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THE EFFECT OF WEBTOON ON STUDENTS' ENGLISH VOCABULARY AT SMK NEGERI 1 PALANGKA RAYA

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of Webtoon for students' English vocabulary. Quantitative research with quasi-experimental design is the method that was used for this study. The population of this study is students of SMK Negeri 1 Palangka Raya. The sample was selected by using total sampling, consisting of 14 ten grade students of Teknik Konstruksi Perumahan (TKP) class. In collecting the data, the researchers used pre-test and post-test. Meanwhile, the researchers used Paired Sample t-test to analyze the data statistically. According to the result of the study, Webtoon showed a significant effect on students' vocabulary. A combination of engaging narrative and unique illustration helped the process of learning new vocabulary to be more enjoyable.

Keywords: *Webtoon, vocabulary, effect*

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Introduction

One of the most significant languages in the world is English. It is widely utilized in both education and communication. Because English plays such important roles in today's world, students must become proficient in all areas of it, particularly vocabulary. Student's vocabulary helps them communicate and express ideas effectively. According to Susanto (2017), students that have a little vocabulary will struggle in all areas of language proficiency. The



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lack of vocabulary will make students experiencing difficulty to understand texts, speak well, and improve other language abilities including writing, speaking, listening, and reading.

Many students struggle to master vocabulary in English. The main issue with learning vocabulary in the present day is that traditional approaches typically do not engage students well enough, resulting in the lack of vocabulary. For younger generations used to interactive digital content, methods such as rote memorization or reading plain text without visuals are typically less engaging. Students may thus find it difficult to remember and employ language in informal conversations. Language development may be hampered by this lack of involvement, hence it is critical to investigate more dynamic and engaging teaching methods.

The researchers have conducted a pre-observation at SMK Negeri 1 Palangka Raya during PLP 2 (Pengenalan Lapangan Persekolahan) 2. It is revealed that students are lacking in vocabulary, which affects their 4 English skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking.) To solve this problem, the researchers suggest a solution by using Webtoon comics for students to learn vocabulary. Mayer & Moreno (2005) stated that Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning helps learners process information more effectively when presented with both visual and textual elements. Entertaining illustrations and engaging narratives will be able to help students understand and gain new vocabulary.

A laptop or smartphone can readily access Webtoon, a digital comic (Berlian et al., 2021). One possible tactic is to use Webtoon as a vocabulary study tool because it better suits students' preferences for digital learning. Using Webtoon as a vocabulary-learning tool can be a very successful tactic since it combines text with eye-catching images to increase student interest. Webtoons help people learn and remember new words by presenting them in scenarios that are relevant to stories. Additionally, people can study on their own by browsing Webtoons related to their interest, which inevitably expands their vocabulary. Teachers can also leverage Webtoons for various educational activities, such as vocabulary discussions, contextual analysis, and creative storytelling exercises. This approach transforms vocabulary learning into a more engaging, interactive, and relevant experience for students in today's digital age.

Rather than relying just on textbooks, visual like pictures can capture students' interest and motivate them to expand their vocabulary. Additionally, the researchers proposed adopting Webtoon as a medium to teach vocabulary in order to address the students' lack of vocabulary. Students will be able to enjoy the teaching and learning process and quickly

learn the words by using Webtoon (Safitri et al., 2023). Webtoon can help in vocabulary memorization by combining narrative and illustrations.

In this study, the researchers attempt to answer the following research question: "How does the use of Webtoon effect students vocabulary?" In order to answer the research question, the researchers will conduct a study entitled "The Effect of Webtoon on Students' English Vocabulary at Ten Grade Students of SMK Negeri 1 Palangka Raya."

Therefore, it is essential to discuss relevant theory and study regarding the importance of vocabulary and Webtoon to learn new vocabulary.

