IMPROVING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' ENGLISH VOCABULARY THROUGH *learnenglish.de* WEBSITE

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ABSTRACT

Students who enter junior high school must have master the basics of the international language, that is English language, so that when entering senior high school students are proficient in English. The purpose of this study is to find out whether the *learnenglish.de* website is able to influence students' skills in English, especially in mastering English vocabulary. This type of research was included in the type of qualitative research with a descriptive study approach. This research was conducted specifically, detail, and in depth with students. The results of this study include; Many students were helped by online courses, moreover free courses, in improving English skills. In addition, 86,4% of 44 students agreed that the *learnenglish.de* website was worth using to improve their English skills, especially in terms of vocabulary. This was proven by the existence of various types of learning related to English in the website.

Keywords: English vocabulary; learnenglish.de website; Junior high school students; learn English; English skills

INTRODUCTION

Although Indonesia has made English a Foreign Language (EFL), English is necessary for students who need the language as a career prospect. Along with the development of the times, it increasingly opens up opportunities to communicate internationally.

That makes English a potential provision (Mika Andika, 2022). Students should not only rely on English class hours at school to learn English. However, students can also study privately at home using online applications or websites. Of course, not all online courses were paid, but some also provide free online courses. According to the results of the authors were research, 100% of 44 students like free courses. In addition, we found a *learnenglish.de* website that provides free and complete English learning.

Technology has a very important role in the teaching and learning process. (Tapscott, 2008) stated that the generation of digital generation uses technology like breathing. By using technology, they can find learning resources, search for information on the internet, and even play games. This is also supported by the results of a previous study, where 96.1% of 203 students aged 13-15 expressed their readiness and familiarity with the use of technology in everyday life (Permana, 2020).

In Indonesia, English language has been learned since elementary school, some have even learned English in kindergarten. Therefore, by the time students enter junior high school, they should have mastered the basics of English, such as mastering vocabulary that can be used in daily conversation. Moreover, generation Z has now made smartphones like friends, so generation Z students should be smarter in finding information or learning to improve their abilities through smartphones, especially improving their ability to speak English. However, most generation Z students use their smartphones to just surf chatting on WhatsApp, scrolling Instagram and Facebook, playing TikTok and games, and other things that are not useful with screen time that is not ideal. If they put in a little effort to find a free app or website to learn and not have to spend a lot of money, then they will find it. This is unfortunate for junior high school students who are already good at playing smartphones, but do not have the effort to look for useful things on social media.

The authors found the *learnenglish.de* website when we were in the second grade of senior high school. The authors use the website to increase the English vocabulary that the authors wants to master. The authors also uses the website as an additional course as teaching material for the final exam. Website *learnenglish.de* was very helpful as an additional teaching material apart from the classroom material taught by the teacher. Of course, the authors regrets the delay in finding the website. In addition, the authors

believes that the website will help high school students in mastering the basics of English, and their ability will increase to proficiency level when they step into high school. This is proven by the results of the authors were research on students who have used the *learnenglish.de* website.

METHODOLOGY

The type of research was included in the type of qualitative research with a descriptive study approach, involving 44 students who had an opinion about the *learnenglish.de* website through a questionnaire. This research was conducted specifically, in detail, and in depth with students. A qualitative description approach through an online survey, that is a questionnaire with open-ended questions was an interesting solution to find out the positive impact of the *learnenglish.de* website in improving English vocabulary for junior high school students. The data analysis technique in descriptive qualitative aims to describe or provide an overview of the *learnenglish.de* website, whether the website is able to improve the English vocabulary of junior high school students. The authors examined students' perceptions, actions, and motivations regarding the website through a questionnaire. The choice of this method is based on several considerations. First, qualitative methods are more adaptable when meeting multiple realities. Second, this method presents directly the nature of the relationship between researchers and informants. Third, this method is able to adapt to the many value patterns encountered (Moleong, 2018).

As a result, this study uses data collection by providing an instrument that has one type of open-ended questions, which contains four items. (Dwinawan, 2018) explains that open-ended questions are the type of questions used to get broad answers. This is intended so that researchers get clearer data, and also make it easier for respondents to answer. The authors asks questions to respondents by providing questions that are similar in nature to essays so that respondents can freely provide answers without the need to be fixated on other answer options that have been provided by the authors. In addition, the researchers also provides open-ended questions where respondents have

the right to give their opinions in the blank answer column provided. This type of question is quite helpful in the data identification process.

