when learning vocabulary with the support of the Hello English application. These strategies included repetition, guessing word meanings from context, using translation features,

and practicing vocabulary through quizzes and games. The diversity of strategies demonstrates that students did not rely on a single approach but combined several techniques according to their learning needs and preferences.

One strategy frequently observed during the learning process was repetition. Students tended to repeat unfamiliar words either aloud or silently after encountering new vocabulary in the application. This practice appeared to help them remember word forms and meanings more effectively. Repeated exposure to vocabulary allowed students to strengthen their memory and become more familiar with new words. This finding supports Nation's (2013) view that repeated encounters with vocabulary contribute to stronger retention and long-term learning.

Another strategy identified in this study was guessing meaning from context. Several students attempted to understand unfamiliar words by paying attention to pictures, example sentences, and contextual information before checking translations. This finding indicates that students attempted to interpret word meanings independently instead of relying directly on explicit explanations. Such a strategy encourages learners to develop deeper processing of vocabulary and promotes independent learning habits.

Translation also emerged as an important strategy among participants. When students faced vocabulary that was difficult to understand through context alone, they used the translation feature available in the application. For many participants, translation served as a practical tool for confirming word meanings and reducing uncertainty during learning activities. Although translation is often considered a basic strategy, the findings suggest that it remained useful, particularly for learners with limited vocabulary knowledge.

The most prominent strategy observed in this research was practicing vocabulary through quizzes and games. Students showed high levels of engagement when participating in interactive activities provided by the application. Many participants reported that quizzes and games made learning more enjoyable and encouraged them to continue practicing vocabulary. These activities provided repeated exposure to words while creating a learning atmosphere that felt less formal and more motivating. This result aligns with Oxford's (2017) argument that

meaningful and engaging learning activities can support the development of effective language learning strategies.

The findings also revealed several factors that influenced students' selection of vocabulary learning strategies. Motivation was identified as one of the strongest factors. Students who enjoyed using the application tended to participate more actively and experiment with different learning techniques. Technology-based learning platforms can increase students' participation and interaction during English learning activities (Tirtanawati & Khoiriyah, 2021). Their willingness to engage with vocabulary learning activities contributed to greater use of learning strategies.

In addition to motivation, the accessibility and simplicity of the application affected students' learning behavior. Participants generally perceived the application as easy to operate, allowing them to focus more on learning tasks than on technical issues. This ease of use encouraged students to explore various features and apply different strategies according to their individual learning preferences.

Application features themselves also played a significant role. Interactive components such as games, quizzes, pronunciation exercises, and translation tools provided opportunities for students to learn vocabulary in multiple ways. These features supported different learning styles and enabled students to choose strategies that suited their needs. Digital media has become one of the important tools in supporting English language learning among EFL students (Tirtanawati & Prastiwi, 2023). The findings suggest that the design of a learning application can influence not only students' motivation but also the strategies they employ during learning activities.

Another factor identified in this study was learning difficulty. Students often adjusted their strategies when encountering unfamiliar or challenging vocabulary. For example, they tended to rely more heavily on repetition and translation when dealing with difficult words. This indicates that strategy selection is closely related to learners' perceived challenges and language proficiency levels.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that vocabulary learning through the Hello English application involves a combination of cognitive, memory-related, and discovery-oriented strategies. The application not only provides learning materials

but also creates opportunities for students to engage actively with vocabulary through interactive and flexible learning experiences. Technology-based learning strategies may help students develop more independent learning habits in English learning (Tirtanawati & Rozak, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

The study provides several conclusions regarding students' vocabulary learning strategies through the Hello English application, as presented below:

1. The students employed various vocabulary learning strategies while using the Hello English application. The strategies identified in this study included repetition, guessing meaning from context, using translation features, and practicing vocabulary through quizzes and games. Among these strategies, practice through quizzes and games emerged as the most frequently used strategy because students considered it more engaging, interactive, and enjoyable. These strategies helped students improve vocabulary understanding, retention, and learning participation. Several factors influenced students' choice of vocabulary learning strategies while using the Hello English application. The factors included learning motivation, ease of application use, application features, and learning difficulties. Motivation encouraged students to participate actively in learning activities, while accessible features such as quizzes, games, pronunciation practice, and translation tools supported the use of different learning strategies.

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