1. The Importance of Vocabulary

When learning a new language, vocabulary is a crucial starting point. For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, vocabulary is frequently regarded as an essential component since a small vocabulary will impede clear communication (Alqahtani, 2015). Learners must first master vocabulary before moving on to other areas of the target language, such as grammar, reading, writing, speaking, and listening. According to Rasulova (2023), vocabulary has an impact on all aspects of communication, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In line with this, Susanto (2017) stated that communication would be hampered by a small vocabulary when learning a second language. It will have an impact on understanding and processing information in addition to communication.

Second language learners, including English Foreign Language (EFL) learners, often encounter difficulty to have sufficient vocabulary. Similar to language, vocabulary varies from basic to advanced. The difficulty of remembering and comprehending the meaning of a language increases with its degree. Vocabulary will be lost from memory, particularly if it is not frequently used in everyday life or learning materials. Lacking vocabulary will make it difficult to express ideas, understand written or spoken texts, or engage in productive conversations. Aisyah (2017) claimed having a large vocabulary will greatly help students to learn English and its four main components, which include speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Thus, it is essential to have rich vocabulary knowledge.

Learners acquire vocabulary when they absorb it from regularly consumed content. However, language acquisition is more difficult when learning pressure is present. Because they dislike the learning process, students will quickly forget the vocabulary rather than memorize it. When learners watch movies, listen to music, read comics, or interact with other forms of entertainment, they usually have an easier time remembering new vocabulary. According to Simamore and Oktaviani (2020), students can now

use a range of media, including music, videos, movies, and more, to practice their abilities. By helping students relate words to visual or auditory information, these media provide them with rich, contextualized input that improves their comprehension.

2. Webtoon

Webtoon, a type of digital comic, first became well-known in South Korea. Unlike traditional comics that are published in books, webtoons are made to be read online. Because the panels use a vertical framework, they are arranged from top to bottom. This style is perfect for smartphones and tablets since readers can use their fingers to scroll down to read the next part of the story.

Webtoon, WebComics and Tapas are several applications that provide online comic. These application usually offer a large selection of free online comic to read. Because new episodes are created every week, viewers may regularly follow their favorite comic, much like they would with a television program.

Some of the things that contribute to Webtoon's immense success include its vivid visuals, moving characters, and engrossing stories. In addition to superheroes and action, webtoons cover a wide range of topics, such as romance, humor, fantasy, horror, mystery, school life, and more. This variety makes Webtoons appealing to many students and teenagers since it lets them choose the kind of story they want. According to (Novanti & Suprayogi 2021), Webtoon's visual and narrative help EFL learners who use the application to expand their vocabulary.

Additionally, webtoons depict common place feelings and lives in a way that young readers may relate to. The language is often informal and modern, much like people's speech in everyday life. This enhances the reading experience and facilitates comprehension. The Webtoon's illustrations are very imaginative and help students understand the dialogue or unfamiliar terms (Novanti & Suprayogi, 2021). Because of its attractive images, Webtoon can be used as an alternative medium to enhance students' interest in reading (Fauziah and Nasrullah, 2023).

Furthermore, Webtoon is a modern comic format created for online distribution. It is easy to use, entertaining to read, and jam-packed with creative stories and beautiful illustrations. Because of this, Webtoon has become one of the most well-liked digital entertainment choices for young people nowadays. Webtoon is accessible through smartphones, appealing to Generation Z, and offers language learners a fun educational experience.

3. Using Webtoon to Learn Vocabulary

Webtoon presents text in a visually appealing way, it might be a useful tool for learning vocabulary in English. According to research, contextual vocabulary learning improves comprehension because it allows students to relate words to situations in real life (Nation, 2001). Webtoon dialogues mirror real-world language usage, giving students an understanding of how words work in various contexts.

Effective language learning, according to Krashen (1982), occurs when students interact with the language in a relaxed and pleasurable setting. Webtoon is a fun reading platform that can encourage students to read more frequently, which naturally helps them increase their vocabulary. By giving context for new terms, the visual components also help with comprehension and lessen the need for frequent dictionary consulting.

