Implementation of the Direct Reading Method Assisted by Digital Media to Improve English Vocabulary Mastery

Penerapan Metode Membaca Langsung Berbantuan Media Digital dalam Meningkatkan Penguasaan Kosakata Bahasa Inggris

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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary mastery is a fundamental component of English learning that underpins students' ability to read, write, speak, and listen effectively. However, many Indonesian learners still rely on passive memorization and translation strategies, which are less effective for long-term vocabulary retention and communicative competence. This study investigates the application of the Direct Reading Method assisted by digital media as an innovative strategy to improve students' English vocabulary mastery. The integration of digital resources, such as interactive e-books, vocabulary applications, and multimodal content, aims to create a more contextual, engaging, and effective learning environment that meets the needs of the digital generation. This research employed a quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest control group. Participants were high school students selected purposively based on low initial vocabulary scores and access to digital devices. Data were collected using vocabulary tests, observation sheets, and motivation questionnaires. Quantitative data were analyzed through t-tests, while qualitative findings were drawn from observations and student responses. The findings demonstrate that the experimental group, taught using the Direct Reading Method with digital media, showed significantly greater improvement in vocabulary mastery than the control group taught with conventional methods. The experimental group's average score increased by +23.4 compared to +11.3 in the control group, with statistical tests confirming significant differences (p < 0.01). Furthermore, students in the experimental group exhibited higher engagement (82%), stronger motivation, and a greater desire to continue using the method. In conclusion, combining Direct Reading with digital media not only enhances vocabulary mastery but also fosters active participation and learning motivation. This approach offers an effective, interactive, and technology-integrated model of vocabulary learning suitable for 21st-century education.

Keywords: Direct Reading; Digital Media; Vocabulary Mastery

ABSTRAK

Penguasaan kosakata merupakan komponen fundamental pembelajaran bahasa Inggris yang mendasari kemampuan siswa untuk membaca, menulis, berbicara, dan mendengarkan secara efektif. Namun, banyak pembelajar Indonesia masih mengandalkan strategi menghafal pasif dan penerjemahan, yang kurang efektif untuk retensi kosakata jangka panjang dan kompetensi komunikatif. Penelitian ini menyelidiki penerapan Metode Membaca Langsung yang dibantu media digital sebagai strategi inovatif untuk meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata bahasa Inggris siswa. Integrasi sumber daya digital seperti buku elektronik interaktif, aplikasi kosakata, dan konten multimoda yang bertujuan untuk menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang lebih kontekstual, menarik, dan efektif yang memenuhi kebutuhan generasi digital. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuasi-eksperimental dengan kelompok kontrol pretes-postes. Partisipan adalah siswa SMA yang dipilih secara purposif berdasarkan skor kosakata awal yang rendah dan akses ke perangkat digital. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan tes kosakata, lembar observasi, dan kuesioner motivasi. Data kuantitatif dianalisis melalui uji-t, sementara temuan kualitatif diperoleh dari observasi dan respons siswa. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kelompok eksperimen yang diajar menggunakan Metode Membaca Langsung dengan media digital menunjukkan peningkatan penguasaan kosakata yang signifikan lebih besar dibandingkan kelompok kontrol yang diajar dengan metode konvensional. Skor rata-rata kelompok eksperimen meningkat sebesar +23,4 dibandingkan dengan +11,3 pada kelompok kontrol, dengan uji statistik yang mengonfirmasi perbedaan yang signifikan (p < 0,01). Lebih lanjut, siswa dalam kelompok eksperimen menunjukkan keterlibatan yang lebih tinggi (82%), motivasi yang lebih kuat, dan keinginan yang lebih besar untuk terus menggunakan metode tersebut. Kesimpulannya, menggabungkan Membaca Langsung dengan media digital tidak hanya meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata tetapi juga mendorong partisipasi aktif dan motivasi belajar. Pendekatan ini menawarkan model pembelajaran kosakata yang efektif, interaktif, dan terintegrasi dengan teknologi yang sesuai untuk pendidikan abad ke-21.

