EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BUSUU APPLICATION IN ENHANCING ENGLISH VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to determine the impact of the Busuu application on students' English vocabulary acquisition. The study population consisted of all seventh-grade students at SMPN 30 BATAM, totaling 430 students across ten classes. A random cluster sampling technique was employed to select 76 students, with 38 students in the experimental group and 38 in the control group. Data collection involved a pre-test and post-test, with validity ensured through established testing procedures. The data were analyzed using a t-test, with normality and homogeneity verified via the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the F-test, respectively. The experimental group received instruction using the Busuu application, while the control group did not. The analysis revealed that the significance value (sig. 2-tailed) was less than 0.05 (0.000 < 0.05), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H0) and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (Ha). This indicates a significant effect of using the Busuu application on students' English vocabulary acquisition. Despite these findings, the study suggests that the Busuu application could still be a valuable tool for enhancing students' vocabulary knowledge.

Keywords: *Busuu Application, Vocabulary*

INTRODUCTION

English proficiency is increasingly recognized as essential for citizens in countries that are active participants in the global economy, providing them with the access necessary for obtaining information and knowledge crucial for social and economic development. As a developing country, Indonesia faces a growing demand for English fluency, which has led to the language being a key subject within the education system (Dewi & Premini, 2018). This rising importance of English, especially in educational contexts, has prompted educators and researchers to explore various teaching methods and tools to enhance English language acquisition among students. According to Amberg and Vause (as cited in Arizah & Merie, 2021), language

is a communication tool, and communication almost always occurs within a social context. This underscores the critical role of language in daily life. However, the diversity of languages worldwide can create challenges in expressing and conveying messages, especially when communicating with someone from a different nationality. This challenge underscores the importance of English as a medium for international communication. According to Fatiha et al. (2014), English has become an international language widely adopted for communication globally, serving as a bridge between native and non-native speakers. This demonstrates the significant role of English in scientific, cultural, and technological exchanges.

Technology is a crucial component of modern life, rapidly advancing to enhance human performance across various fields, including health, government, trade, services, and education. The development of technology has made it easier for society to access information. In the field of education, technological advancements have led to the creation of learning media that assist both teachers and students in the teaching and learning process. This is particularly evident in the emergence of learning applications that combine innovation and creativity to engage students in learning activities, thereby enhancing their motivation. Foreign language learning, especially English, has seen significant advancements with the introduction of such applications.

Several foreign language learning applications offer unique features, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. Rizqiyyah and Drajati (2020) noted that these apps help users learn, practice, and enhance both language skills and knowledge, with the goal of expressing themselves in the target language. One such application is Busuu, which offers a fun and effective alternative to textbook learning for English vocabulary acquisition. The Busuu application provides courses that cover the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—as well as vocabulary and translation. It also allows users to practice with native speakers. According to Susanto et al. (2022), using the Busuu application effectively increases students' motivation and vocabulary learning skills. This effectiveness is supported by research indicating that

the Busuu application positively impacts students' motivation and their ability to learn a second language.

The use of English learning applications as a medium for student learning is a method that teachers employ to facilitate students' understanding of learning materials. In learning English as a second language, students must master the four key skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In the initial stages of learning, students are usually introduced to vocabulary before advancing to these skills. Lessard-Clouston (2013) emphasizes that vocabulary is central to teaching English; without sufficient vocabulary, students cannot understand others or express their ideas. Thus, vocabulary is essential for students in learning English. A lack of vocabulary knowledge limits students' ability to understand and communicate, making it difficult to form sentences and develop coherent paragraphs.

The difficulties faced by students in acquiring vocabulary became apparent during the researchers' teaching practices. Many students struggled with speaking, writing, and reading due to their limited vocabulary and the reliance on traditional textbooks without supplemental learning media. This lack of engaging learning tools contributed to the ineffectiveness of teaching and learning activities. These observations motivated the researcher to explore the use of the Busuu application as a learning medium to assist students in enhancing their English vocabulary. Therefore, this study investigates "The Effect of Using Busuu Application as Teaching Media for Student's English Vocabulary at SMPN 30 Batam."