Additionally, Lin (2018) discovered that by presenting information in a more captivating manner than conventional techniques, digital media, including online comics, improve vocabulary retention. According to a study by Amelia et al. (2024), Webtoon was a useful tool for helping students become more proficient in vocabulary. A comparable study by Al Farissi et al. (2024) revealed that Webtoon had a good impact on students' vocabulary. Based on a different study by Wulandary in 2019, Webtoon users claimed that the platform is a useful tool for vocabulary learning. This demonstrates that Webtoon is a useful teaching resource for English language learners in addition to being a source of amusement.

Research Method

This section discussed the method used to investigate the effect of Webtoon on students' English vocabulary. It includes the design, population and sample, instrument, data collection and data analysis.

Design

The research design was carried out using quasi-experimental research with a quantitative approach. Quantitative approach provides a reliable finding by minimizing the impact of subjective interpretation. Quantifiable data must be collected, analyzed and evaluated in order to use quantitative approaches to support the hypothesis developed in a specific study (Ghanad, 2023). Then, according to Reichard and Mark (2000) in quasi-experimental research, the treatment condition is determined non-randomly.

Population and Sample

The population of this study is students of SMK Negeri 1 Palangka Raya. The sample was selected by using total sampling, consisting of 14 ten grades students of Teknik Konstruksi Perumahan (TKP) class. In line with this, due to limited time and resources, there is only one class that receives the treatment.

Instrument

The instrument used for data collection is a vocabulary test in the form of multiple-choice questions. The test was designed to measure students English vocabulary before and after the treatment. It consists of two parts, which is pre-test and post-test. Each test contains the same number of questions with similar level.

Data Collection

The data were collected by using pre-test and post-test to measure students' vocabulary improvement before and after using webtoon. The question format is in the form of multiple choice questions. Before the treatment, students were given multiple choice questions to test their initial vocabulary knowledge. After that students were instructed to read a webtoon comic entitled "Omniscient Reader". This webtoon was chosen by its rich vocabulary and engaging narrative. Then, students took a post-test in the same format as pre-test, which is in multiple choice questions. It was given to measure any improvement in students vocabulary after reading Webtoon.

Data Analysis

Students score were put into a table before being abalyzed quantatively. The score of pre-test and post-test were analyzed by using statistical analysis, specifically Paired Sample t-test to determine if there is a significant effect in students vocabulary after and before the treatment of using Webtoon. The significance level used is 0.05. If Sig. (2-tailed) was lower than 0.05, it indicated that Webtoon positively impact students vocabulary.

Results and Discussion

Results

The data (score) were obtained after conducting pre-test and post-test in the form of multiple choice questions. Then, the data were analyzed by using SPSS software application from Microsoft. To analyze the data, the researchers used Paired Sample t-test. This process is needed to determine whether there is a significant effect on students' vocabulary after using a Webtoon comic entitled "Omniscient Reader" as learning media.

This research attempts to test the following hypothesis:

Ho: The use of Webtoon does not have a significant effect on student's vocabulary.

Ha: The use of Webtoon has a significant effect on student's vocabulary.

After collecting the data, the researchers obtained the scores of pre-test and post-test. The score can be seen in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 The Score of Pre-Test and Post-Test

No	Student's Initial	Pre-test	Post-test
1	RA	55	80
2	AF	45	75
3	AP	45	75
4	BA	65	85
5	CO	55	85
6	EA	50	75
7	FP	55	80
8	KY	55	80
9	MA	75	85
10	MF	45	75
11	N	55	80
12	N	60	80
13	NN	55	85
14	S	45	75
Mean		54,29	79,64

Based on the table above, it was discovered that there were significant effects of utilizing Webtoon on student's vocabulary. The mean score of pre-test is 54,29 and the mean score of post-test is 79,64. The post-test score is higher than pre-test since student's score increased by 25% after reading Webtoon comic. It was proven that Ha is accepted and Webtoon is positively effected students vocabulary.

These score showed that engeging comic in Webtoon can be used as a media for students to learn new vocabulary. They can enjoy reading an entertaining comic based on their interest. Since Webtoon provide many comics with various genre so students will not get bored. The illustration also encaourage students to keep reading and discover new vocabulary. Furthermore, to measure the result statically, Paired Sample t-test test was conducted to compare the vocabulary score of pre-test and post-test.

