



Boosting Vocabulary Mastery with the Hello English App: A Game-Changing Solution for EFL Learners

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to improve students' vocabulary mastery through the use of the Hello English application for tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 8 Bandar Lampung during the 2023/2024 academic year. This study employed the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method, which was conducted in two cycles. The subjects of this research were 35 students from class X.1. Both experimental and non-experimental data collection methods were utilized. Vocabulary tests (sections 1 and 2) were used for experimental data, while observation cards were employed for non-experimental data. Data analysis incorporated both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The results of the study indicated that the Hello English application significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery. The average test scores increased from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2. In the first cycle, 14 students (40%) met the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) with an average score of 70.63 points. In the second cycle, 24 students (69%) achieved the KKM, with an average score of 73 points. Additionally, the overall class performance improved from an average score of 6.5 in the first cycle to 7.22 in the second cycle, reflecting a shift from weak to satisfactory performance. Based on these findings, it was concluded that the implementation of the Hello English application effectively enhanced vocabulary mastery among the tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 8 Bandar Lampung. This research implies that incorporating digital learning tools such as Hello English can be an effective strategy to address language learning challenges and foster student engagement in vocabulary acquisition.

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INTRODUCTION

English is a global language utilized by a vast majority of people worldwide. In the present era, English has become essential for communication in various fields, such as business, international relations, and scientific advancements (Hastomo et al., 2024). It serves as a medium through which individuals interact and exchange ideas. Consequently, proficiency in English is vital for acquiring additional knowledge, information, and expertise. Within educational settings, students enhance their English language skills through classroom activities, often engaging in peer teaching to support each other's learning. To achieve success in learning English, it is essential to develop a sufficient vocabulary, which is the foundation for effective communication and speaking abilities.

Words play a pivotal role in acquiring a new language, serving as the bridge connecting the four essential skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. A broad vocabulary is necessary for effective communication and understanding across these skills. According to McCarty (2003), vocabulary encompasses the knowledge of word meanings. Similarly, Webb and Nation (2018) define vocabulary as the collection of words individuals need to know to communicate effectively, including both expressive vocabulary (spoken words) and receptive vocabulary (words understood). Teaching and learning vocabulary involve identifying and comprehending the meanings of specific words in both spoken and written language. A limited vocabulary can hinder individuals from effectively expressing thoughts and feelings, particularly when communicating in a foreign language.

Vocabulary is a crucial component of all language skills. In addition to facilitating communication, it underpins other skills such as reading, listening, and writing. As Murcia (2001) asserts, vocabulary acquisition often occurs indirectly during activities like understanding texts or engaging in communicative tasks. Therefore, students should focus on learning high-frequency English words relevant to real-life contexts. Students with limited vocabulary often face challenges in articulating their thoughts effectively. Fortunately, various strategies can be employed to enhance vocabulary learning.

To introduce vocabulary effectively, teachers should select relevant topics and employ motivational teaching strategies that engage students. Teachers play a significant role in making the learning process interesting, interactive, and challenging (Andeska et al., 2021). Vocabulary should be taught systematically, ensuring students understand and retain the words they learn. Strategies such as using dictionaries, maintaining vocabulary notebooks, playing word games, encouraging extensive reading, and leveraging the learning environment can enhance vocabulary acquisition.

The growing prevalence of smartphones among students has opened new avenues for vocabulary learning. Researchers have explored the use of mobile applications to facilitate English language learning, particularly vocabulary acquisition. According to Aminatun and Hastomo (2024), mobile applications make

learning vocabulary more accessible and efficient, allowing students to practice at any time, even outside the classroom. These applications enable self-directed learning, providing students with the flexibility to improve their vocabulary independently.

One widely used application is Hello English, which has been shown to benefit students, particularly in schools with limited English teaching resources. Research by Daulay et al. (2023) highlights that Hello English is an interactive mobile application designed to enhance users' English skills, including vocabulary, reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Teachers can use this application to support students in building their vocabulary and language skills.

Studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of Hello English in improving vocabulary mastery. Aini et al. (2022) found that the application significantly aids students in memorizing new vocabulary within a short period. Similarly, Sudarmaji et al. (2022) reported that Hello English outperformed other applications in helping students recall and use new words effectively. The application combines engaging features such as games, interactive lessons, and clear explanations of language rules, making it an enjoyable learning tool. Hidayati and Diana (2022) observed that Hello English positively impacts students' perceptions of English learning, particularly by enabling them to repeat and retain vocabulary effectively.

Preliminary research conducted at SMA Negeri 8 Bandar Lampung revealed that students faced challenges in mastering vocabulary. Many students struggled to use words correctly, felt unmotivated, and often disrupted classroom activities. These challenges underscore the need for teachers to employ diverse and engaging teaching media to motivate students and create an enjoyable learning environment.