The researcher also reviewed several studies that examined vocabulary acquisition and the use of the Busuu application. For example, Susanto et al. (2022) explored the performance of students using the Busuu online platform and its impact on vocabulary learning motivation and achievement, finding that the platform significantly improved students' vocabulary. Khairunnisa et al. (2021) studied the development of English vocabulary through the Busuu application and reported improvements based on pre-test and post-test results. Rizqiyyah and Drajati (2020)

examined students' attitudes toward independent learning through the Busuu application, noting that students had a positive attitude and improved their English vocabulary. Similarly, Rohman et al. (2023) found that the Busuu application significantly enhanced students' vocabulary at SMP Negeri 35 Samarinda, as evidenced by a notable increase in post-test scores.

Based on these studies, it is evident that previous research has focused on the development, improvement, and achievement of English vocabulary using the Busuu application as a learning medium. In contrast, the present study aims to determine whether the Busuu application has a significant impact on students' English vocabulary knowledge at SMPN 30 Batam.

METHODOLOGY

This research aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Busuu application in enhancing students' English vocabulary acquisition at SMPN 30 Batam. The study adopted a quantitative research approach using a quasi-experimental design. Specifically, a pre-test and post-test control group design was employed to measure the differences in vocabulary acquisition between students using the Busuu application and those who did not.

Participants

The population for this study consisted of all seventh-grade students at SMPN 30 Batam, with a total enrollment of 430 students across ten classes. The sample was selected using a random cluster sampling technique, resulting in two groups: an experimental group (n=38) and a control group (n=38). The experimental group was taught using the Busuu application, while the control group received traditional vocabulary instruction without the use of the application.

Instruments

The main data collection instrument was a vocabulary test designed to assess the students' knowledge of English vocabulary. The test was administered as both a

pre-test and post-test to gauge the students' progress. The validity of the test was established through expert consultation, and reliability was ensured through pilot testing with a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.85, indicating a high level of consistency.

Procedure

The study was conducted over a period of four weeks. In the first week, both groups underwent a pre-test to assess their baseline English vocabulary knowledge. The experimental group was then instructed using the Busuu application for vocabulary learning, while the control group received instruction through traditional methods, such as teacher-led explanations and textbook exercises. The Busuu application sessions were integrated into the experimental group's learning schedule for three days per week, with each session lasting 60 minutes. The control group followed the same time structure without the use of technology.

At the end of the four-week period, both groups were given a post-test identical to the pre-test to measure any improvements in vocabulary knowledge. Throughout the experiment, the researchers ensured that both groups had access to the same amount of vocabulary content to avoid discrepancies in learning material.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using statistical techniques to determine the effectiveness of the Busuu application. A paired samples t-test was applied to compare the pre-test and post-test results within both groups, while an independent samples t-test was used to compare the post-test scores between the experimental and control groups. Additionally, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to check for the normality of the data, and Levene's test was conducted to assess the homogeneity of variances. All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS software, and significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

FINDINGS

Based on the whole findings of the data, it was found that there no significant effect of using the Busuu application on students' English vocabulary skills. It can be seen and compared from the result score of pre-test and post-test in the experimental and control group. The result of the data of using the Busuu application on students' English vocabulary skills, the normality testing, also the result of testing hypothesis can be seen from the table below:

1. Normality Test

In the normality test, the researcher uses the Shapiro-Wilk normality test for sample sizes that have more than 50 respondents using SPSS 25 statistics. The data can be seen from the data below:

Table 1: Normality Test in the Control Class

Test	Statistic	df	Significance (Sig.)
Kolmogorov-Smirnov			
Pre-Test	0.124	38	0.144
Post-Test	0.118	38	0.200
Shapiro-Wilk			
Pre-Test	0.966	38	0.298
Post-Test	0.947	38	0.072

Based on the normality test in the control class above, the score in the pre-test, t count was larger than the t table (.298 > 0.05). Furthermore, the score in the post-test, t count was larger than the t table (.072 > 0.05). In this case, the researcher concluded that the data of the pre-test and post-test for the control class are normally distributed. Furthermore, the data of their speaking in the pre-test and post-test on the experimental class could be seen in the table above:

Table 2: Normality Test in the Experiment Class

Test	Statistic	df	Significance (Sig.)
Kolmogorov-Smirnov			
Pre-Test	0.148	38	0.035
Post-Test	0.116	38	0.200
Shapiro-Wilk			
Pre-Test	0.945	38	0.063
Post-Test	0.967	38	0.323

Table 2 presents the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, which were conducted to assess whether the distribution of pre-test and post-test scores in the experimental class deviates from a normal distribution. This test is crucial because many statistical analyses, such as t-tests, assume that the data are normally distributed.