DISCUSSION

1. An Overview of Learn English Website

Learn English (*learnenglish.de*) is a Non-Profit Organization (NPO) website registered in the United Kingdom since 1999. The Learn English team runs a network of online websites and services voluntarily. They organize several sessions on the platform. The session was dedicated to helping ESL (English Second Language) and EFL (English Foreign Language) students and teachers who wanted to improve English skills. All sessions are held free of charge for and open to all. This website is aimed at beginner-level students learning English, also to enrich the teacher is lessons along with lesson plans and handouts. As well as this website to control students' English learning process by itself, along with to promote the use of technology for learning and teaching.
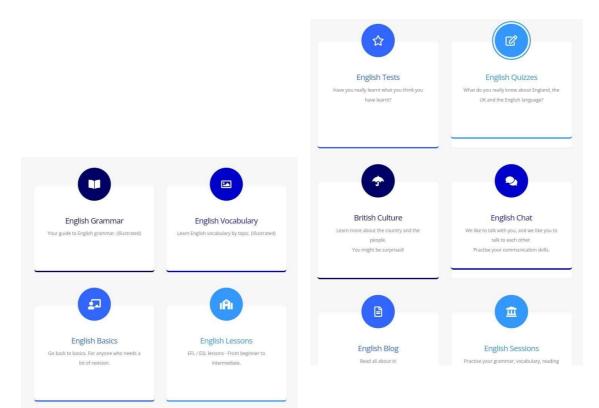
The *learnenglish.de* website offers ways to learn English with an extensive English vocabulary together with magazines, diaries, games, free English lessons and tests, what is more insights into culture, traditions and customs in the United Kingdom. Learn English has the slogan, "Created for you. Inspired by you." Besides, it also has a vision to make the website a free resource for EFL and ESL. The authors are very grateful to the *learnenglish.de* team, which has helped many students as well as teachers in learning English. The developers of learn english network are Lynne Hand and her team. Lynne Hand is an education teacher from London, England, United Kingdom. The developers of the *learnenglish.de* website really volunteered to create it. The *learnenglish.de* website has been able to help people around the world since 1999. This is all done in an effort for people to master English language as it is an international language. Therefore, learning English is very important, because English is an international language that is generally used as a language of communication for people who come from abroad (Schechter, 2016).

2. The Role of Learn English Website to Improve English Vocabulary for Junior High School Students'

Nowadays, there is more and more pressure to master the English language. Indonesians aged 13-15, including those living away from major population centers are well aware of the potential importance of English for themselves and the possible benefits they can gain by acquiring proficiency. If junior high school students have mastered the basics of English, it will be easier for them in high school, college, and when looking for a career. In addition, learning a new language is no longer confined to the traditional classroom. The increasing use of technology has changed the way English is learned and taught, not only in the classroom, but outside the classroom. Mobile technology expands language learning by enabling access in a variety of contexts. Junior high school students must be good at finding information on social media because the current technological advances that will continue to create opportunities to improve second language mastery. (Jeremy, 2009) said that the ability to speak fluently does not only rely on knowledge of language features, but also the ability to process information and language. Moreover, smartphones are ubiquitous among young adults, with 92% of 18- to 29-year-olds owning one (Berger, 2018). Students who use smartphones are actually more motivated to learn both in class and independently outside of class, and they also show less anxiety.

The reason of authors makes the *learnenglish.de* website as the object of research, because the website was very complete for learning English, especially for beginners who want to master the basics of English. On the first page of the website, there were many learning options, to the same degree; all of English Basics, English Grammar, English Vocabulary, English Lessons for ESL or EFL, English Pronunciation for listening practice, plus there were Fun and Games. In addition, there was definitely an English Tests menu to find out the extent of our English Skills. There are also English Quizzes. As well as we will also learn more about England, United Kingdom, and English language. On the website, there was a British Culture column. We can learn about the cusghjktoms, culture and traditions of the United Kingdom. There was also an English Chat section to talk to each other. Last, there was an English session column to practice English grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing skills.

*Attendant *learnenglish.de* website looks like this:

In the company of the complete website, it has a positive influence on improving the skills of ESL and EFL students or teachers, especially for junior high school children who need to master the basics of English. According to the results of our research questionnaire, one of the student users of the *learnenglish.de* website argues that, "*The learnenglish.de website was very worth it to improve English language skills, especially the ability to master English vocabulary, because the website can be accessed by all groups for free and the features are also extensive, so that it can add insight into vocabulary, grammar, and others*" (Nirmaya, opinion in questionnaire, May 8, 2023). On the website, students learn the form of the word, the meaning of the word, and how to use the word appropriately in various situations. Therefore, respondents in our research questionnaire thought that *learnenglish.de* website was worth to improve English skills especially in vocabulary. Vocabulary mastery facilitates the development of other language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. That being the case, English vocabulary needs to be mastered by junior high school students so that when they go to senior high school, college, and work, they just need to develop the vocabulary into a sentence.

