Evaluating Telegram Application to Empower the Students’ Vocabulary Mastery

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Abstract

The biggest trigger for the students’ in mastering vocabulary is learning media. The inexistence of good learning media will affect the students’ vocabulary mastery. One of the learning media that is much promoted and used during the pandemic of Covid-19 is the telegram application. Therefore, this research aims to measure the use of telegram applications as learning media to enhance the students’ vocabulary mastery. In this research, the researcher applied a quasi-experimental method. The population of this research was the seventh-grade students at UPTD SMP Negeri 22 Barru. The samples of the research were taken using the cluster random sampling technique, there are two classes as samples, experimental class, and control class, both classes consisted of 28 students. The data was collected using vocabulary tests (pre-test and post-test) and analyzed employing statistical calculations to test the hypothesis. The result of this research shows that the mean score for pre-tests was 45.35 and the post-test was 83.57. Besides the different scores for pre-test and post-test, the mean score of the students in post-test was 83.57 is higher than the Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (75) in UPTD SMP Negeri 22 Barru. The result of the t-test value in the post-test was 2.214 and the t-table value was 1.684. It means that $H_1$ was accepted and $H_0$ was rejected and the seventh-grade students at UPTD SMP Negeri 22 Barru who are taught by using the telegram application have better vocabulary mastery than the seventh-grade students who are taught without using the telegram application.

Keywords: learning media, vocabulary, telegram application, telegram features, Covid-19

1. Introduction

In Indonesia, English has become one of the local content in the teaching curriculum which has been provided from junior high school to the university level. In learning English, four skills must be mastered by students, they are; listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. To complete these four skills, four aspects are needed to be mastered in the process of learning English, they are; vocabulary, structure, grammar, and pronunciation.

In this case, the researcher focuses his attention on vocabulary. Egorova et al. (2020), Simbolon et al. (2020), Susilowati (2019) stated that vocabulary is the most basic aspect of English that has to be mastered before mastering English skills. By increasing vocabulary mastery, students can easily communicate in English in both oral and written form, students can also easily understand sentences in English in both reading and speech forms.

Since November 2019 the government of Indonesia has implemented an online learning process to minimize the transmission of Covid-19 (Fitriani et al., 2020; Leonard et al., 2020; Zboun & Farrah, 2021). There are many faces to face applications that can be used to implement online learning processes such as Zoom Cloud Meeting, Google Meet, and Webex. etc. However, several schools, including UPTD SMP Negeri 22 Barru prefer to use the WhatsApp application, because it uses quite easy and does not drain a lot of students’ internet quota.

On the other hand, based on the observation, the writer found that their mean score is 59. This score is categorized as poor classification based on the score criteria of Dirjen Pendidikan Dasar Dan Menengah (2017). Through questioning, 75% of students stated that the factor that triggers students’ vocabulary mastery relatively low is teaching and learning media. The learning media used by the teacher made them feel bored and less enthusiastic to carry out the English learning process.

Based on the explanation above, the writer proposes another application that is similar to the WhatsApp
application but has higher quality than it, which is the telegram application. Such as Barthelmäś et al. (2021), Ghabadi and Taki (2018), Hussien Mohamad Alakrash (2020), MANNA and GHOSH (2018), Tabrizi and Onvani (2018) stated that so many features are available in both communicative apps, but if we look back to the characteristics we have seen many drawbacks available in WhatsApp whereas as telegram application is very helpful to cover the weakness, especially in improving students vocabulary mastery, there are features in telegram application that can make the student interest to following the learning process, such as polling features and telegram bot, which is WhatsApp application does not have these feature.

2. Review of Literature

Vocabulary is a set of words that are used to understand language both input and output. By vocabulary, the listener and the reader could be easy to understand the meaning of the sentences conveyed by the speaker and the writer, by vocabulary the speaker and the writer can also easy to convey their opinion to the listener and the reader. Vocabulary is the total number of word owned by the speaker that is used to communicate their ideas and provide an explanation for the meaning that want to be expressed (Fengxiang, 2013; Lube & Nuraeni, 2020; Lubis, 2020; Maassen et al., 2022). Such as Abdillah (2018) stated that vocabulary is all words that we used both in spoken and written form. Then, Alkurtehe and Dzakiria (2018), Alzahrani et al. (2019), Sinaga et al. (2018) stated that vocabulary is an aspect that can help students to understand what is written in the text and convey meanings from it easily.