For the pre-test scores, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test yielded a statistic of 0.148 with a significance value of 0.035. Since this value is less than 0.05, it indicates a significant deviation from normality. However, the Shapiro-Wilk test, which is generally more reliable for small sample sizes, produced a statistic of 0.945 with a significance value of 0.063, which is greater than 0.05, suggesting that the pre-test scores do not significantly deviate from normality. For the post-test scores, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test resulted in a statistic of 0.116 with a significance value of 0.200, and the Shapiro-Wilk test gave a statistic of 0.967 with a significance value of 0.323. Both tests have significance values greater than 0.05, indicating that the post-test scores are normally distributed.

2. Homogeneity Test

A homogeneity test was conducted to find out whether each group has a homogeneous variance or not. In this case, the researcher used SPSS 25 statistics to test homogeneity. The data can be seen from the data below:

Table 3: Homogeneity Test of Pre-Test Scores between Control and Experimental Classes

Test Method	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Significance (Sig.)
Based on Mean	0.159	1	74	0.691
Based on Median	0.088	1	74	0.768
Based on Median (adjusted df)	0.088	1	69.651	0.768
Based on Trimmed Mean	0.150	1	74	0.700

Table 4: Homogeneity Test of Post-Test Scores Between Control and Experimental Classes

Test Method	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Based on Mean	0.077	1	74	0.783
Based on Median	0.032	1	74	0.859

Test Method	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Based on Median (adjusted df)	0.032	1	73.79	0.859
Based on Trimmed Mean	0.064	1	74	0.801

Table 4 presents the results of the Levene's Test, which was conducted to assess the equality of variances between the control and experimental groups after the intervention. The test was performed using four different methods: based on mean, median, median with adjusted degrees of freedom, and trimmed mean. The results show that the significance values (Sig.) for all methods are above 0.05, with values of 0.783, 0.859, 0.859, and 0.801 respectively. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the variances between the control and experimental groups in the post-test scores. In other words, the assumption of homogeneity of variance is met, which supports the validity of comparing the means of the two groups.

The Levene Statistic values are low across all methods, further confirming that the variance in post-test scores is similar between the two groups. This homogeneity of variance suggests that any observed differences in the mean scores between the control and experimental groups are not due to differences in variability, but rather may be attributed to the effect of the intervention itself.

Furthermore, to determine whether or not there is an effect of Busuu application to students English vocabulary. In this study, there are research hypotheses that must be tested. The outcome of pre-test and post- test on experimental class was analyzed by applying the t-test. The researcher used the t-test through the SPSS for windows version 25. The data could be seen from the table below:

Table 5: Independent Samples Test

Group	Mean Difference	F	Significance (Sig.)
Experiment Class	-12.421	0.967	0.000

table presents the results of an independent samples t-test that was conducted to determine whether there is a significant difference in English vocabulary scores between students who used the Busuu application (the experimental group) and those who did not (the control group). The mean difference between the two groups was -12.421, indicating that, on average, the students in the experimental group scored 12.421 points lower than those in the control group. This negative mean difference suggests that students who used the Busuu application performed worse on the vocabulary test compared to those who did not.

The F value from Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was 0.967, with a significance level of 0.329. Since this significance level is greater than 0.05, we assume that the variances between the two groups are approximately equal, indicating homogeneity of variance.

The significance value (Sig.) for the t-test was 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 threshold typically used in hypothesis testing. This result indicates that the difference in scores between the experimental and control groups is statistically significant. In other words, the use of the Busuu application had a significant impact on students' English vocabulary scores, but contrary to expectations, the impact was negative. The students who used the Busuu application scored significantly lower than those who did not, suggesting potential issues with how the application was implemented or the instructional method used in conjunction with the app.

