
The 3rd IICLLTLC 2019

The 3rd Indonesian International Conference on Linguistics, Language Teaching, Literature and Culture

USING “MEMRISE” TO BOOST ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS VOCABULARY MASTERY: STUDENTS’ VIEWPOINT

Dyah Aminatun

dyah_aminatun@teknokrat.ac.id
Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia

Lulud Oktaviani

lulud_oktaviani@teknokrat.ac.id
Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Comprehending English of certain field will be beneficial for students. It is in line with the fact that the term of English will be different from what is usually learned in general English class. English for Business class demands students to learn English for business context. However, non-English major students do not always have high understanding in English. Consequently, it is hard for them to understand and use English well. Fortunately, in this recent era, there are various platforms and online applications for learning English using technologies which can be accessed by anyone, and anywhere in easier way. Memrise is one of online applications that can facilitate students from various majors to learn English and especially to learn new vocabulary. This study was conducted in English for Business class of Management major and was intended to find out students’ point of view of using Memrise application in boosting their vocabulary mastery of English for business. The result showed that the use of Memrise has helped students to learn new English vocabulary as well as the meaning, the spelling, how they are pronounced, and how they are used in a sentence.

Keywords: *English for Business, vocabulary mastery, Memrise*

INTRODUCTION

Industrial revolution 4.0 has led almost every single field in life transformed into global level. People try their best to fight in this era. Comprehending global language is one of the keys to survive in this century. One of the fields which really needs English as a tool of communication is business field. Business field is a place where people connect with other people from around the world beyond time and places. According to Hayes (2019), a business is defined as an organization or enterprising entity engaged in commercial, industrial, or

professional activities; it can also be an activities of individuals to produce and sell goods and services for profit. Business allows people to interact with each other. It is not only dealing with regional scope, but also international scale. Seeing this importance, language is absolutely a way to communicate with partner or college in business field. One of global language that can be used in this field is English. The importance of English for many fields has created English for specific purposes because the terms of English will be distinct from one area to another.

English for specific purposes (ESP) is different from English for general purposes (EGP). EGP is a language that people use in daily life and daily conversation. However, ESP has professional propose inside it. Bowker and Pearson (2002) stated that in ESP students learn English to fulfill their needs of English language to achieve their goals for future. According to this definition, ESP is needed for many fields of study in order to communicate with other people to achieve the goal. English as international language has been introduced to students who need English for their specific purpose according to the program they choose. It is started from high school to university level. University level especially, has many different majors and programs for their students. Therefore, English that is provided in every major should be different. Related to business field that has been mentioned earlier, Management is one of majors that has high chance to deal with it. Students of management program should learn many terms about economy, management, business, and so on. Thus, they also need to learn English vocabulary about those terms since vocabulary is an important factor in learning language. It is in line with the statement from Moeller et al. (2009) that vocabulary is central to the learning and teaching as it affords learners access to all forms of oral and written communication.

Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia is one of universities in Indonesia which provides English for specific purpose for their students. It is proven by the existence of English for Business subject for Management and Accountancy program. It is believed that, by having good skill of English, students will be able to compete in the future to achieve their goal after graduating from the major that they have chosen. However, according to the result of interview and questionnaire, the students admit that English is an important language that they should comprehend, but it is hard for them to accomplish it. The students think that English is a difficult language to learn. It is because they do not know some words that they are going to say. It is also supported by the statement from Assefa (2010) that one of the factors affecting students' English speaking skill is limited grammar and vocabulary.

Seeing this problem, teachers or lecturers need more efforts to minimize the problem faced by students in comprehending English. They need to be creative in using strategy of teaching and choosing media for teaching. Fortunately, in this digital era, millions people have used smart phone not only as a tool of communication but also for other activities, such as learning. As technology is getting advanced and English is needed by many people, developers try to use this chance to develop many applications to help its users to experience learning in modern and interesting way. Learning language is not only learning a single thing, but many aspects should be learned. The main thing of learning language is to communicate with other people. Language is essentially a means of communication among the members of a society (Sirbu, 2015). As it is stated previously by Moeller et al. (2009) that one of the basic elements to use a language is vocabulary since it is central of communication. By

comprehending vocabulary, students thought it will be easier for them when they want to say something in English.

