STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES OF UTILIZING HELLO ENGLISH APPLICATION FOR ENGLISH VOCABULARY LEARNING: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays the use of technology media is inevitable in EFL classrooms. However, the study pertaining to the use of the Hello application that focuses on learning vocabulary at junior high school level is still relatively limited. Therefore, this study aims to explore junior high school students' perspectives on using the Hello English application for English vocabulary learning. This research used a qualitative case study. The data were collected through interviews, observation, and document reviews from the 9th-grade students at a state junior high school in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia. The data were then analyzed using thematic analysis. The result revealed two main themes: the benefits and concerns associated with using the Hello English application for vocabulary learning. The students perceived benefits of the application including improving their understanding, pronunciation, and expansion of English vocabulary, along with enjoyable learning experiences. However, students encountered challenges such as technical difficulties and struggles with advanced games. In addition, the students overcame these issues with the assistance of others. The study might have implications on the understanding of the enactment in using the technological application for EFL vocabulary learning.

Keywords: EFL Learning, Hello English Application, Media, Vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is one element for mastering English because to master a language, of course, students should learn thousands of words. Students must have a lot of vocabulary to master English. Vocabulary knowledge is often known as vocabulary depth which brings speakers to understand the extent of a word (Maskor & Baharudin, 2016). In short, vocabulary knowledge is knowledge of vocabulary components, lexical organization, receptive and productive mastery, and fluency. It is not just knowing a word, but also having to

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understand aspects of the process and word construction (Schmitt, 2014).

Alqahtani (2015) stated, "In English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL), vocabulary learning items play an important role in all language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing". This statement means that vocabulary is a very important and necessary aspect of learning English skills. Students' English vocabulary mastery still needs to be improved, especially in reading skills. For example, when the teacher gives reading texts to students, students tend to have difficulty understanding the meaning of the text. The lack of students' vocabulary mastery can hinder them to learn new vocabulary. This is due to the lack of interest and motivation of students to learn English, and the lack of creativity of teachers in creating fun learning, causing students to feel bored (Ansarnur, 2021).

Students can master English easily if they are motivated and interested in learning English. Olowo (2020) mentioned that with so many media that educators can use in learning activities, they facilitate students to be more interested in learning materials. Teachers must be able to create creative and fun learning strategies to increase students' interest and motivation in learning English. This is in line with the study of Nurhayati and Samiati (2018) that as stipulated in the 2013 curriculum, teachers are required to find fun media and active methods in solving students' intelligence problems.

It is necessary to apply fun media that can improve students' vocabulary achievement. Siregar et al., (2020) stated that the games in the Hello English application have various features that can improve the student's comprehension of

English in every meeting and gave the effect of increasing the students' competency in learning English. The study was conducted using classroom action research with the subject of non-English Department students at a university level. Not only that but there has also been a study dealing with the Hello English application. Anugrah (2021) used the Hello English application to make students more fluent in speaking skills, and the results stated that the Hello English application was effective in enhancing students' speaking skills. This study was administered quantitatively using experimental research. In addition, in the previous study by Satriani et al., (2019), it is stated that the Hello English application had a good impact on students' vocabulary achievement because, in their research, students feel enthusiastic about the vocabulary learning process. This study was qualitative research at a university level.

Despite the above studies about the use of the Hello English application in EFL learning, little work has focused on students' perspectives on using the Hello English application in EFL vocabulary learning, particularly from the perspective of junior high school level students. Therefore, this study aims to explore junior high school students' perspectives on using the Hello English application for learning English vocabulary.

The Enactment of Hello English Application in English Classroom

The Hello English application is an online English learning application that can allow learners to learn English and have interactive lessons with topics of English conversation, vocabulary, and grammar developed by Culture Alley (Anugrah, 2021). Hidayati and Diana (2019) also

stated that the Hello English application offers comprehensive English skills with an interesting game model. The researchers investigated the students' experiences in using Hello English application, the students' responses were positive. There are various features provided by the Hello English application, including lesson explanations and descriptions, lesson quizzes, and one vs one game related to English lessons, and users can also earn coins from lessons, quizzes, and games. These coins serve to unlock other lessons and as achievements for the user.

The Hello English application can make it easier for students or users to learn a new language because this application provides the concept of learning and playing which will make students or users feel happy and interested in learning English. The Hello English application facilitates learners with 475 lessons containing 19 phases. All the material contained in the Hello English application has included a complete and clear explanation so that it can make it easier for students to understand it (Ansarnur, 2021). In addition, this application does not only provide a dictionary for students to learn new vocabulary but also has audio that can help students to learn how to pronounce vocabulary correctly. Moreover, the Hello English application provides various word games and exercises including news, conversations, articles, and games(Patni, 2017). Therefore, the Hello English application will help students learn vocabulary. Using online applications in learning will be able to further support the spirit of learning from students (Imanudin & Fauziah, 2022).

