

Effective Strategies to Enhance Students English Vocabulary Through the Dynamic use of Memrise Application

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Abstract

This research aimed to investigate the effective of the Memrise application to improve English vocabulary mastery among tenth-grade students at SMK Bakti Jaya, Depok, during the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The study employed qualitative methods through three cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, involving 20 students of class X A as participants. Data were gathered via observation, interviews, tests, and discussions, focusing on students' vocabulary mastery, engagement, and responses to the use of the Memrise application. The findings revealed significant improvement in students' vocabulary mastery across the three cycles, with 55% passing the minimum competency criteria in the first cycle, increasing to 75% in the second, and reaching 95% in the third cycle. The interactive and enjoyable features of the application enhanced students' memory retention and autonomous learning capabilities. In conclusion, the Memrise application effectively improved vocabulary mastery among tenth-grade students, boosting both academic performance and enthusiasm for learning English. The study recommends incorporating digital learning tools like Memrise in English language teaching to foster a more engaging and effective learning environment. Students showed increased participation, motivation, and positive attitudes towards learning vocabulary using Memrise.

Keywords: Digital Learning Tools, Improving English Vocabulary, Memrise Application

1 INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is a crucial component in mastering the four fundamental English skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Without adequate vocabulary knowledge, students struggle to communicate ideas effectively, as vocabulary forms the foundation for understanding and producing language. Vocabulary is encountered in various forms books, articles, news, novels, and comics and frequent exposure to new words and their meanings expands a learner's vocabulary.

Currently, social media plays a significant role in language exposure, offering learners ongoing contact with English vocabulary in contexts that can aid comprehension. Mastery of vocabulary goes beyond memorization; it requires understanding proper usage within appropriate contexts. Strong commitment and effective learning strategies can significantly boost English proficiency starting from simple practices like reading and noting new words consistently.

Memrise promotes autonomous learning, allowing students to study anytime and anywhere through smartphones or web platforms. It supports vocabulary learning with spaced repetition methods that help retain knowledge longer. Moreover, apps like Memrise offer flexibility, convenience, personalized learning, and opportunities for global interaction, which are valuable in the digital and globalized era. Using such apps helps students enhance all language skills and digital communication competencies crucial for future academic and professional success.

Walker (2015) explored Memrise's impact on Latin vocabulary learning, finding it enjoyable and convenient for learners, suggesting it as a useful tool for language teachers aiming to boost vocabulary acquisition and long-term word memory.

Rosydah (2018) investigated the use of Memrise to improve mastery of irregular verbs among Indonesian high school students, showing statistically significant improvement in the experimental group using Memrise compared to a control group. The study supports Memrise's effectiveness in vocabulary learning.

Putri Annisa Zulhantiar (2023) corroborated these findings by showing that Memrise positively affects vocabulary enrichment for grade X students, reinforcing the app's role as a beneficial digital media resource for vocabulary learning. Based on these findings, the researcher implemented Memrise Application as a learning medium to improve students English vocabulary of tenth grade students at SMK Bakti Jaya Depok. The study was designed as a Classroom Action Research (CAR) consisting of three cycles: planning, action, observation, and reflection. This research aims to investigate whether memrise application can improve student English vocabulary and provide practical implications for english teachers adopting technology based learning strategies.

2 RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs the Classroom Action Research (CAR) with three implementation cycles in class X of SMK Bakti Jaya. Each cycle consisted of curriculum-based material planning, teacher-led learning using the Memrise application, observation of student behavior and learning outcomes, and reflection for future learning improvement (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). Data collection was conducted through observation (teacher and student observation sheets), post-learning vocabulary tests, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and class discussions.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Pre-Action

The pre-action stage was conducted in Class X at SMK Bakti Jaya Depok, classroom observations showed several weaknesses in students' English vocabulary mastery. The students were not actively engaged in English learning, and the teaching was dominated by conventional methods, particularly in vocabulary teaching. This conventional approach led to limited vocabulary acquisition, low student interest, lack of motivation, and a general lack of enthusiasm for learning.

The class was teacher-centered and monotonous, with most activities focusing on the teacher's explanation. Many students scored below the minimum passing grade (KKM) of 75 in English at SMK Bakti Jaya. To tackle these issues, the researcher introduced the Memrise application as a tool to improve vocabulary mastery and support teaching and learning. Therefore, the English teacher and researcher collaborated to develop strategies for vocabulary improvement by integrating the Memrise application.