Nowadays, there are many online applications that can be chosen by students to ease them learn English; one of them is *Memrise*. Applications of language learning like *Memrise* are excessively popular, with over 20 million registered users (Hickey, 2015). It is an online educational application that is available on www.Memrise.com and also can be downloaded on Apple Store and Google Play. *Memrise* is a language learning application developed by an American company of language technologies which enables users to master a foreign language with their mobiles without the help of a teacher. The application guarantees for the users they can learn a language much quicker and easier than ever before without having to learn rules of grammar deductively (Abarghoui & Taki, 2018). *Memrise* uses spaced repetition of flash cards to boost rate of learning (Sue, 2015). The content and materials on *Memrise* are created through crowd-sourcing, that is, all members of *Memrise* can contribute to make the content.

What is special about *Memrise* is that this application provides the achievements of the memory studies and can send the progress of learning to their students via email. The amount of information provided depends on the author of the course. *Memrise* allows the users to learn about many words of certain language or certain fields which will contain of the definitions, synonym, antonym, and even their pronunciation (Luczak, 2017). By using this application, lecturers can create their own content in *Memrise* and make a group of intended students. Lecturers can also use the provided content that has been made by *Memrise* member and ask students to practice the vocabulary from it. The achievement of students can be seen by the lecturers to see the progress of each student in a week or a month. Students can access this application anywhere and anytime, so they will have additional materials from *Memrise* besides main materials explained by lecturers in the classroom.

However, not every student is able to deal with online educational application like *Memrise*. Some students are more comfortable with learning face to face in the classroom, but some really enjoy learning with online application. Sometimes students forget they have application that can enable them learn anywhere, or they are too lazy to open it outside the class. On the other side, some students find that it is so interesting to learn English vocabulary that is correlated with their subject in different way. Seeing this phenomenon, this study tries to find out students' point of view of using *Memrise* application in boosting their vocabulary mastery of English for business.

This study took place in Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia, in Management study program, in the even semester of academic year 2018/2019. It was conducted in the class of English for Business II. It is a descriptive study which investigates the details of people in a setting of qualitative approach (Cresswell, 2008). Moreover, Wu and Volker (2009) also state that descriptive design is used to give description and explanation of beliefs, meanings in context-specific setting and behaviors.

The objects of this study were students' behavior and perspective in using *Memrise* application to improve their English for business vocabulary. The subject of this study was chosen by using purposive sampling. According to Sugiyono (2010), purposive sampling is a sampling used by considering several factors. It is also stated by Dornyei (2007) that purposive sampling procedure chooses participants who meet some specific predetermined

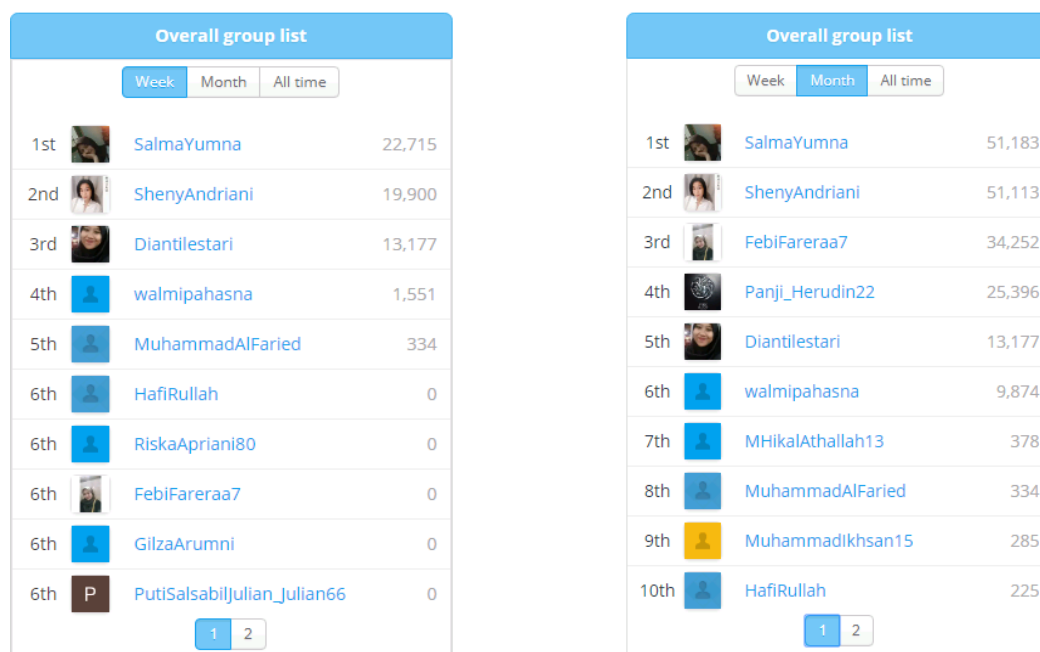
criteria. The sample consisted of 18 students. Students were asked to use *Memrise* outside the classroom and do the exercise provided by the lecturer about English for business.