The important thing for a teacher before starting teaching is to make some preparations before the teaching and learning process is carried out. Some points that need to be prepared by the teacher include subject matter, media (Hello English application), and lesson plans (Savage, 2015). To make the classroom learning process more innovative and interesting, teachers can use the Hello English application as a learning medium. This application provides various useful features to improve students' English language skills.

The Hello English application provides a variety of topics, in which there is a brief explanation of each topic that can help students understand sentences in detail. When students do the exercises in the application, a short explanation will appear. If students have difficulty understanding the explanation, the teacher will help students by explaining the material using simple words that are easily understood by students (Kurniawati et al., 2020). Anugrah (2021) administered experimental research and found that Hello English application had significant effect on students' speaking skills. This application is easy to use and performs well. Moreover, this application facilitated students to practice speaking English easier and provided students with useful English vocabulary.

Teaching and Learning English Vocabulary

Vocabulary becomes part of a language in the form of a set of words, therefore, vocabulary is a very important part of a language. This is in line with Chaer's (2010) statement that vocabulary is all the words in a language that is the wealth of the language itself. In general, vocabulary is defined as knowledge of words and their meanings. Some people also define vocabulary as a list of words arranged alphabetically and by definition. Alizadeh (2016) stated that a word, in most linguistic analysis, is described as a set of properties,

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or features, each word is a combination of its meaning, register, association, collocation, grammatical behavior, written form (spelling), spoken form (pronunciation) and frequency.

Vocabulary is all the words that are known and used by certain people. So in other words, vocabulary is one of the keys that students must understand if they want to have good knowledge of the four English skills (Sinaga & Pasaribu, 2020). According to Wahyudin and Rido (2020), when learning vocabulary, learners must be able to adjust their learning style. In addition, students must also have strategies (Lestari & Wahyudin, 2020), and use media that can make it easier for students to develop their vocabulary mastery (Sari & Wahyudin, 2019; Sasalia & Sari, 2020).

In learning English, if students can master a lot of vocabulary, then they will be able to understand English well and fluently because knowing the meaning of words is the key to understanding the language. Therefore, mastery of vocabulary in English is very important in learning English (Rambe, 2019). Fajriyah (2013) stated that vocabulary is one component of English that plays an important role in understanding reading and expressing all ideas both in written and spoken form. Learning English will not succeed without vocabulary, because vocabulary is the most important aspect to use structure and function to make someone more comprehensive (Lubis, 2015).

Syafrizal and Haerudin (2018) mentioned that there were several techniques used by teachers in teaching vocabulary, such as translation, memorization, games, and singing. Also, teachers often asked students to come forward to answer questions on the blackboard. In addition, teachers created fun and useful learning interactions. Teachers provided students with interactions with native speakers, or skilled English speakers from different cultures on interesting topics. Therefore, the application increased student motivation and made students more enthusiastic to take part in learning activities (Ashraf et al., 2014).

METHOD
The research design used in this research was a qualitative case study. Ary (2010) stated that qualitative research is a general term used for various research approaches that focus on phenomena in their natural setting so that the research conducted is research without a predetermined hypothesis. Moleong (2017) stated that qualitative research is research that aims to understand the phenomena being experienced by the subject such as behavior, perception, motivation, action, etc. The researchers used a qualitative case study method because the method tends to focus on exploring why and how questions, and focuses on studying in depth to find reality.

The data in this research were transcripts of interviews, notes of observations, and documents of students' portfolios of using the Hello English application in learning English vocabulary. The data were taken from the 9th-grade students at a state junior high school in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia. The data were collected using interviews as transcript data, supported by observation and document review.

In this study, the researchers followed Braun and Clarke (2006) in using thematic analysis to analyze the data including being familiar with the data, generating initial codes, searching for

themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report/manuscript. The researchers used data source triangulation consisting of interviews as the main data and supported by observations, and documents' reviews in the form of students' portfolio.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Findings
The result revealed two main themes: the benefits and concerns associated with using the Hello English application for vocabulary learning, followed by several sub-themes as follows.

Students' Benefits of the Use of Hello English Application in Learning English Vocabulary
Some students revealed that the use of the Hello English application in vocabulary learning provides several benefits including improving students' understanding in using the vocabulary, correcting students' English pronunciation of the vocabulary, increasing students' new English vocabulary, and providing students with fun English vocabulary learning experiences

Improving Students' Understanding in Using the Vocabulary
The results of interviews regarding the use of the Hello English application in understanding the use of vocabulary were expressed by several students, including: *"The benefits that I get after using this application are that I can use English vocabulary properly and correctly"* (S. 1). He said that this application helped him in improving his understanding of using English vocabulary.