Vocabulary is an important aspect of English (Krepel et al., 2021; Nurdiansyah et al., 2019; Sayidin, 2021). In addition, Auly et al. (2021), Cain and Oakhill (2014), Faliyanti (2017), Senoliningi et al. (2020) also stated that vocabulary is an important aspect that students need when studying English. An extreme idea coming from O’g’li and Muhammadqosimovna (2021) stated that vocabulary is the most important part of the language because when someone does no longer has sufficient vocabulary then he could have difficulty in speaking or writing using his target language, other than that when someone does no longer has sufficient vocabulary then he could have difficulty in recognizing the sentence. Then, Jannah et al. (2020), Komalasari and Zuhriyah (2021) stated that vocabulary mastery is a supporting factor in the success of language learning, this is not simply an opinion that is usually believed, but it has been agreed upon by experts and researcher.

Moreover, teaching vocabulary is a process of introducing, understanding, and bringing new words closer to students to use in communicating. Such as Aziz and Yamat (2016), Hajiveva (2015), Mirta et al. (2021) stated that teaching vocabulary aims to enable students to understand, acquire, and use foreign vocabulary for communicative purposes. Chang et al. (2021), Deni and Fahriany (2020), Garwan and Priyanti (2021), Susanto (2017) stated that in teaching vocabulary teachers must remember that teaching vocabulary is a new and different lesson from the students’ mother tongue. Therefore, the teacher must be careful to choose the media, strategy, and techniques of teaching that will be used to teach vocabulary.

Telegram application is one of the learning media that can make students easy to learn because there are many features in telegram application that support the learning process to be successful, such as tools to share pictures, files, audio, video, and more with users and friends (Husslemerien Mohamad Alakrash, 2020; Shariffah Khairiah Tuan Kechil et al., 2019). Besides that Syamimie et al. (2019), Wahyuningtias et al. (2021) stated that the telegram application is a recommended application for teachers because it can be used as a device to inspire or motivate students in improving their English-speaking skills outside the formal classroom. Alcayde-Garcia et al. (2019) also stated that telegram application is one of the alternatives to make students interested to practice English was improved. Refers to some preceded experts’ ideas it can be assumed that the telegram application is one of the learning applications that has many features that can improve students speaking, writing, reading, and listening skill so that automatically students’ vocabulary also increases.

Some procedures can be implemented in the classroom related to the teaching reading by using the telegram application (Sari, 2017). The procedure involves Pre-Teaching where the teacher makes sure that all of the students have installed the telegram application. After that, the teacher explains to the students how to use all of the features in the telegram application. The second phase is Whilst Teaching in which the teacher starts to teach the material and allows students to gather the material. After that, the teacher asks about the student’s understanding of the material, and the students can also ask questions regarding the things that are not understood from the material. Finally, the last phase is Post Teaching which is become evaluation phase. In this phase, the teacher can give quizzes to students to find out whether students understand the material that has been taught. Then, before the lesson is closed, the teacher gives an assignment. Finally, the teacher closes the lesson by giving the motivation to learn to students, as usually done when teaching offline.
3. Method

This study’s methodology was quasi-experimental, with pre-test and post-test designs. This study employed two classes: an experimental class and a control class. The sample was taken using a random sampling technique. First, the researcher wrote down the name of the seventh class in papers to determine which class would be the sample. The sample for this research was VII-3 class, which consisted of 28 students as an experimental class, and VII-4 class, which consisted of 28 students as a control class, using this sampling technique. As a result, the total number of samples is 56 students.

Three steps make up the implementation of English learning media utilizing the Telegram application in the learning process: first, preparation; second, implementation; and third, closure. The term “preparation stage” refers to getting the instructors and students ready. In this stage, the preparation includes; Preparing chat rooms on Telegram. A chat group including both instructors and students must be created by the lecturers. This chat room promotes communication between all participants in the English language learning process, including students, and the lecturers; learning documents which involve the syllabus and lesson plans, which comprise the learning objectives, the materials to be used, and the learning instruments, are examples of these teaching resources; Creating students’ attendance records through the Telegram app’s poll feature. It is useful for controlling student attendance because each group member can only fill in once and cannot be replaced.