The data of this study was gained by using questionnaire as the main instrument. Besides that, interview was also employed to support the validation of the data. There were eleven questions about English subject in general, seven questions about the use of technology in learning, and ten questions about using *Memrise* to learn English for business vocabulary. The questions and statement varied from close to open-ended type. Descriptive analysis was used as a technique in analyzing the data. The data obtained from the result of questionnaire and interview was then explained in a form of data description.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

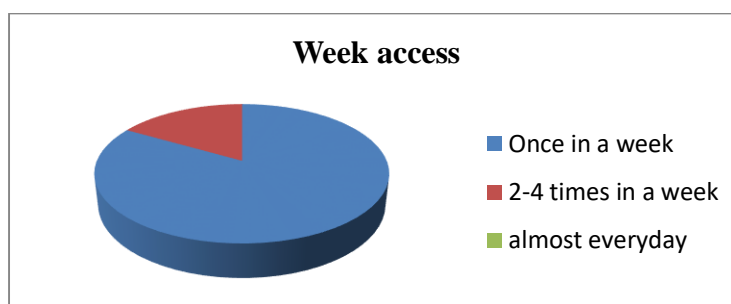
According to the results of questionnaire from 18 students of Management program, it is gained that most students have high interest to learn grammar and vocabulary rather than pronunciation and spelling. It is also related with their reason of learning English in which most students state that they want to have high English speaking skill the most, but they do not know much vocabulary.

After using *Memrise*, 16 students think that learning English for business vocabulary using *Memrise* is fun and is related with the subject that they take. One of the reasons is that students can feel more motivated because there is point system or achievement in learning process using *Memrise*.



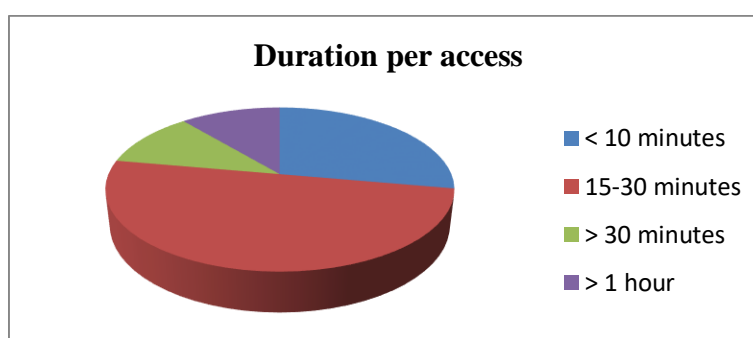
Picture 1. Students' achievement per week and month

However, two students state that *Memrise* is not interesting because they cannot use this application well. Although most students say that it is an interesting application, result of questionnaire shows that most students only access *Memrise* once in a week (83.3%), the rest are using it two until four times in a week (16.7%), and none of them access *Memrise* every day.



Picture 2. Accessing *Memrise* per week

In every access, students mostly spent around 15-30 minutes (50%). There are 27.8% of students spent less than 10 minutes, and 11.1% students spent more than 30 minutes and more than one hour per access.



Picture 3. Duration of using *Memrise* per access

From the charts, it can be seen that, students were not spending much time accessing the application. It is due to some problems which came out from internal or external aspects of the students. The external factor might come from internet connection problem had by the students. Besides that, students are still lack of motivation to regularly access this application due to students need to deal with other assignments from other subjects and need to be done outside the class. However, according to students' point of view, using *Memrise* during learning English for business really gives benefits for them in understanding English for business vocabulary. It is because *Memrise* provides repetition for every word learned. The summary of students' perception of using *Memrise* to help them in learning English for business can be seen below.