One student also said, *"At first I did not understand how to use this vocabulary at the right moment, but then I got to know*

and understand a lot". She also added, *"The application can explain good vocabulary and what is right, like past tense and others"* (S. 4). Similar benefits were also obtained by student 4, she stated that previously she did not understand the when and how vocabulary was used, but after using the Hello English application, she knew the proper use and placement of vocabulary in English. Student 4 also emphasized that the Hello English app can explain how to use vocabulary correctly, such as the use of vocabulary in the past tense form.

Another student also said, *"Yes Miss. New vocabulary and the explanation is what I did not know at first so I knew it Miss"* (S. 3). He revealed that not only new vocabulary was learned, but he also found it easier to understand the explanation of vocabulary that he did not know before.

Based on the statements mentioned above, it can be concluded that the Hello English application can improve students' understanding of using vocabulary. In addition, the data were also supported by the study of students' documents. Through the students' portfolios, it was shown that students understood the vocabulary.

Correcting Students' English Pronunciation of the Vocabulary
Some students also revealed that their vocabulary pronunciation became better after using the Hello English app. This was conveyed by several students, such as: *"It is fun because there are games too, then if it's like speaking or we answer wrongly there might be some corrections"* (S. 4). She stated that the Hello English application has games containing speaking questions, she revealed that if there are pronunciation errors when answering speaking questions, there are corrections for the wrong vocabulary pronunciation.

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Another student also mentioned that *"By compiling vocabulary, we can learn English more fluently, and there is also a voice note, so we can imitate the correct way of reading English"* (S.1). He mentioned that this is one of the benefits obtained after using the Hello English application in vocabulary learning. *"I can use English vocabulary properly and correctly, and also how to pronounce English properly and correctly too"* (S.1). He said that the voice note feature in the Hello English application helped him in pronouncing the right vocabulary, he could understand the correct pronunciation by imitating the voice notes contained in the game.

Moreover, another student also said, *"So it is more fun to learn vocabulary. There is also a speaking game, which helps me, so I know what the correct pronunciation of words is"* (S. 2). He revealed that in the Hello English application, there is a speaking game feature that can help him know the correct pronunciation of a word. Based on the results of students' statements, it can be concluded that the Hello English application can help students in improving the pronunciation of English vocabulary.

Increasing Students' New English Vocabulary

Another benefit that students got after using the Hello English application is adding new vocabulary. This was mentioned by several students in previously conducted interviews, including: *"The game is quite fun and I can also learn new words while learning"* (S. 2). The same idea was also conveyed by another student, *"Yes, there are games in the application, I can learn vocabulary from the game"* (S. 5).

The same thing was expressed by student 5 who said that she got a lot of new vocabulary from the games she played. In addition, it was also conveyed by another student, *"The benefits, which definitely can get new vocabulary, and then understand a lot about correct English sentences"* (S. 6). He revealed the benefits he got when using the Hello English application was that he got new vocabulary. He also revealed that can understand many correct English sentences. Therefore, it can be concluded from the students' statements that the Hello English app can help them increase their English vocabulary.

Providing Students with Fun English Vocabulary Learning Experiences

Some students said that the Hello English application is a fun application for learning vocabulary, this was expressed by students as follows: *"Yes, the lessons are more fun, miss, there are many games, I like to learn while playing, so I do not get bored during the lesson, miss"* (S. 3). She said that the Hello English application makes lessons more exciting because according to her, the presence of games makes learning not boring.

One student also stated, *"It is fun, especially when given like questions, it is more challenging"* (S. 4). She stated that there were questions formed in a game model so that it was more exciting and challenging. Another student also mentioned, *"I think the learning is good and understandable, and also the application is really fun for learning vocabulary"* (S. 5). In addition, student 5 revealed that the Hello English app makes lessons fun and easy to understand for learning vocabulary.

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Students' Concerns in Using Hello English Application in Learning English Vocabulary

Not only the benefits obtained by students but also some students experienced difficulties when using the Hello English application, including students' technical problems in initiating the application, students' difficulties in using advanced games in the application, and students' assistances from others to solve the problem in using the application.

Students' Technical Problems in Initiating the Application

The first difficulty experienced by students was expressed in the interview as follows, *"Yes, miss, I have difficulties when I get into the application, register, like I have difficulties, I'm confused miss"* (S. 3). She found that her difficulty when using the Hello English application was during application registration, she felt confused when she first entered the application

Another student also mentioned, *"But there are still difficulties where when I first opened the application, there were choices, there was SSC and others, which I think young children don't know what that is like"* (S. 2). He revealed that he was confused when given several options to register for the application. This is also supported by student responses such as: *"Actually it is easy, it is just when I first downloaded, it seemed like there were many choices, and I did not understand, and I tapped it and suddenly I was able to enter"* (S. 1). He said that he felt difficult when they first opened the application where there were many choices that had to be filled in before logging into the application.