3.2 Action

3.2.1 Cycle I

a. Planning

The first cycle was conducted on April 14, 2025, The researcher prepared the syllabus 2013 revision and lesson plan based on the syllabus. Observation sheets were created for on-task and off-task behaviors, both for the collaborator and researcher. An interview guideline and students' attendance list were prepared. Necessary supporting materials, such as internet data for smartphones, were arranged in case of connectivity issues. The first material chosen for the first meeting in Cycle 1 was "Recount Text, talking about Historical Building," selected based on the syllabus and agreement with the collaborator. The researcher ensured all materials were ready to be uploaded into the Memrise application for use during the teaching process. Tests were prepared to collect data during Cycle 1.

b. Acting

The learning objectives were explained, and motivation was given to increase students' interest in mastering vocabulary. The researcher shared personal experiences emphasizing the importance of English for global communication and career support. The material focused on Narrative Text, especially vocabulary related to places and directions, using the Memrise application course "English Language Course 3." The researcher explained the social function, generic structure, language features, and vocabulary of the narrative text. Students practiced vocabulary through repeated exercises on Memrise to reinforce memory. The researcher explained the social function, generic structure, language features, and vocabulary of the narrative text.

c. Reflecting

The reflection of Cycle 1 shows that the teaching and learning activities faced several problems. The class situation was not fully conducive for effective learning. Although students engaged in the process, only 55% of them achieved the minimum competency target (KKM). The average score was 72.75, indicating that many students still struggled with vocabulary mastery. Therefore, it was necessary to continue to the next cycle to further improve students' vocabulary skills.

3.2.2 Cycle II

a. Planning

The researcher selected appropriate learning materials based on the syllabus and incorporated reflections from Cycle 1. Learning materials were prepared and uploaded into the Memrise application for use in teaching. An observation sheet was created to monitor all classroom activities during the cycle. A test was designed and prepared to collect data for evaluating student progress in Cycle 2.

This planning aimed to improve upon the previous cycle by organizing materials and tools to support enhanced vocabulary learning through the Memrise app. The reflection from Cycle 1 helped to adjust the approach and content accordingly.

b. Acting

The researcher greeted the students, checked attendance, and reminded them of the previous material. The researcher explained the learning objectives and motivated students by emphasizing the importance of English for global communication and careers. The material focused on Narrative Text with a theme related to "Where we want to go?" covering vocabulary about places and directions from the Memrise English Language Course 3. The researcher explained the narrative text's social function, generic structure, language features, and related vocabulary practiced through the Memrise application. Students completed several repeated vocabulary tests in the application to reinforce memory. A question-and-answer session was held to clarify students' doubts about the material. The learning process was made more active and engaging with closer guidance from the researcher to help students stay focused and enjoy the lessons.

c. Observing

The researcher successfully implemented all the stages in the lesson plan and followed the procedures for vocabulary teaching using the Memrise application. The teaching and learning process in Cycle 2 was designed to be more engaging to motivate students and advance their vocabulary mastery. The researcher provided closer guidance to help students stay focused and improve learning outcomes. Students showed great interest in the material because Memrise offered a fun, game-like learning experience. Students actively answered the teacher's questions and completed several vocabulary tests within the application, repeated multiple times for better retention. Students paid attention during the teacher's explanations, behaved appropriately in class, and did not disturb their peers, creating a conducive learning environment. According to the researcher's observation,

students' activeness reached 65%, attention and respect were at 85%, hard work was 80%, and appreciation toward the learning process was 90%.

d. Reflecting

Several problems were still found in the teaching and learning activities, indicating the class situation was not yet ideal. Despite issues, 75% of the students were able to achieve the target passing grade (KKM 75) in this cycle. The average score of the students increased to 78.55. Based on these outcomes, it was decided that another cycle must be conducted to further improve students' vocabulary mastery.

