IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY BY USING U-DICTIONARY

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Abstract- *The teacher found several vocabulary problems faced by the students during teaching and learning English. The students were lack of vocabulary mastery, had difficulty in memorizing the word, sometimes missed spelling the word, and the difficulty pronouncing the words and finding the word's meaning. They were difficult to recognize the word classes such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs effectively. For this reason, the researcher brought U-dictionary as media to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The classroom action research method with two cycles was used in this research. The subject was the second-semester students of Bina Sarana Informatika University consisting of 46 students. The observation and measurement techniques were used as the technique of collecting data. The observation checklists, field notes, interviews, and tests were used as the instruments for collecting data. The result showed that the use of U-Dictionary could help the teacher to improve the student's vocabulary mastery effectively. It served as a fun and simple way of learning activity. U-Dictionary led the students to build up their motivation and interest during the teaching and learning process.*

Keywords: improve; vocabulary; mastery; u-dictionary

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INTRODUCTION

In this modern era, technology is growing rapidly in as same education field which allows a variety of learning processes. Technology is revolutionizing many fields, including education, with the internet and computers playing an important role in changing the way of learning and supporting students (Rahayu and Baskoro, 2022). The teacher asked to improve their learning strategy in teaching and learning process in the classroom. Bringing technology into the classroom helps to improve the learning process. Teachers can use technology as a medium for teaching. One of them is U-dictionary.

U-dictionary was one of the digital or electric dictionaries. Knauer et al (2020) studied that the U-Dictionary was an interactive teaching media since it took the technology that developed students' motivation to engage with the learning activity. It was a modern technology that could be downloaded on mobile phones and used as a learning medium. it offered some features that support solving vocabulary problems. U-Dictionary is a word translator application that can be installed on a smartphone. U-Dictionary allows the user to find the meaning of words or sentences in both offline and online modes (Wiratman, 2021). By U-Dictionary, the students could translate the words into other languages. It was an application that could lead the students to develop their language skills practically (Krismonika, Norahmi, and Asi, 2021).

The benefits of using U-Dictionary proposed by Zheng & Wang (2016) to learn English quickly. "1) Students could use the camera to see anywhere in English and interpret pictures. 2) Use the Android lock screen to detect English; if students had the U dictionary installed on the phone, they could also recognize English from the lock screen without using a camera. 3). With the aid of a dictionary, students might quickly and easily learn English by playing. 4). Find English-language articles written in English, the articles are written in a conversational style so that we can discover ways to read English even as also gain perception". The features of U-Dictionary illustrated by Wulandari and Handayani (2019) as follows: "1) U-Dictionary is one the offline dictionaries that can be downloaded from an android or smartphone. 2) Students can use it for translating more than 30 languages without an internet connection. 3) Students can translate words and short phrases. 3) Allow students to quickly access short tests and mini-games to practice any language they want. 4) Students can listen to the pronunciation whenever the Android smartphone has an Internet connection".

During teaching and learning English in the classroom, the researchers found problems faced by the students, especially their vocabulary. The students were lack of vocabulary mastery, had difficulty memorizing the word, sometimes missed spelling the word, and had hard pronouncing the words and finding the words meaning. So, they could not recognize the word classes such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs effectively. As we know vocabulary plays an important part in learning a language. It is a component of a language. Students need to develop their vocabulary usage to increase their language

skill (Folse, 2020). Learning English as a second language means people need to have enough vocabulary to express themselves and learn a variety of words so that they are not perceived when reading, writing, listening, or speaking English. Puspitasari (2016) stated that vocabulary is a primary of the language, which is very important for language learners**.** Therefore, Munawir, Inayah, and Huda (2022) explained that students need to achieve as many words as possible when learning English, this could help them acquire the language well. People will use a language efficiently if they have a large vocabulary. Moreover, according to Nurhalimah (2020) words as symbols for expressing the ideas. The more words people learn will allow people to express their ideas better. McKoewn and Curtis (2014) argued that when learning a new language, students need to engage huge of new words. It can be said that people need to master the vocabulary first to acquire a new language.