In the ongoing process, there are several technical learning opportunities to learn vocabulary which were applied, including 1) Learning videos were linked to third-party media such as YouTube, Vimeo, Google Video, and others. The lecturer sent a video link to the telegram group class, which they clicked on to watch through the lecturer’s video messages. Lecturers send the desired learning video directly to the student chat group, explained the objectives of learning, giving a stimulus about the learning process. Telegram was chosen because it has efficient storage management. The students could open the video without taking lots of phone storage they had. They could choose whether or not the video would be stored on their phone storage or not., which may give a different experience in using another platform. Full storage can be an external constraint that causes students could not to access the learning material. 2) The students learned vocabulary through selected videos that had been sent to the class group. The selected video was customized according to the students’ vocabulary level. Then, during each meeting, the selected video level for vocabulary learning would be advanced. This technique was chosen to upgrade students’ vocabulary levels. 3) Using Telegram’s video call feature. This method was used by lecturers who want to communicate directly with students. The assessment was conducted one in one to make sure that the students understand the material given at each meeting.

4. Results and Discussions

This section presents the analysis of the collected data from the vocabulary test which covers pre-tests and post-tests. The Pre-tests aims to measure the students’ prior knowledge of vocabulary mastery, pre-test was conducted both in the experimental and control class. It was conducted before giving treatment. The result of scoring the students’ work on the pre-test is presented in the following table.

Table 1. The rating percentage of student’s vocabulary mastery in the pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Experimental Class</th>
<th>Control Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F (%)</td>
<td>F (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>86–100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>71–85</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>56–70</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>&lt; 55</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number of samples</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Related to the student’s prior knowledge of vocabulary mastery, the result of the students’ pre-test showed that during online classes most of the students in experimental and control classes were classified as very poor and categorized as a low achievement. It means that the seventh-grade students at UPTD SMP Negeri 22 Barru need attractive learning media to improve their vocabulary mastery. Therefore, the researcher applied telegram application in the treatment of experimental class as a medium to improve the seventh-grade students’ vocabulary mastery at UPTD SMP Negeri 22 Barru. Whereas in the control class the researcher applied the WhatsApp application.

After giving treatment on using telegram as learning media to enhance students’ vocabulary mastery, again, the
researcher gave a vocabulary mastery test to the students in form of a Post-test. The Post-test was conducted to measure the improvement of students’ vocabulary mastery after giving treatment. In a similar way to the pre-test, the result of the students’ post-test is presented in the following Table 2.

Table 2. The rating percentage of students’ vocabulary mastery in post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Experimental Class</th>
<th>Control Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F ( % )</td>
<td>F ( % )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>86–100</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>71–85</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>56–70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>&lt;55</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.85%</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28.57%</td>
<td>21.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.71%</td>
<td>21.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14.28%</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Mean score and standard deviation of the students’ pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>45.35</td>
<td>20.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>42.85</td>
<td>12.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows that the mean score of the students’ pre-test in the experimental class (45.35) was greater than the mean of the students’ pre-test in the control class (42.85) and also was lower than the Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (75) in UPTD SMP Negeri 22 Barru. To find out whether the mean difference of both classes was statistically significant or not at a level of significance of 5% (0.05), degree of freedom (n1 + n2 – 2) = 54, the result of the calculation is shown in the following table.

Table 4. The t-test of the students’ pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>t-test value</th>
<th>t-table value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>0.586</td>
<td>1.673</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Mean score and standard deviation of the student’s post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>81.07</td>
<td>16.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>73.21</td>
<td>17.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To find out whether the mean difference of both classes was statistically significant or not at a level of significance of 5% (0.05), degree of freedom \((n_1 + n_2 - 2) = 54\), the result of the calculation as shown in the following table.

Table 6. The t-test of the students’ post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>t-test value</th>
<th>t-table value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>1.875</td>
<td>1.673</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows that the t-test value (1.875) is higher than the t-table value (1.673). It means that there was a significant difference between students who are taught vocabulary using the telegram application and students who are taught using the WhatsApp application.