Table 1. Students' Perception towards *Memrise*

No.	Statement	Agree	Disagree
1.	<i>Memrise</i> helps me learn English	100%	-
2.	<i>Memrise</i> not only helps me memorize, but also improves my English for business vocabulary	100%	-
3.	<i>Memrise</i> is easy to access	83.3%	16.7%
4.	<i>Memrise</i> facilitates me to know how to pronounce the words	100%	-
5.	Learning vocabulary using <i>Memrise</i> is fun		

6.	<i>Memrise</i> can be accessed anywhere and anytime	94.4%	5.6%
7.	Points system in <i>Memrise</i> motivates me to use <i>Memrise</i>	94.4%	5.6%
8.	<i>Memrise</i> improves my independent learning	100%	-

Based on the data of students' perception, it can be seen that *Memrise* has high contribution in improving students' English vocabulary, especially English for business vocabulary. One of interesting parts of this application from the students' perspective is that point system than can be compared with other participant or respondent. By seeing this points or achievement, students are highly motivated to beat other participants. After using *Memrise*, students stated that they now more understand about the term that lecturer uses in English for Business class because they have learned it on *Memrise*. It is easy to access because nowadays most of student have used smart phone as a learning tool. Besides that, it is provided with good graphic and illustration.

These findings are in line with the previous research conducted by Esit (2011) that found that students can learn better through multimedia applications. Besides that, these results agree with the result gained from the research conducted by Walker (2016) that using *Memrise* is enjoyable and convenient in learning Latin vocabulary. It means that *Memrise* is not only suitable for learning Latin vocabulary, but also English vocabulary and more other languages.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The research verifies that learning English for business vocabulary with *Memrise* gives positive influence towards students' vocabulary mastery. It is shown from the response and attitude of students which are more responsive during English for Business class. Although there are some students who feel inconvenient with the application, the students still feel that *Memrise* give good effects in learning English. One factor that can make the inconvenience happen is that the internet connection since it is an online application. Therefore, it suggested for the next researcher to pay attention to the connectivity had by every students. It is also better to have a schedule for students to access their *Memrise* outside classroom, so students will have same responsibility in learning via *Memrise*. Hopefully, in the future, this research can also be replicated with a larger scale with different scope and circumstances.

REFERENCES

- Abarghoui and Taki (2018). Measuring the Effectiveness of Using "Memrise" on High School Students' Perceptions of Learning EFL. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 8(12), 1758-1765. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0812.25>.
- Assefa, B. (2010). *A study of the major factors that affect students' speaking skills: Identifying factors that affect students' English speaking skills: The case of grade 11 Ethiopian students*. Germany: VDM Publisher.

- Bowker, L. & Pearson, J. (2002). *Working with Specialised Language: A Practical Guide to Using Corpora*. London: Routledge.
- Cresswell, J. W. 2008. *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Dornyei, Z. 2007. *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Esit, Ö. (2011). Your verbal zone: An intelligent computer-assisted language learning program in support of Turkish learners' vocabulary learning. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 24(3), 211-232. doi:10.1080/09588221.2010.538702.
- Essays, UK. (November 2018). Definitions of ESP by Different Scholars English Language Essay. Retrieved from <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/english-language/definitions-of-esp-by-different-scholars-english-language-essay.php?vref=1>
- Hayes, Adam. (2019). Business. *Investopedia*. Retrieved 22 April 2019.
- Hickey, M. (2015). Learning the Duolingo – how one app speaks volumes for language learning. The Guardian News and Media Limited. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/mar/08/learning-the-duolingo-how-one-app-speaks-volumes-for-language-learning.10.02.2018>.
- Luczak Aleksandra (2017). Using *Memrise* In Legal English Teaching. *Studies in Logic, Grammar, and Rethoric*, 49(62), 141-152. DOI: 10.1515/slgr-2017-0009.
- Moeller, A., Ketsman, Masmaliyeva (2009) The Essentials of Vocabulary Teaching: From Theory to Practice. *Faculty Publications: Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education*.pp. 1-16.
- Shellenbarger, Sue. (2015). "Flashcards Get Smarter So You Can, Too". *WSJ*. Retrieved 24 June 2019.
- Sirbu, Anca. (2015). The Significance of Language as a Tool of Communication. *PROQUEST SciTech Journals, PROQUEST Engineering Journals, PROQUEST Illustrata: Technology, PROQUEST Technology Journals, PROQUEST Military Collection PROQUEST Advanced Technologies & Aerospace*. 18(2), 405-406.
- Sugiyono. 2010. *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Walker, L. (2015). The Impact of Using *Memrise* On Students' Perception of Learning Latin Vocabulary and on Long-term Memory of Words. *Journal of Classics of Teaching*. Volume 16 Issue 32.51-56.