Therefore, it can be concluded that students also have difficulties when registering for the Hello English application. In addition, based on the observation, it was found that students had difficulty in starting the application.

Students' Difficulties in Using Advanced Games in the Application

Related to games, some students have difficulties that become one of the challenges, the student explained, *"Yes, in the game, when answering some questions there are difficult questions"* (S. 5). She revealed that her difficulty was in the game included in the application, she said that there were some questions that she found difficult so she had trouble answering the questions.

Another student also expressed, *"It was fun but a bit difficult. The difficult ones were the games, but the material was easy to understand. If the level is above five, it starts to be difficult"* (S. 6). He also said, *"Maybe there were games that were difficult and easy, like how difficult it was to arrange words, it was difficult to guess the game"* (S. 6). The same thing was expressed by student 6 that if the game level is getting higher, then the difficulty will increase, so he found it difficult to answer some questions.

Students' Assistances from Others to Solve the Problem in Using the Application

With the difficulties experienced by students when using the Hello English application in vocabulary learning, students also revealed how they overcame these difficulties, as conveyed by students, *"If it was difficult at that time, I immediately asked my friend, how to register"* (S. 3). She said she usually asked her friends.

This is similar to the answers of other students, *"At home, I usually ask my*

brother, and at school, I ask you directly, miss" (S. 5). To overcome the difficulties experienced when using the Hello English application, she usually asked family members if at home or to the teacher if she was at school. Thus, it can be concluded that if there are difficulties faced by students, students will ask for help from friends, teachers, or family members.

Discussion

This study was conducted to find out students' perspectives on the use of the Hello English application in vocabulary learning. The results of the study show that the Hello English application provides various benefits for them. However, some challenges were also experienced by the students. Furthermore, from the results of interviews with students, it was found that the Hello English application can improve their understanding of using vocabulary. This finding is relevant to Anugrah (2021) who said that the Hello English application is effectively applied in the teaching and learning process because this application can make it easier for teachers to present material and also make it easier for students to understanding the vocabulary taught.

Then, students also revealed that using the Hello English application in vocabulary learning can improve students' pronunciation of English vocabulary, this is in line with the research conducted by Utari et al., (2020), who revealed that the Hello English application is very suitable for use in pronunciation subjects because students will be more active and focused on learning pronunciation with learning methods while playing. In addition, there is another research conducted by Anugrah (2021) states that the Hello English application was effective in enhancing students' speaking skills because the application can make students more fluent in speaking skills.

Another benefit expressed by students is that they got a lot of new vocabulary after using the Hello English application. This study supported the research of Fajriani (2020) concluding that there was an increase in students' English vocabulary after they were taught using the Hello English application. Also, the finding is also in line with the study of Nutriyanto (2020) stating that using the Hello English application students were able to understand and developed new vocabulary. Moreover, the researchers also found students' perspectives which revealed that the Hello English application provided a fun experience for students in learning English vocabulary. Nutriyanto (2020) also found that students became more motivated to learn English vocabulary by using the Hello English application because the Hello English application provided fun vocabulary learning. Furthermore, Satriani et al. (2019) revealed that the Hello English application had a good impact on students' vocabulary achievement because students felt enthusiastic in the vocabulary learning process.

There were several difficulties experienced by students when using the Hello English application. One of them was a technical problem in starting the application. This finding supports the research by Sawitri et al., (2019) mentioning there were still unprepared human resources to utilize ICT in the learning process. Not only that, but the researchers also found that students had difficulties in using advanced games. Regarding students' difficulties in using advanced games, this finding supports the research by Nutriyanto (2020) stating that students sometimes had difficulty

answering some difficult questions when playing games.

In this study, it was found that students' way to overcome difficulties in using advanced games was that students asked other people. It is important to note that there should be clear assistances and instruction from the teachers. Therefore, students can understand the application very well. Related to this finding, Maylan et al., (2018) suggested that teachers should give a comprehensive directions and tutorials to work on the material contained in the Hello English application.

CONCLUSION

This study has identified students' perspectives on the use of the Hello English application in vocabulary learning. This study revealed two themes including students' benefits toward the use of the Hello English Application in learning English Vocabulary and students' concerns about using the Hello English application in learning English vocabulary. Some of the benefits that students got after using the Hello English application included improving students understanding of using English vocabulary, correcting students' pronunciation of English vocabulary, increasing students' English vocabulary, and providing students with fun English learning. However, students experienced several challenges, including technical issues starting the application and difficulty in utilizing the application's advanced games. In addition, students were able to solve by the other assistances. The implication of the study might be beneficial for the implementation of technology as a teaching media such as Hello English in learning English especially students' vocabulary in terms of its benefits and concerns. In teaching and learning English language, utilizing the technology as well as designing appropriate the classroom instruction may help students to learn the target of English language. The teachers and students should consider the use of certain technology which provides more advantages and can be used appropriately.

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