Teaching vocabulary is also not easy either. The teacher needs creativity to create a fun, enjoyable, and memorable learning activity. Besides, the teacher needs to build the students motivation during the learning process. Motivation and interest are important in a learning process. It may also be built into an activity to help the vocabulary learning would be memorable (Nation, 2022). For this reason, the researcher brought U-dictionary as media to improve students' vocabulary mastery. It is hoped can help students experience new learning media that allow them portability and accuracy.

METHODS

Research Design

The classroom action research method was used in this research due to the purpose of this research was to find out the solution to improve students' vocabulary mastery. Action research is represented to examine the data on people's work to help increase performance (Sagor and Willian, 2017). Action research is a process diciplined by inquiry to improve the quality of action within it (Hopkins, 2014). Action research identify issues of deep importance relevant to practice, collect and analyze data, and share their findings (Manfra, 2019). The four steps of action research stated by Kemmis & McTaggart cited in Syah (2013): "1. Planning: a problem or issue is identified and a plan of action is developed to bring about improvements in specific areas of the research context; 2.

Action: the plan is put into action over an agreed period; 3. Observation: the effects of the action are observed and data are collected; 4. Reflection: the effects of the action are evaluated and become the basis for further cycles of research".

Data Collection

The subject of this research was the second-semester students of Bina Sarana Informatika University consisting of 46 students. The researcher was also helped by the collaborator to observe the process of teaching and learning. To collect the data the researcher used observation and measurement techniques. Meanwhile, the observation checklists, field notes, interviews, and tests were used as the instruments for collecting data. The result of the observation was recorded in the observation checklist, field note, and interview. Moreover, the objective test of the individual students' work was the measurement technique in this research. The researcher would measure the srudents score after U-Dictionary was implemented in the teaching and learning process.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the researchers used qualitative and quantitative analyses. Qualitative analysis was used to describe the process of teaching and learning vocabulary using U-Dictionary which was obtained from the observation checklist, field notes, and interviews. Besides, quantitative analysis was used to know the students' improvement through the mean score on the individual test. The researcher would analyse the students achievement through their individual test in form of multiple choice test.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Finding

Through the observation, interview, and individual tests conducted in this research, the researchers found the students could improve their vocabulary mastery by using U-Dictionary. The researcher conducted the U-Dictionary treatment in two cycles.

Cycle 1

Planning was the first stage in this research. The researcher set everything needed during the teaching and learning process, the lesson plan to teach vocabulary using U-Dictionary, and the instruments of collecting data such as observation checklist, field note, and test. Second was the acting stage. The researcher implemented U-Dictionary as the media in teaching vocabulary. The researcher began to introduce the four basic vocabulary includes verb, noun, adjective, and adverb. Then, explained to students about U-Dictionary and asked them to download it through their mobile phones. The researcher demonstrated how to use the U-Dictionary. The students were given words and they began to search for the word meaning, spelling, pronouncing, and analyzing the words, which one was the word belong to verb, noun, adjective, or adverb. Finally, the students were given a test through words on a paper, they were asked to find the meaning and analyze the word class. Third was the observing stage. The researcher acted as a teacher and was helped by a collaborator to observe the teaching and learning process in the classroom using the instruments, which were observation checklists, field note reports, and interviews.

The data gained from the observation checklist and field notes showed that the teacher did good preparation in the teaching and learning process. The teacher also could implement the lesson plan well. The teacher could guide the students to engage with the material and media used in teaching vocabulary using U-Dictionary. The classroom situation was still passive at the beginning of learning due to the students ' lack of confidence to state their ideas. The students were afraid of making mistakes when the teacher asked about the meaning and spelling of the word, asked them to pronounce the word, and organized the word classes. The teacher tried to build good communication among students by allowing the students to try the U-Dictionary. After being introduced to U-Dictionary the classroom began to share a good atmosphere. A few of the students began to express their ideas by mentioning the meaning of the word delivered by a teacher, tried to pronounce the word, and even tried to analyze the class of the word and some of them were still reluctant to express their ideas. Next, the teacher began to deliver the test for students in the form of multiple choice. A few students could answer the

questions very well. On the other hand, some students still seemed confused and did not have their confidence during the test.