3.2.3 Cycle III

a. Planning

Selecting appropriate materials based on the syllabus and reflecting on results from the previous cycle. Organizing the lesson plan incorporating Memrise application materials. Preparing an observation sheet to monitor classroom activities. Designing a test to collect data for Cycle 3.

b. Acting

Opening the lesson with greetings, prayers, attendance check, and motivating students by explaining the importance of English. Continuing vocabulary learning focused on Narrative Text related to destinations and places via the Memrise app. Explaining social functions, generic structures, and language features of narrative text. Engaging students in repeated vocabulary practice and question-and-answer sessions using Memrise. Creating a comfortable, active, and enjoyable learning environment with close teacher guidance.

c. Observing

Monitoring improvement in students' vocabulary mastery and engagement. Observing the implementation of lesson plans and structured procedures using Memrise. Documenting increased student activeness (90%), attention (90%), hard work (95%), and appreciation (100%). Noting students' focused participation and respectful behavior creating conducive learning conditions.

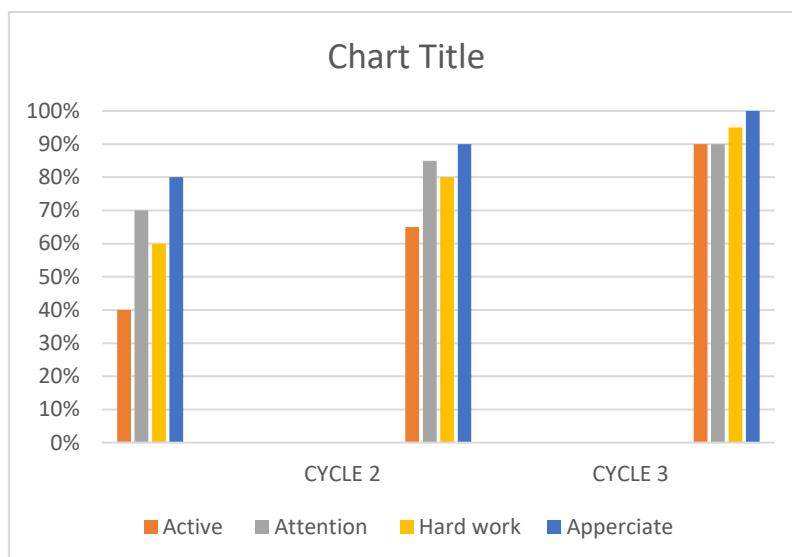
d. Reflecting

Collaborative evaluation with observer to assess the teaching and learning process. Concluding that Memrise application effectively improves vocabulary mastery. Reporting significant progress in vocabulary scores (average 83.1) and active student participation. Declaring the research successful as it met its success criteria with 95% of students passing the minimum mastery score.

3.3 Discussion

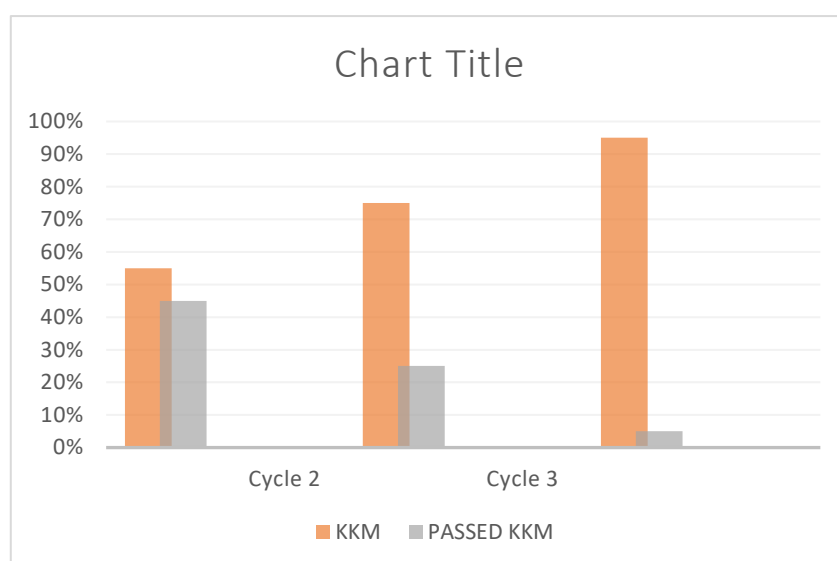
Based on research conducted in the 11th grade at SMK Bakti Jaya Depok, The observations during the research cycles showed increasing student engagement in vocabulary learning using the Memrise application. In Cycle 1, 40% of students were active, 70% attentive, 60% hardworking, and 80% appreciative. By Cycle 3, these numbers had increased to 90%, 90%, 95%, and 100% respectively, indicating higher participation and motivation. The vocabulary test results demonstrated significant improvement from Cycle 1 to Cycle 3. In Cycle 1, 55% of students passed the minimum competency criteria (KKM = 75), rising to 75% in Cycle 2, and reaching 95% in Cycle 3. The average scores also increased from 72.75 to 83.1 by the end of Cycle 3. Interviews with students revealed that they found Memrise engaging and enjoyable. They appreciated the game-like activities, spaced repetition feature, and interactive exercises, which helped them remember vocabulary effectively and made learning less boring. The collaborator (English teacher) observed positive outcomes, noting increasing student enthusiasm and improved vocabulary mastery attributed to using Memrise. She expressed interest in