This study investigates the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery through the Hello English application. By incorporating this application into the learning process, students become more engaged and enthusiastic about English lessons. The interactive features of the application, such as games, practice exercises, and a built-in dictionary, allow students to learn vocabulary in an enjoyable and meaningful way. As Padang and Sitepu (2023) emphasize, media plays a pivotal role in the teaching-learning process by creating a dynamic and engaging classroom atmosphere. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the field of language education by highlighting the potential of mobile applications as effective tools for improving vocabulary mastery.

Based on the above considerations, this study, titled "Boosting Vocabulary Mastery with the Hello English App: A Game-Changing Solution for EFL Learners," aims to provide insights into the role of mobile applications in enhancing vocabulary learning and to address the challenges faced by students in mastering English vocabulary.

METHOD

The research design implemented in this study was Classroom Action Research

(CAR), consisting of four phases: planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection (Sutiyono & Hastomo, 2022). This research was conducted at SMA Negeri 8 Bandar Lampung, with the subjects being 35 tenth-grade students in their second semester, comprising 18 female and 17 male students. The research was carried out in two cycles, namely Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, where each cycle was a series of interrelated actions. The second cycle built upon and modified the implementation of the first cycle to achieve improved outcomes.

CAR is a systematic approach utilized by teachers to address and enhance teaching and learning practices within the classroom. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), CAR is a reflective and inclusive form of social research aimed at understanding and improving educational practices. This approach focuses on understanding the roles individuals play in educational or societal contexts, gaining insights into these processes, and implementing changes to improve the relevance and effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies. The stages of this research, aligned with the Classroom Action Research framework, guided the systematic execution and evaluation of the study.

The initial stage, Planning, involved preparing for the actions to be implemented in the research. The researcher developed a comprehensive design addressing all aspects of the CAR. General planning aimed to create an overarching framework, while special planning focused on designing activities for progression between cycles. The goal was to enhance students' vocabulary mastery by formulating alternative strategies within the context of English language learning. This included creating a detailed learning implementation plan, covering aspects such as learning approaches, educational media, instructional materials, and techniques for evaluation. Specific preparations included selecting diverse materials for the research, designing lesson plans aligned with teaching materials to be delivered using the Hello English application, and developing techniques and instruments for observing and evaluating the teaching and learning process.

In the Implementation stage, the researcher executed the lesson plans through the Hello English application. In both Cycle I and Cycle II, students were engaged in observing materials displayed via the application. After the observation, students participated in question-and-answer sessions and discussions. These interactions allowed the researcher to elaborate on descriptive text elements such as synonyms, antonyms, and meanings using a process-oriented approach.

During the Observation phase, the researcher closely monitored all activities throughout the research process. This included observing the classroom environment, students' attitudes, and their responses during lessons. Observations also encompassed students' engagement with tasks and challenges they faced while learning. These observations were essential for analyzing the effectiveness of the Hello English application and its impact on student learning. To ensure thorough monitoring, the researcher was assisted by colleagues who observed the students' activities and the overall learning process.

The final stage, Reflection, involved a collaborative evaluation of the research process. This included discussions about various issues encountered, providing feedback on lesson preparation, analyzing students' performance on tasks, and assessing their activities during the learning process. Reflection sessions were conducted after each cycle to identify areas for improvement and to determine preliminary activities for the subsequent cycle. The insights gained from these reflections informed the replanning phase, ensuring a more effective implementation of the research.

To assess students' vocabulary mastery, two types of Tests were employed. The first was a formative test, conducted during each meeting to evaluate students' progress in the learning process. The second was a summative test, administered at the end of each cycle to assess students' overall learning achievements. These tests served to reinforce learning, motivate students, and provide measurable outcomes of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The research was conducted at SMAN 08 Bandar Lampung, utilizing the Hello English application as a tool to enhance vocabulary mastery. The study followed a CAR design and involved tenth-grade students. A total of 35 students participated in the research, consisting of 17 male and 18 female students. The study was carried out in two cycles, namely Cycle One and Cycle Two (Hastomo & Zulianti, 2022). Each cycle consisted of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The discussion focused on the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery through the implementation of the Hello English application among tenth-grade students at SMAN 8 Bandar Lampung.