Refers to the presented data, the researcher needs to elaborate on the process of this research. Three steps have been carried out by researchers, there are input, process, and output steps. At the input step, the researcher gave a pre-test to the students and the result is following the data obtained from the result of the students’ pre-test that there was no significant difference between the two mean scores before treatment.

The next step is processing (giving treatment), for the experimental class the researcher teaches vocabulary using the telegram application while for the control class the researcher teaches vocabulary using the WhatsApp application. Both classes are taught things at home material so that while doing online learning students can still increase their vocabulary by observing and understanding the vocabulary of nouns in each student’s home. This research is in line with Seven et al. (2020), Shorkaee and Talebi (2018) which sets up the guidelines for teaching vocabulary, it is important to select words that are often implemented in everyday life and of course needed by students.

This study supports (Tabrizi & Onvani’s, 2018) statement that vocabulary mastery is a supporting factor for the success of language learning, so students need to continue to improve their vocabulary mastery. In improving students’ vocabulary mastery, several online learning applications can be utilized. However, in this study, the researcher only focuses on the use of telegram application as a recommended learning media, and to measure whether or not this telegram application can improve the seventh-grade students’ vocabulary mastery at UPTD SMP Negeri 22 Barru. A comparison is needed with the learning application used by the teacher at that school, that is the WhatsApp application. This research is in line with (Hussien Mohamad Alakrash’s, 2020) statement that the WhatsApp application is very popular both as a communication media and as a learning media. However, in terms of its functionality in the vocabulary learning process, telegram offers more advantages than the WhatsApp application does not have, such as higher capacity, various sending features and quiz features, and various learning bots.

Based on the theory, the researcher can conclude that in terms of facilitating the learning process, the telegram application is still superior rather than the WhatsApp application. The same thing was also stated by Houda (2022), Khoshshima et al. (2018), Syarifudin and Suharjito (2020) that there are many advantages of the telegram application in the learning process, including telegram has higher capacity than WhatsApp, telegram can check student’s attendance automatically, features and bot of telegram can help to learn process running well, especially polling feature, it can make students easy to remember and understand the material easily.

Talking about the features and bots in the telegram application. This study agrees with Shariffah Khairiah Tuan Kechil et al. (2019) who stated that there are many features and bots in the telegram that can support the success of the learning process. The results of observations from this study also show that there are several positive impacts shown by students while learning vocabulary by utilizing various features and bots in telegram application, while the positive impacts shown include; students can pronounce the vocabulary being taught with good pronunciation, students play an active role in the learning process, students are more independent to find out unknown vocabulary, and students are faster in memorizing vocabulary.

However, to strengthen the argument above, at the output step, the researcher gave a post-test for the experimental class and the control class. Then, a comparison was made between the two classes, and the results showed that the mean score of students’ post-tests in the experimental class (81.07) was higher than the mean score of students’ post-tests in the control class (73.21). It means that there was a significant difference between the two mean scores after treatment. So, it was proved that the use of the Telegram application can improve the seventh-grade students’ vocabulary mastery at UPTD SMP Negeri 22 Barru.
5. Conclusions

Supporting this research, learning vocabularies using telegram provides a more meaningful experience for students during online learning. The advantages of the features offered by Telegram make it easier for students to access learning materials without obstacles. The constraints referred to the use of the phone’s storage capacity which is sometimes not sufficient to accommodate the heavy load of material distributed by the lecturers. The polling feature that is used as an absence can make it easier for lecturers to control students in doing learning in group chats. The availability of various study groups that connect many practitioners of a particular field can also help students learn independently and discuss the obstacles they encounter during their studies. The use of the one in one video call feature can be used to evaluate student learning outcomes directly in real time.

As the result, the implementation of the Telegram application as learning online media for teaching vocabulary resulted in some positive impacts shown by students, such as students can pronounce the vocabulary being taught with good pronunciation, students play an active role in the learning process, students are more independent to find out unknown vocabulary, and students are faster in memorizing vocabulary. Based on this finding, it was proved that the use of the Telegram application can improve the seventh-grade students’ vocabulary mastery at UPTD SMP Negeri 22 Barru.

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