At that point in time, there were also questionnaire respondents who thought that, "*The learnenglish.de website is very worthy to improve the vocabulary of junior high school students, because in addition to being accessible for free, this website also provides many learning options from basic, intermediate, and advanced level*" (Fatimah, opinion in questionnare, May 8, 2023). From the many opinions, respondents mostly think that the Learn English website is worth from it is appearance and also from the various learning options, then they also really like the Learn English website because it can be accessed for free. However, even though it was free, it was worth. 86.4% of 44 students think that the website was worth it to help improve English vcabulary skills for junior high school students. In those days, 13.6% students argues that Learn English website cannot help improve English vocabulary skills for junior high school students. In addition, the authors concludes that the Learn English website can greatly help junior high school students improve their English vocabulary if they are hardwork in learning it.

(Teodorescu, 2015) reported that language apps or websites allow students to tailor practice to their level of knowledge, with a choice between apps for beginners, intermediate or advanced, and the possibility to assess themselves and monitor progress. Although mobile apps or websites have a great impact on the development of language skills, this must be accompanied by high learning motivation from the students. Students must also interact or practice the English language to their friends or to people around them so that they do not forget the vocabulary they have learned. Afterwards, students can practice by doing monologues. Students can also write essays or scientific papers using English. The learn english website will not be able to improve students' English vocabulary if the students do not practice often and only read the lesson material on the website at a glance. Students must practice what they have learned in their daily lives in order to become fluent or good at English more quickly. On the occasion, sudents can also challenge themselves to memorize the vocabulary that has been learned on the website and repeat the memorization once or twice a week.

3. Disadvantages of the Learn English website

From the beginning of the article, the authors wrote many advantages of the *learnenglish.de* website. However, while there are advantages, there are also has disadvantages. The Learn English user respondents in our research said that the website has too many advertisements, this was because the website was accessed for free. The advertisements that still interfere with our learning English and make students not focus on learning. In addition, the appearance of the website was very monotonous especially for junior high school students who like animations. As well as on the website there are also no pictures and videos as learning materials, there are only voice to learn listening English. This website uses internet access such as quota or wifi, so when the quota runs out and the power goes out this website cannot be used because it uses internet access.

However, so far, many respondents in our research who participated in filling out the questionnaire did not mind the shortcomings of the website. They are quite satisfied with Learn English website that helps them in learning English. There are even respondents who want the website to have an app version as well. As said by (Anwar, May 2023, opinion in questionnare) "*It seems that if an application version is made, it will be more instant.*" The authors agrees with this opinion, but the website version is already very good and very helpful for many people. As well as, many people have recognized the advantages of the website because it is easy to use, such as people who are still learning English at an early level they will quickly understand and understand when learning through the website. Especially if you study regularly like spending 2 hours a day.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results that the authors describes in the description and analysis of the role of *learnenglish.de* website in improving vocabulary skills of junior high school students, the authors refers to the conclusion of the subject matter and pays attention to the research objectives. These are the following conclusion:

First, the development of Learn English website to assist students in improving English vocabulary. From the beginning of the establishment of the website in 1999 until now it has developed so rapidly and has not been neglected. Learn English website users are also increasing. However, there is no change in the features of the website. The features are still the same as when the website was newly created. This makes students who learn through the Learn English website will receive the learning materials thoroughly because there is no addition or subtraction of materials on the website.

Secondly, English learning in learnenglish.de website has a great influence for students in improving English vocabulary skills. It is proven by the opinions of many students in our research questionnaire. Moreover, it is also proven because of the completeness of the website, Starting from the features of English Basics, English Grammar, English Vocabulary, English Lessons for ESL or EFL, English Pronunciation, plus there are Fun and Games. In addition, there are English Test and Quiz menu, and significantly more.

Third, the existence of the Learn English website is very important to help students in improving English vocabulary. As a matter of course, it is accompanied by students who diligently study the lessons on the website, as well as the way students practice them, and the way students manage their time to learn affects the development of improving English vocabulary skills of junior high school students.

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