Table 4.2 The Result of Paired Sample t-test

		Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pretest - Posttest	- 25.35714	5.70569	1.52491	- 28.65151	- 22.06277	- 16.629	13	.000

The result analysis revealed that the value of Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.000. The value of Sig. (2-tailed) which is $0.000 < 0.05$, it means that H_a is accepted. The results indicated that Webtoon significantly impacted the vocabulary of tenth-grade students of Teknik Konstruksi Perumahan (TKP) class in SMK Negeri 1 Palangka Raya.

Discussion

Based on the analysis of this study, the findings indicated that Webtoons as a teaching tool greatly enhances students' vocabulary retention. The increasing score in post-test shows better comprehension and retention of vocabulary using a contextual and visual learning strategy, in addition to a quantitative improvement. Webtoons, which blend storylines, conversations, and visual components, give words a more contextualized meaning, which helps students understand and use vocabulary correctly.

When learning a second language, it is crucial to have a decent amount of vocabulary. Susanto (2017) stated that communication would be hampered by a small vocabulary when learning a second language. Vocabulary is a foundation used as a steppingstone. Lack of vocabuly will

make students experience difficulty to learn another four English skill which include speaking, listening, reading and writing.

The findings of this study correlate with a previous research conducted by Lin (2018) who found that digital media, such as online comics is capable to enhance vocabulary retention by presenting information in a more engaging way than traditional method. In addition, Amelia (2024) said that Webtoon was a useful tool for helping students become more proficient in vocabulary. These existing studies supported the study's recommendation to use Webtoon as media to learn new vocabulary.

With its uniqueness, Webtoon not only deliver an entertaining storyline but also used vocabularies related to daily life. Nation (2001) said that contextual vocabulary learning improves comprehension because it allows students to relate words to situations in real life. Those vocabularies in Webtoon can be used in daily life when students communicating with others. Many people can understand dialog in Webtoon since it was adapted to vocabulary that are frequently used in daily conversation. Based on a different study by Wulandary in 2019, Webtoon users claimed that the platform is a useful tool for vocabulary learning. In addition, Al Farissi et al. (2024) said that Webtoon had a good impact on students' vocabulary.

Furthermore, the engaging format of Webtoons is capable to enhance student motivation and participation in the learning process. The statistical analysis using the Paired Sample t-test revealed that the observed improvement was statistically significant, indicating that Webtoons has a direct and positive impact on students' vocabulary learning outcomes. Compared to textbook which only full of words, Webtoon provide an entertaining narrative with unique illustration, encouraging student to read and improve their vocabulary. Webtoon also offer various genre such as romance, action, fantasy, comedy, horror and slice of life. Students can chose any genre that they want to read and will not get bored. Therefore, integrating webtoons into the teaching process particularly in English vocabulary can be considered an innovative and effective alternative learning strategy, especially in vocational education settings that demand practical and engaging pedagogical approaches.

Conclusion

According to the findings and study, students' English vocabulary is positively and significantly impacted when Webtoon is used as a learning media. Webtoon offers engaging stories and illustration, students are better able to comprehend and gain new vocabulary because they are learning it in an enjoyable and relevant setting. Through Webtoon, that provide fun

narrative and engaging illustrations, students will be able to experience more enjoyable learning process, which help them to gain and memorize new vocabulary faster compared to learning by using traditional media such as reading textbook.

Following the use of Webtoon in the learning process, there was a noticeable improvement which shown in pre-test and post-test scores. The statistical test of Paired Sample t-test showed the significance of the improvement. It indicated that Webtoon is a good tool for helping students expand their vocabulary in English.

Learning new vocabulary through Webtoon makes the process more enjoyable and engaging. Students become more motivated to learn since the media which is presented in a way that suits their digital lifestyle and interest. Therefore, teachers can consider using Webtoon as an alternative teaching method, especially in vocational schools where fun and practical learning is needed.

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