Pre-Research

As the initial phase of the research, the researcher conducted a pre-action survey to assess the preliminary conditions related to both the learning processes and the vocabulary mastery of tenth-grade students at SMAN 8 Bandar Lampung. These initial conditions served as a reference point for identifying and designing appropriate interventions to be implemented during the subsequent research cycles. Observations during the learning process revealed a lack of student engagement, as evidenced by minimal participation in classroom activities, such as asking and answering questions and completing assignments given by the teacher. The results of the pre-action observation were categorized as less effective, supported by the pre-test results, which indicated that only 12 students actively participated out of the total population. This highlighted a generally inactive learning environment.

Furthermore, the pre-test results showed that many students struggled to answer questions related to synonyms, antonyms, and meanings. They were unable to construct

sentences in English due to their limited vocabulary, which led to confusion when attempting to answer the test questions. These findings underscored the need for instructional media designed to enhance students' vocabulary mastery. Such media are expected to facilitate improvements in the learning process and support the successful implementation of English language instruction.

Cycle 1

The process of achieving vocabulary mastery through the Hello English application, as documented by the observation sheet, demonstrated significant enhancement across all aspects during Cycle I. However, certain areas still require further improvement. Specifically, students' engagement in answering teachers' questions received an average score of 6.5, categorizing it as less satisfactory. On the other hand, the aspect related to students' activity in posing questions about the material presented during lessons achieved an average score of 6.38, placing it within the sufficient category. While these scores reflect improvements compared to the initial conditions prior to the intervention, it is important to note that during this cycle, students exhibited a commendable level of participation in both asking and responding to the teacher's inquiries, indicating positive progress in their overall classroom engagement.

Cycle 2

The improvement in the observation scores of students' vocabulary mastery during the learning process through the Hello English application showed significant progress from the pre-action stage to the subsequent cycles. In the first cycle, the average score improved to 6.5, and in the second cycle, it further increased to 7.22, reflecting an overall improvement of 0.72 from pre-action to Cycle II.

The most substantial improvement observed in the post-action stage of Cycle II was in the aspect of student enthusiasm during the learning process. Conversely, the aspect that showed the least improvement was student activity. However, in Cycle II, this aspect demonstrated marked progress and better alignment with the intended plan compared to Cycle I. Students showed increased engagement in the learning process, successfully completed their assignments, and displayed heightened attentiveness and focus, particularly during writing activities.

Moreover, there was a noticeable rise in students' interest and enthusiasm for expanding their vocabulary and constructing sentences using the Hello English application. This indicates that the application effectively supported students in becoming more proactive and motivated in their vocabulary learning journey. Based on the students' learning activities table 1, the mean total score in the first cycle was 6.5 points, while the total average score in the second cycle increased to 7.22 points. This indicates an improvement of 0.72 points from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2. Furthermore, it can be observed that the students' learning process showed notable improvement between the

two cycles.

Table 1. The Students' Learning Activities

Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Improvement
Average Score	Average Score	
6,5	7,22	0,72

The implementation of the Hello English application in the tenth-grade classroom at SMAN 8 Bandar Lampung actively engaged students in the learning process. They appeared to participate enthusiastically and enjoy the lessons. Additionally, there was a significant improvement in students' vocabulary mastery and overall scores. For a more detailed analysis, this progress is illustrated in the following graph, which highlights the improvement in students' learning outcomes.

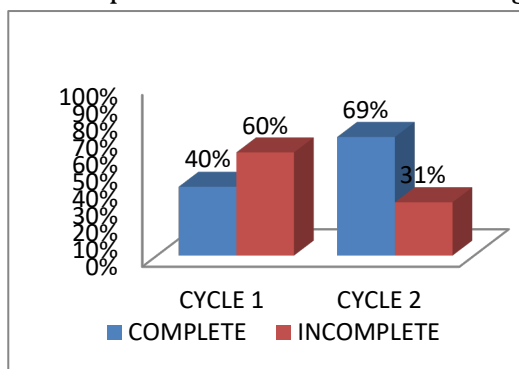


Figure 1. The Improvement in Learning Results Recapitulation

According to Figure 1, in Cycle 1, 14 students (40%) achieved a score above the minimum competency level, while 21 students (60%) did not meet the required standard. In Cycle 2, the results improved significantly, with 24 students (69%) reaching the advanced level, while 11 students (31%) still did not meet the minimum qualification for advanced proficiency. Based on this data, it is evident that the implementation of the Hello English application effectively improved students' vocabulary mastery. Consequently, the researcher concluded that by the completion of Cycle 2, the CAR aimed at enhancing students' vocabulary mastery through the Hello English application in the tenth grade of SMAN 8 Bandar Lampung was successfully achieved, and no additional cycles were necessary.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of this study, the researcher asserts that the Hello English application positively improved students' vocabulary mastery. Data collected from test papers and observation sheets indicated favorable outcomes in the learning process, particularly in understanding words. The Hello English application helped students remember and comprehend word meanings effectively. The vocabulary test scores across two cycles demonstrate that the application significantly enhanced students' vocabulary mastery. Analyzing the average scores of students in each cycle reveals that the mean score in Cycle 1 was 6.5, categorized as inactive, with only 14 students (40%)

scoring above the Minimum Completeness Criteria.