Kata Kunci: Membaca Langsung; Media Digital; Penguasaan Kosakata

1. Introduction

One of the essential components of learning English is vocabulary mastery, which serves as the foundation for other language skills such as writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Without a sufficient vocabulary, students will struggle to understand texts, convey ideas, and interact effectively in the target language. Therefore, it is crucial for English teachers to develop vocabulary learning strategies that are effective, contextual, and up-to-date.

The direct reading method, also known as the direct memorization method, emphasizes learners' direct engagement with the text, allowing them to derive meaning and expand their vocabulary through the context of the reading. Compared with traditional memorization methods, this method encourages learners to associate words with the context and situations within the sentence, which improves their vocabulary retention (Afendi & Fadillah, 2022; Yanti, 2022). In addition, recent research shows that direct involvement in reading improves reading comprehension and vocabulary (Asrul & Rahmawati, 2022; Cendana et al., 2022).

Conversely, advances in digital technology are opening doors to new prospects in education. Digital media, whether in the form of learning apps, interactive e-books, or game-based platforms, have been proven to increase learning motivation and provide a more engaging learning experience (Solihin et al., 2024; Zulkipli et al., 2024). This is because digital media provides rich, multimodal (text, images, audio, and video) content and allows for direct interactive feedback with students (Dahlström, 2022).

The current state of English learning in Indonesia demonstrates the importance of this research. Many students still employ passive memorization and word-for-word translation strategies; these methods have proven ineffective in improving sustained communication skills (Ben Khalifa et al., 2020; Cladis, 2020). Furthermore, despite the widespread use of digital media, there has been little comprehensive research on their integration with live reading techniques. Nevertheless, some studies suggest that digital reading can improve vocabulary retention and its use in real-life communication (Klimova & Zamborova, 2020; Nami & Asadnia, 2024).

The novelty of this research is that the direct reading method can be used in conjunction with digital media to improve vocabulary mastery. Common digital media, such as the Duolingo or Quizizz apps, to support vocabulary learning have been the subject of previous research (Andriani & Nuroh, 2023; Panmei & Waluyo, 2022). However, there is little research that specifically examines how digital media can be used in conjunction with direct reading strategies to aid in greater vocabulary acquisition. This has become an important research gap to address.

Furthermore, this research has significant practical contributions in developing contextual English language learning models that meet the needs of the digital generation. Today's learners are more familiar with technology, so digital media can help them become more engaged and motivated to read English texts. Therefore, it is hoped that this research will not only enhance theoretical research on vocabulary learning strategies but also provide teachers with practical suggestions for developing digital literacy-based learning models.

Overall, the application of direct reading techniques with the aid of digital media in English language education has the potential to shift paradigms. This will shift the mechanical and rigid approach to vocabulary learning to a more interactive, contextual, and natural approach. This research provides innovation relevant to 21st-century needs by combining classical learning theories with modern technology. It also addresses the challenges of globalization and the demands of digital literacy in language education.

2. Method

This study used a quasi-experimental approach with a pretest-posttest control group design (Suteja & Setiawan, 2022). This design was chosen because it allowed researchers to compare vocabulary mastery between a control group using conventional methods and an experimental group using a digitally assisted direct reading method. Consequently, the intervention could be measured more objectively. The study subjects were high school students learning English. A purposive sampling method was used to select representative classes based on several criteria. These criteria included low vocabulary mastery based on initial scores, adequate access to digital devices, such as gadgets or laptops, and school support for the use of digital media in learning. English vocabulary tests (pre- and post-tests), observation sheets, and learning motivation questionnaires were the main instruments of this study. Quantitative and qualitative data analysis were conducted in two stages. It is hoped that these techniques can provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of direct reading techniques with the assistance of digital media in improving English vocabulary mastery. It can also assess how the application of technology in learning affects student motivation and engagement.

