

AN INTERVIEW STUDY ON DIGITAL VOCABULARY LEARNING WITH ROSETTA STONE APPS : INDONESIAN EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the perceptions of Indonesian EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students regarding the Rosetta Stone application as a digital vocabulary learning medium. This research uses qualitative methods that collect data through participant interviews (Creswell, 2012). Digital vocabulary learning using mobile language learning assistants in the EFL scope, this research analyzes the results of interviews using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), the finding showed that participants found Rosetta Stone to be an effective tool for improving pronunciation and vocabulary acquisition. The interactive features, real-time feedback on pronunciation, and dynamic immersion approach contributed significantly to their learning experience.

Keywords

EFL students, Indonesian, Rosetta Stone Apps, Digital vocabulary learning, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning

1. PENDAHULUAN

In the ever-evolving landscape of language education, the integration of digital tools has become increasingly prevalent, offering innovative environments for learners to improve their language skills (Calvo-Ferrer, 2020). This notion has transformed students' learning experience (Kurt & Bensen, 2017), providing new and dynamics ways for learners to acquire and improve their language skills (Zhang et al., 2011), and providing learners with diverse learning styles and preferences (Zou et al., 2021). For these reasons, various learning platforms and applications were invented in order to assist language learners to learn targeted language. One contender is Rosetta Stone app, a globally acclaimed innovative platform which provide immersive language learning environment with its multimedia-rich content and dynamic exercise for language learners to learn targeted language and enrich their vocabulary knowledge.

In language learning, vocabulary acquisition and learning hold immense significance roles in language mastery (Nation & Meara, 2002). Lack of vocabulary can hinder the development of targeted language and impede effective communication. Learners' ability to express thoughts, ideas, and emotions is intricately tied to the richness of lexical inventory (Nation, 2000). Moreover, learners' robust vocabulary knowledge is necessary for reading comprehension (Stæhr, 2008), writing proficiency (Akbarian & Farrokhi, 2021; Coxhead, 2018), and overall language comprehension (Akbarian & Farrokhi, 2021; Szabo et al., 2021). Without enough lexical unit supply, learners might struggle to convey discourse meaning, resulting in miscommunication (Kikuchi, 2009).

This study contributes to the growing body of empirical research on technology-enhanced language learning by offering in-depth insights into Indonesian EFL students' perceptions of using Rosetta Stone for vocabulary acquisition. Unlike most existing studies that focus on quantitative outcomes, this interview-based study provides rich, contextualized data that deepen the understanding of learners' personal experiences, motivation, and engagement with digital vocabulary tools. It fills a gap in the literature by focusing on a non-Western context, where access, familiarity, and cultural adaptation of digital platforms may differ significantly.

Practically, the findings of this study can inform language educators, curriculum designers, and edtech developers about how Indonesian EFL learners interact with digital platforms like Rosetta Stone. By understanding learners' preferences, challenges, and perceived benefits, stakeholders can make more informed decisions when integrating similar tools into classroom settings or self-learning environments. This study also offers practical recommendations for optimizing the use of Rosetta Stone in Indonesian EFL contexts, which can improve vocabulary learning outcomes and digital literacy among students.

The demand for competent English language skills among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in Indonesia has expanded tremendously, reflecting the country's rising integration into the global community. Traditional methods of language education are progressively being supplemented by digital resources that provide learners with more interactive and dynamic chances for vocabulary learning in response to this need. The introduction of platforms such as the Rosetta Stone app represents a move toward technology-enabled language learning, which provides students with multimedia-rich information and immersive activities to help them improve their vocabulary in a fun way.

To date, many researchers attracted to investigate the effectiveness of digital vocabulary learning on EFL students. Wang et al., (2021) for example reported that digital vocabulary learning could attract students to learn vocabulary through feedback and reward systems. Two studies (Fu et al, 2021; Liang 2018) reported that students have better learning experience using digital apps to learn English vocabulary. Additionally, Hongjin (2021) reported the enhancement of learners' vocabulary skills and motivational aspects because of digital vocabulary learning schools. In this regard, although research have reported that digital vocabulary tools can improve students' vocabulary learning. However, the research that explore participants experience in using these digital vocabulary learning apps, particularly in Indonesia, is still in its infancy such as; Kahoot (Puji Lestari et al., 2022), U-Dictionary Apps (Dhian Marita Sari et al., 2024), and Duolingo, (Umi Mujiarni et al., 2024). However, the research which particularly investigate Rosetta Stone Apps is none existence. Thus, there is a need to explore EFL students experience in using digital vocabulary learning tools, particularly Rosetta Stone, to learn English vocabulary

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

In order to investigate students' perception concerning digital vocabulary learning mediated by Rosetta Stone Apps, this research uses qualitative methods that collect data through participant interviews (Creswell, 2012). Further, qualitative methods can help researchers understand processes and patterns of human behavior that can be difficult to quantify. There are several advantage to using qualitative research

methods. Firstly, qualitative methods produce an in-depth (detailed) picture of participants' feelings, opinions and experiences and interpret the meaning of their actions. Secondly, qualitative research methods such as participant observation, unstructured interviews, direct observation, describes the most common notes in data collection (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2017). During data collection, researchers interact with participants directly as occurs during data collection through interviews. Therefore, qualitative methods can contribute to the understanding of complex features of language assessment.

In order to recruit research participants for this study, the researchers employ purposive sampling. According to Jupp (2006) purposive sampling is a technique employed to select participants based on specific considerations and it is appropriate for qualitative methods. In this case, there are several criteria that has been determined for the research participants involved in this study.

As the result namely, there were 3 participants. To protect the identity of the participants, the researcher used a pseudonym. Student 1 from the Islamic University of Jember English study program class of 2019. Student 2 from the Islamic University of Jember English study program class of 2019. Student 3 from the Islamic University of Jember class of 2021.