Based on the interview, the students stated that they were happy when using U-Dictioanary in the English class, it could help them in finding the solutions to the vocabulary. U-Dictionary was comfortable since they could access it easily on their phone. It gave them flexibility. Besides, the students also explained that they were difficult to pronounce the word because the spelling and the way to sound the word were different. The students are also afraid of making mistakes when organizing the word classes. They needed more explanation and exercises. Furthermore, based on the data was gained from a measurement test that was conducted in the form of multiple choice which consisted of 10 items. The student's average score in cycle I was 70.69. The student's highest score was 100 and the student's lowest score was 30.

The last was the reflecting stage. The result of this cycle 1 did not show the significant improvement. The students were still lack of confidence and difficult to find the meaning of the word. Besides, based on the passing grade, the students' average score was categorized as good. There were many students who not reached the passing grade, >70. Thus the researcher needed some corrections: First, the teacher would guide the students by giving them clear explanations about the word classes and make sure that all the students understood the material. Second, the teacher would give all the students an extra chance to try U-Dictionary and analyze the word. The teacher also would generate more words for students to explore. Third, the students were also asked to memorize the words. It was hoped that the students could find the easiness in solving the vocabularies problems. Thus, the students could enjoy the learning process by using U-Dictionary and find the easy way to find the word meaning, pronounce, spell, and even analyze the word classes. Based on the correction and result above, it needed to continue the next cycle due to the purpose of this research to find how well the use of U-Dictionary improves students' vocabulary mastery.

Cycle 2

According to the first cycle's result, the researcher set to continue the learning process to the second cycle. First, the researcher prepared the planning stage by making

a new plan for doing the research and implementing the activities based on the correction in the previous cycle. The teaching properties, and lesson plan for implementing U-Dictionary in teaching vocabulary. The instruments needed for collecting data such as observation checklist, field note, and test were also set by the teacher. The researcher did the acting stage by implementing U-Dictionary in teaching vocabulary. Second, the teacher did the action stage. The teacher began the class by greeting the students and checking their presence. After that, the teacher made sure the condition of the class was ready to start the learning activity. The teacher explained the word classes namely verb, noun, adjective, and adverb. The teacher also talked about the U-Dictionary and demonstrated how to use it effectively. Furthermore, the teacher gave some words on the whiteboard and asked students to find the word meaning, spell, pronounce through U-Dictionary, and finally found the word classes. The teacher asked the students one by one and the students answered. The teacher asked the students to memorize the word. After stimulating the students to find the vocabulary using U-Dictionary, the teacher gave the test in the form of multiple choice. The teacher also guides the students during the test.

The third was the observing stage. In this stage, the researcher observes the information gained from the observation checklist and field notes. The result showed that the teacher could implement the lesson plan well. The teacher opened the class energetically. This built the students' motivation to acquire the material better, and of course, the atmosphere of the class was improved. The students seemed ready to start the English class. Besides, the teacher could deliver the material about word classes very well. She provided many examples and allowed the students to do many exercises. The students engaged with the teacher's explanation. It showed their enthusiasm in answering the teacher's question. Since the teacher demonstrated clearly how to use the U-Dictionary, the students were confident when trying U-Dictionary to find out the words meaning, spelling, pronouncing, and organize the word classes. The students experienced much vocabulary and were motivated to memorize it. The test given by the teacher also did very well by students. They were concentrated during the test. The students could do the test appropriately and they seemed happy.

From the interview, the students stated that they could understand the material better. Since the teacher explained the features of U-Dictionary, the students were eager

to try it and they found that U-Dictionary was fun and easy to use. It was pleasant to use U-Dictionary on the mobile phone. The students also explained that bringing U-Dictionary into the classroom could give the students new experience of learning. Not only could access the word's meaning and spelling practically, but they also could hear the pronunciation of the word. So, it led them to learn how to say the word correctly. Through U-Dictionary, students could find the meaning of the word and they were interested in analyzing the word classes. Furthermore, based on the data gained from a measurement test the student's average score in cycle 2 was 91.08. The student's highest score was 100 and the student's lowest score was 70.