3. Results and Discussion

The following Table 1, data comes from an English vocabulary test conducted on the experimental and control groups.

Table 1. Average Pretest and Posttest Scores

Group	Pretest (Mean)	Posttest (Mean)	Enhancement (Δ)
Experiment (Direct Reading Method + Digital Media)	55,2	78,6	+23,4
Control (Conventional Method)	54,8	66,1	+11,3

The table 1 above shows that both groups' vocabulary mastery improved. However, the experimental group experienced greater improvement than the control group.

A paired sample t-test showed a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental and control groups ($p < 0.001$). Conversely, an independent sample t-test showed a significant difference between the posttest scores of the experimental and control groups ($p < 0.01$). This indicates that the direct reading technique with the aid of digital media is more effective in improving vocabulary mastery than conventional techniques.

Observation results showed this improvement; students in the experimental group were more active in asking questions, speaking, and using new vocabulary while reading digital books. While only 56% of students in the control group showed high engagement, 82% of students in the experimental group showed high engagement. The results of the student questionnaire related to their responses to the learning are as Table 2.

Table 2. Student Responses to Learning

Motivational Indicator	Eksperimen (%)	Control (%)
Interest in reading texts	85	60
Difficulty understanding vocabulary	30	55
Enthusiasm for using learning media	88	50
Desire to continue the method	90	52

Data shows that students are more motivated to use digital media and find it easier to understand new vocabulary. The results showed that using direct reading techniques with the aid of digital media resulted in significant improvements in English vocabulary mastery. The experimental group achieved a greater average score increase than the control group (+11.3 points). This suggests that digital media can enhance direct reading beyond just being a technical aid.

The direct reading method prioritizes vocabulary comprehension within the context of the direct reading rather than word-for-word translation. This method provides students with meaningful input that can aid their language learning. Students can strengthen their vocabulary retention by reading original English texts.

Students' reading experiences were enriched with digital media such as interactive e-books, vocabulary apps, and hyperlinked texts. Multimodal media—images, sound, and text—strengthened vocabulary comprehension. Questionnaire data showed that 90 percent of students in the experimental group wanted to use this method again, demonstrating that digital media can increase students' motivation to learn. Study (Chuang et al., 2018) shows that digital-based learning increases students' interest and engagement in vocabulary learning.

In addition, observation results showed that student participation in the experimental group was higher (82%) compared to the control group (56%). Students were more active in asking questions and using new vocabulary when speaking. This supports the research (Al-Jarf, 2021) who found that using digital media when teaching reading significantly increased student participation. Students found the learning process more enjoyable and challenging when digital interactivity was present.

These findings are related to a global trend in language learning, namely the implementation of digital technology in the classroom (digitally assisted language learning). Digital media accelerates students' vocabulary acquisition, according to new research by (Ulfah et al., 2023; Zou et al., 2021). They also allow students to learn independently outside of class. Students in the experimental group in this study not only studied in class but also learned vocabulary through digital applications.

The latest finding in this study is the combination of direct reading techniques with digital media. Previous research often emphasized the effectiveness of traditional direct reading, such as printed text, but this study shows that using digital media improves vocabulary comprehension and encourages learning. In other words, English learning is now more contextual, interactive, and suited to the learning styles of the digital generation.

4. Conclusion

According to research and discussions, the direct reading method with the help of digital media has proven effective in improving English vocabulary mastery. When compared to the control group, the experimental group that received the treatment had a higher average vocabulary score. Furthermore, digital media improves direct reading skills. By combining interactive e-books, vocabulary apps, and digital texts, multimodal input (text, images, and audio) can be obtained, which enriches vocabulary understanding and makes it easier for students to associate word meanings with

the reading context. Students in the experimental group were more enthusiastic, more active in asking questions, and used more new vocabulary in discussions. This indicates that digital media improves cognitive aspects, such as vocabulary mastery, and affective aspects.

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