applying Memrise in future teaching due to its ability to combine fun and effective learning. The overall discussion concluded that the Memrise application effectively supports vocabulary acquisition by increasing student motivation, engagement, and vocabulary retention in an interactive, enjoyable manner.



Picture I. Result of Improvement of observe memrise application in each Cycle

Based on research conducted in the 11th grade at SMK Bakti Jaya Depok, the use of memrise application to improve students English vocabulary over three cycles. This progress can be seen from the total of 20 students In Cycle 1, student participation in the learning process showed moderate levels, with 40% of students being active, 70% paying attention, 60% demonstrating hard work, and 80% showing appreciation for the learning activities. This indicates that nearly half of the students were engaged, although there was room for improvement. In Cycle 2, there was a noticeable increase in student engagement. Active participation rose to 65%, attention climbed to 85%, hard work reached 80%, and appreciation remained at 80%. This demonstrates that the use of the Memrise application helped to boost students' involvement, motivation, and focus compared to the first cycle. By Cycle 3, student engagement had markedly improved. The percentage of active students rose to 90%, attention reached 90%, hard work increased to 95%, and appreciation for the learning process hit 100%. These figures show that nearly all students were fully engaged, attentive, hardworking, and appreciative during the learning activities. Overall, the upward trend across the cycles reflects that the Memrise application contributed positively to increasing student participation, enthusiasm, and motivation throughout the learning process.



Picture II. Result of Improvement of observe memrise application in each Cycle

Observed indicators consisted of participation in discussions, the ability to express English vocabulary, responsibility, group cooperation, and independent reflection. In Cycle 1, 55% of the students passed the minimum passing grade (KKM) of 75, while 45% failed, with an average score of 72.75. This indicates that just over half of the students met the standard at the initial stage. In Cycle 2, there was an improvement, with 75% of students passing and 25% failing. The average score increased to 78.55, showing clear progress in students' vocabulary mastery after further use of the Memrise application. By Cycle 3, the improvement became more significant, as 95% of students passed and only 5% failed the test. The average score rose to 82.35, indicating that almost all students reached the required competency level. This data demonstrates a consistent increase in students' vocabulary achievement across the three cycles, highlighting the effectiveness of the Memrise application in improving vocabulary mastery among tenth-grade students. The passing rate improved by 40% from Cycle 1 to Cycle 3, supporting a well-structured and progressive learning intervention.

4 CONCLUSION

The use of the Memrise application effectively improves vocabulary mastery among tenth-grade students at SMK BAKTI JAYA, Depok. There was continuous progress in vocabulary mastery observed in each cycle as students actively participated in learning through the Memrise app. Students showed improvements in understanding word meanings, word functions, pronunciation, synonyms, and antonyms, which positively impacted their overall learning. The application helped increase students' motivation and self-confidence in learning English vocabulary. Students demonstrated increased attention, positive responses, and respect during the learning process. There was a significant 20% increase in students' vocabulary scores from Cycle 1 to Cycle 3. The study confirmed the hypothesis that the Memrise application enhances vocabulary

mastery effectively. It is recommended for English teachers to use Memrise to make vocabulary learning more engaging and enjoyable. Students are encouraged to actively engage and practice vocabulary regularly using digital tools like Memrise. Future researchers are encouraged to explore and analyze Memrise's effectiveness further in English language learning contexts. These conclusions indicate that Memrise is a successful digital learning tool for improving English vocabulary at the secondary education level.

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