One possible explanation for these results could be linked to the teaching methodology employed during the study. The research relied on a teacher-centered approach, where the teacher directed the learning process, possibly limiting the interactive and autonomous learning opportunities that the Busuu application is designed to provide. The effectiveness of the Busuu application is closely tied to its ability to motivate students and enhance their vocabulary skills through self-directed learning. The application is most effective when students engage with it independently, allowing them to learn at their own pace and according to their individual learning

styles. By using a teacher-centered method, the potential benefits of the Busuu application—such as fostering autonomy and increasing motivation—may not have been fully realized.

DISCUSSION

This research aimed to determine whether the Busuu application could effectively enhance English vocabulary knowledge among students at SMPN 30 Batam. The focus was on assessing the potential of Busuu as a teaching medium to improve students' English vocabulary. However, the findings revealed that the use of the Busuu application did not significantly impact students' vocabulary acquisition. This conclusion is drawn from the statistical analysis presented in Table 4, where the hypothesis test using the t-test formula indicated that the significance value (sig. 2-tailed) was less than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). Consequently, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was rejected, and the null hypothesis (H0) was accepted, indicating that the Busuu application did not have a significant effect on students' English vocabulary at SMPN 30 Batam.

To understand these findings, it is essential to consider the methodological approach used in this study and how it contrasts with previous research. The current study utilized a teacher-centered approach, which may have limited the effectiveness of the Busuu application. In contrast, earlier studies that reported positive outcomes with the Busuu application employed a more student-centered approach, emphasizing active student engagement and independent learning.

While the Busuu application has the potential to enhance vocabulary learning, its success is highly dependent on the teaching method used. The negative impact observed in this study highlights the importance of aligning the use of educational technology with appropriate pedagogical strategies. A shift towards a more student-centered approach might be necessary to fully leverage the benefits of the Busuu

application, enabling students to take ownership of their learning and thereby improving their vocabulary acquisition.

The theories discussed in the introduction provide further insight into these results. According to Amberg and Vause (as cited in Arizah & Merie, 2021), language is inherently social, and effective communication typically occurs within a social context. This suggests that a learning environment that encourages interaction and active participation, as seen in student-centered approaches, is more conducive to language acquisition. Furthermore, Susanto et al. (2022) highlighted that the Busuu application is effective in enhancing motivation and vocabulary learning skills when used in a way that stimulates student interest and involvement.

The limited impact observed in this study may also be attributed to the mismatch between the teaching method and the intended use of the Busuu application. As Lessard-Clouston (2013) emphasizes, vocabulary is central to language learning, and effective vocabulary instruction requires methods that actively engage students in the learning process. The teacher-centered approach used in this study may have reduced students' opportunities to interact with the content and practice their vocabulary, which are critical components of effective vocabulary learning.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that while the Busuu application has the potential to be an effective tool for learning English vocabulary, its success is highly dependent on the teaching approach employed. A more student-centered approach, which aligns with the interactive and engaging nature of language learning applications, may yield more significant results. Therefore, future research should consider adapting the teaching method to better harness the capabilities of the Busuu application and similar language learning tools.

CONCLUSION

This research was conducted by the researcher with the aim of finding out whether using the busuu application can have an influence on the english vocabulary

of students at SMPN 30 Batam. Where the focus of this research is to find out whether the Busuu application can be a teaching media for students to increase their knowledge related to english vocabulary. In the implementation of this research, the researcher found that the use of the Busuu application in the english vocabulary of junior high school students in batam 30 did not have a significant impact. This can be seen from the results in table 4 where based on the hypothesis test used t-test formula with null hypothesis (h0) and alternative hypothesis (ha) it can be seen that sig. (2-tailed) is less than 0.05 (0.000 < 0.05) from the results it can be stated that the hypothesis (ha) is rejected and the null hypothesis (h0) is accepted. Where null hypothesis (h0) there no effect of using busuu application as teaching media for students' english vocabulary at smpn 30 batam. In this case, the researcher relates the research conducted by the researcher with that of other researchers where the researcher finds that the use of the method carried out by the researcher is not appropriate so that the results obtained are not significant. Where in several studies that also cover the same topic, namely the use of the busu application, the researchers focused on the student center method, while in the research conducted by the researcher, the researcher used the teacher center method so that this became one of the factors that influenced the results of this study.

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