The fourth was the reflection stage. From the finding above the researcher could state that the use of U-Dictionary improved the students' vocabulary mastery. It could lead them to create good progress during teaching and learning vocabulary. The students average score in cycle two was improved and categorized as excellent. Almost all of the students reached the passing grade. The researcher stopped the cycle due to the purpose of this research achieved. It could be seen from the table and chart below:

Table 1.1
Students' Average Score in Each Cycle

Students' Average Score	
Cycle 1	**Cycle 2**
70,69	91,08

Figures 1. Students Who Passed the Passing Grade in Each Cycle
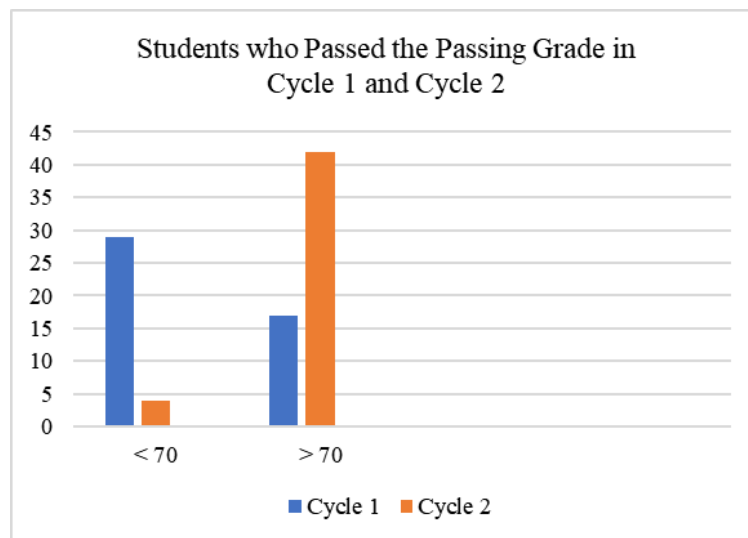
Based on the table and chart above, it showed that the students average score in cycle 1 was 70,69 and the students who did not reach the passing grade was 29 students. Meanwhile, after cycle 2 was conducted the students' average score was 91,08 and the students who did not reach the passing grade only 4 people. Furthermore, the students could experience the vocabulary learning better. They started to confidence and able to express their idea related to the vocabulary given, find the meaning of the word, analyze the word classes, and spell the word. The students showed their improvement from each cycle during the teaching and learning vocabulary using U-Dictionary.

Discussion

The research was done in two cycles. The result showed that U-Dictionary was an effective medium to teach vocabulary. It could allow the students to improve their vocabulary mastery. Through U-Dictionary the students can experience a lot of vocabulary easily and it was flexible to use in all of the education grades. It was supported by Wulandari & Handayani (2019), that U-Dictionary increased students' vocabulary significantly. It was an effective medium in teaching vocabulary because it allowed the students to learn much vocabulary and it was available for students in every grade. Besides, U-Dictionary could build the student's motivation to learn vocabulary. The students could use the technology in the learning process. They will experience with real teaching media. Knauer et al (2020) proposed that the U-Dictionary was an interactive

teaching media since it took the technology that developed students' motivation to engage with the learning activity. This could help the students to improve their interest in learning vocabulary. U-Dictionary provided many features that made the students find an easy way to organize the words. Safina and Putri (2019) claimed that U-Dictionary served advantages that helped to improve students' vocabulary. The features helped the students to translate the word or sentence using a camera or video, provided the spelling of the word, and could listen to the pronunciation when they were connected to the internet. Thus, U-Dictionary could help the students to enjoy vocabulary learning. Finally, it could be stated that the use of U-Dictionary could help the teacher to improve the student's vocabulary mastery. It served as a fun and simple way of learning activity.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The use of U-Dictionary in the second-semester students of Bina Sarana Informatika University especially in the English class improved students' vocabulary mastery. U-Dictionary led the students to build up their motivation and interest during the teaching and learning process. Thus, the calculation of the data and the average score gained by students showed significant improvement. It can be concluded that the use of U-Dictionary as the media in teaching vocabulary could help the teacher improve the student's vocabulary mastery. The teachers could bring technology to create a new atmosphere of learning vocabulary activity. One of them was U-Dictionary. It was an effective medium for helping the students improve their vocabulary mastery. For future research, the researchers suggest to use more features served by U-Dictionary and allow students to explore more vocabulary.

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