

THE USE OF WHATSAPP AS A
COLLABORATIVE TOOL IN VOCABULARY
LEARNING AMONG TERTIARY LEVEL
STUDENTS

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA PAHANG

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I have checked this thesis and in my opinion, this thesis is adequate in terms of scope and quality for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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I hereby declare that the work in this thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Malaysia Pahang or any other institutions.

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ABSTRAK

Perbendaharaan kata adalah tulang belakang pemerolehan bahasa. Walau bagaimanapun, tinjauan luas tentang kajian sebelumnya menunjukkan bahawa Tahap penguasaan bahasa Inggeris pelajar-pelajar Malaysia menurun pelajar Malaysia kerana pengetahuan perbendaharaan kata yang terhad walaupun telah terdedah kepada perbendaharaan kata selama lebih kurang 11 tahun. Untuk meningkatkan keinginan pelajar untuk belajar perbendaharaan kata, pengajar harus kreatif dan peka terhadap perubahan semasa dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran. Peningkatan teknologi, termasuk telefon bimbit, menjadikan peranti tersebut digunakan secara meluas dalam masyarakat moden dan mempunyai pengaruh yang besar dalam bidang pendidikan. Penggunaan aplikasi mudah alih pesanan segera telah menjadi satu wabak di kalangan Generasi Z (Gen-Z) kerana mereka menghabiskan masa lapang mereka melayari aplikasi rangkaian sosial, seperti WhatsApp. Oleh itu, kajian ini meneroka penggunaan WhatsApp sebagai alat pembelajaran kolaboratif untuk membantu pelajar pengajian tinggi mempelajari perbendaharaan kata. Seramai 20 orang pelajar Psikologi semester dari Widad University College terlibat dalam kajian ini. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk melihat kesan penggunaan WhatsApp dalam pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata. Kajian ini juga mengkaji faedah dan halangan yang dialami pelajar setelah menggunakan WhatsApp dalam mempelajari perbendaharaan kata. Reka bentuk kuasi eksperimen telah digunakan di dalam kajian ini. Kajian ini berlangsung selama enam minggu. Ujian perbendaharaan kata digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data kuantitatif sementara temu ramah kumpulan fokus digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data kualitatif. SPSS versi 22 digunakan untuk menganalisis data kuantitatif, dan NVivo 12 digunakan untuk menilai data kualitatif. Penemuan data kuantitatif menunjukkan bahawa terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan dalam julat min antara ujian pra dan ujian pasca setelah menggunakan WhatsApp dalam pembelajaran kosa kata. Temu ramah kumpulan fokus menunjukkan bahawa terdapat faedah dalam menggunakan WhatsApp kerana aplikasi itu memudahkan pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata, mempromosikan pembelajaran kolaboratif, meningkatkan hubungan antara guru dan rakan sebaya, meningkatkan keyakinan pelajar, dan membantu pelajar secara teknikal dalam menguasai perbendaharaan kata sasaran. Oleh itu, hasil kajian ini mengesahkan bahawa WhatsApp adalah alat pembelajaran kolaboratif yang sesuai dalam membantu pembelajaran kosa kata Bahasa Inggeris dalam kalangan pelajar yang menuntut di Institut Pengajian Swasta. Walau bagaimanapun, beberapa teknik perlu diperbaiki untuk mengatasi rintangan sehingga WhatsApp menjadi alat yang berkesan untuk pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata bahasa Inggeris.

ABSTRACT

Vocabulary is a central element of language proficiency that offers a strong foundation for students' language skills. However, an extensive review of previous studies showed that Malaysian students' English proficiency levels are decreasing due to limited vocabulary knowledge despite having been exposed to the vocabulary for more or less than 11 years. In order to tackle students' eagerness to acquire vocabulary, instructors are to be creative and aware of the current changes in the teaching and learning process. The mushrooming of technologies, including mobile phones, has made them widely used devices in modern society and a great influence in the education field. The use of instant messaging mobile applications has become epidemic among Generation Z (Gen-Z) because they spend a significant amount of their free time browsing through social network applications, such as WhatsApp. Hence, this study explored the use of WhatsApp as a collaborative learning tool to assist tertiary-level students in vocabulary learning. A total of 20 second-semester psychology students from Widad University College were involved in the study. This study aims to examine the effects of WhatsApp instruction and investigate the benefits and obstacles experienced by the students upon the use of WhatsApp in vocabulary learning. Furthermore, the quasi-experimental design employed in this study lasted for six weeks. A vocabulary test was used to gather quantitative data, while a focus group interview was conducted to collect qualitative data. SPSS version 22 was applied to analyse the quantitative data, while NVivo 12 was employed to evaluate the qualitative data. The findings of the quantitative data demonstrated a significant difference in the total mean scores between the pre-test and post-test after the use of WhatsApp in vocabulary learning. The focus group interview showed that the benefits of the use of WhatsApp were present, given that the application facilitated vocabulary learning, promoted collaborative learning, enhanced relationships among teachers and peers, boosted student confidence, and provided the students with technical and educational assistance in mastering the target vocabulary. Overall, the findings imply that WhatsApp is a suitable collaborative learning tool for assisting vocabulary learning. However, some techniques need to be improved to get around the problems and ensure that WhatsApp is a useful tool for vocabulary learning.

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