In Cycle 2, the average test score increased to 7.22, showing greater student engagement compared to Cycle 1. However, only 24 students (69%) achieved scores above the proficiency standard. These results confirm that students' vocabulary skills improved over the course of the study. The change in students' learning activities from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2 resulted in an improvement of 0.72 points, with the total score rising from 6.5 to 7.22. This data highlights a positive trend in students' academic performance and vocabulary mastery.

During the treatment process, students received an introduction to the Hello English application. Initially, the researcher explained the application's benefits, how to use it, and its engaging features. Students were instructed to download the application and register using their email accounts to personalize the learning experience. Once registered, students accessed the vocabulary game feature and answered the questions provided. After completing the vocabulary game, students were asked to take notes on the vocabulary they learned using the application. They then constructed sentences using the newly acquired words, enabling them to understand the meanings, synonyms, and antonyms of the vocabulary. In subsequent meetings, the researcher reviewed the previously learned vocabulary to reinforce retention and understanding.

The Hello English application demonstrated its potential to significantly enhance students' learning activities and vocabulary mastery. By integrating technology into the learning process, students not only gained a new learning experience but also found it easier to comprehend materials through the application's interactive games. According to Mutmainah et al. (2023), the Hello English application is an effective teaching tool that significantly impacts vocabulary retention by allowing students to memorize new words in a short period. Similarly, Sudarmaji et al. (2022) found that the application is more effective than other tools in helping students recall and use vocabulary.

The Hello English application employs innovative methods, including games with pictures and explanations, to support vocabulary learning (Hidayati & Diana, 2022). It provides an alternative platform to traditional textbooks, enabling students to practice grammar and vocabulary regularly. Frequent practice and repetition help students easily retain vocabulary, creating a more enjoyable and engaging classroom atmosphere.

One of the key benefits of the Hello English application is its flexibility for teachers to design courses or utilize materials shared by other users. The application incorporates repetition as a strategy to help learners master phrases and words, offering immediate feedback in the form of points after completing exercises. It also optimizes vocabulary retention by presenting words in different contexts, helping students understand nuances in meaning and usage in daily activities.

Regular exposure to vocabulary through the Hello English application enhances long-term retention and fosters deeper understanding. Students receive opportunities to encounter words repeatedly in varied contexts, aiding their ability to apply the vocabulary effectively.

The findings from this study indicate that the Hello English application is an effective tool for improving students' vocabulary mastery. The application not only helps students comprehend the meanings, synonyms, and antonyms of words but also supports contextual learning. Moreover, its accessibility allows students to learn English anytime and anywhere, making it a versatile and convenient resource for vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the Hello English application is a practical solution for addressing students' difficulties in retaining vocabulary and is an excellent medium for enhancing their English learning experience.

CONCLUSION

After conducting CAR to enhance vocabulary mastery using the Hello English application, the researcher drew several conclusions based on the research findings. In Cycle 1, the average score of students' vocabulary tests was 60%, with only 14 students (40%) meeting the minimum proficiency level. By Cycle 2, the average score increased to 69%, with 24 students (69%) achieving the minimum grade. This represents a 29% improvement in vocabulary test scores from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2. The findings indicate that the Hello English application effectively enhanced the vocabulary mastery of tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 8 Bandar Lampung.

Observations during the research revealed that students showed increased motivation and interest in participating in vocabulary learning activities. Academic performance also improved, with the mean score of students' performance rising from 6.5 points in Cycle 1, indicating below-standard proficiency, to 7.22 points in Cycle 2, reaching the "active" criterion. The improvement in learning performance between the two cycles was 0.72 points. These results confirm that the Hello English application successfully enhanced both students' vocabulary mastery and their engagement in learning activities during the 2023/2024 academic year.

The findings of this research highlight the significant benefits of using the Hello English application as an interactive medium to improve students' vocabulary skills. The game-like and interactive features of the application made learning more enjoyable, effectively boosting students' motivation and active participation. Additionally, the immediate feedback provided by the application allowed students to quickly identify and correct errors, fostering a deeper understanding and retention of vocabulary.

Despite these advantages, the study also identified challenges, such as the potential for increased anxiety due to the competitive nature of the application and technical issues like inconsistent internet connectivity. To address these issues, educators should foster a supportive and collaborative learning environment that reduces competitive pressure and ensure reliable access to technology.

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