2.2 Instrumentation

Semi-structured interviews are a research method commonly used in the social science. Semi-structured interviews may further be used when the appropriateness of the data is unclear. In this case circumstances, asking people's opinions, talking and listening to them is the only way to produce the data and information that researchers need. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were chosen to add additional value dimensions for research. Applying these methods can help researchers approach their research questions from different perspectives and lenses. From this perspective, the researcher believes that interviewees should be given more freedom and control over the interview situation than is permitted, as in a „structured“ approach. In addition, Magaldi and Berler (2020) argue that interviews are semi-structure topical trajectories provided prior to the interview, allowing the researcher to delve deeper into the findings.

To gather the data from the participants, the semi-structured interview will be conducted face to face. During the interview process, to avoid interview boredom and fatigue which may hinder the process of data collection, interviews this process is only done in about 35 minutes. This study will also record the interview. During the interview process the researcher will ask five question, following the interview guidelines adapted and adopted from the recent study (Kohnke, 2020) as follow; (1) opinion on Rosetta Stone App, (2) Usefulness of Rosetta Stone App for vocabulary learning, (3) interesting part of Rosetta Stone App, (4) Challenges in using Rosetta Stone App, and (5) App feature suggestion for Rosetta Stone App.

2.3 Data Analysis

In order to gain an in-depth understanding of digital vocabulary learning using mobile language learning assistants in the EFL scope, this research analyzes the results of interviews using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is a method for analyzing, identifying, and reporting patterns, or themes, in data. This is a common technique often used to analyze interview or focus group data in qualitative research. In this regard, thematic Analysis lends itself to a variety of research interests and theoretical perspectives, and is useful as a 'basic' method because: a) this method can be applied to a variety of research questions, from these questions about people's experiences or understanding of them regarding representation and construction of a particular

phenomenon in a particular context; b) can be used for analysis various types of data, from secondary sources such as media to focus group or interview transcripts; c) works with large or small data sets; and d) can be applied to production analysis based on data or based on theory (Braun & Clark, 2006). There are several steps in analyzing the data in this study, those are; familiarizing the data, transcribing the

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

According to the findings of the interviews, students believe that Rosetta Stone is an effective language app for improving pronunciation and vocabulary. The first question established students' general perception of using mobile apps for vocabulary learning.

a. The General Learner's Perceptions

"Apps like Rosetta Stone let you learn at your own speed, which is awesome. They're interactive, making the whole process more fun, and the multimedia stuff really helps you remember and understand better."

(Student 1)

For students expressed positive attitudes toward using Rosetta Stone, highlighting features such as self-paced learning, interactivity, pronunciation practice, and multimedia support. These reflections align with core principles of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), which emphasizes learner autonomy, flexibility, and multimodal input to enhance language acquisition. Student 1 valued the app's ability to improve pronunciation through native speaker models and direct speaking practice,

b. Beneficial of Resetta Stone Apps

Interviewees felt that the application was most useful in pronunciation, this was particularly useful for respondent.

"The coolest thing about the Rosetta Stone app is how interactive it is, letting you practice speaking in a natural way. Plus, the TruAccent feature gives instant feedback on your pronunciation, which really helps you get better fast!" (Student 3)

The interviewees highlighted Rosetta Stone's effectiveness in improving pronunciation and vocabulary, with particular appreciation for its interactive features and instant feedback. Student 3 praised the TruAccent technology for helping refine pronunciation quickly, aligning with MALL's emphasis on immediate, personalized feedback. Students find this app a great tool for learning new vocabulary, most agree that it is interesting and not boring.

"What I really like about Rosetta Stone is how interactive it is, getting you to speak right off the bat, which makes learning fun. The Dynamic Immersion method is awesome too—it uses images and audio instead of just translation, helping you grasp the language more naturally."

(Student 2)

Meanwhile, Student 2 emphasized the app's engaging and immersive design, specifically the Dynamic Immersion method, which supports vocabulary acquisition through contextual learning rather than translation. Overall, students found the app enjoyable and motivating, reinforcing the idea that mobile learning tools can enhance both pronunciation accuracy and vocabulary retention through natural, interactive language exposure.

c. Challenges of Rosetta Stone Apps

One participant mentioned difficulties the problem with the Rosetta Stone application is that

"Sometimes the pronunciation or speech recognition system is inaccurate. So, even if we speak correctly, sometimes it is still not accepted. Apart from that, the appearance sometimes feels a bit complicated for beginners so it takes time to get used to it." (Student 3)

Despite the overall positive feedback, one participant pointed out limitations in Rosetta Stone's speech recognition accuracy, noting that correct pronunciation is occasionally misjudged by the system. This reflects a common challenge in Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), where technological limitations can hinder user experience and progress. Additionally, the participant found the interface somewhat complex for beginners, suggesting that while the app is rich in features, it may require a learning curve for new users. These insights highlight the need for continuous improvement in user interface design and AI-based feedback systems to ensure both accessibility and effectiveness in language learning apps.

d. Participants' Feedback Toward Apps

Students' preferences for motivating app features them or beneficial in their vocabulary acquisition. The researcher asked participants what they think about the app features in Rosetta Stone Apps.

"I hope there is a learning feature with interactive videos that show everyday situations, so that it is easier to understand how to use language in real contexts. Because learning from real situations is more fun and connects faster." (Student 1)

Student responses revealed a preference for app features that enhance engagement and real-world relevance, particularly in supporting vocabulary acquisition. Student 1 expressed a desire for interactive video content depicting everyday situations, emphasizing that contextual and experiential learning would make language use easier to grasp and more enjoyable. This aligns with MALL principles that prioritize authentic learning environments and multimodal input to boost retention and motivation. The suggestion indicates that incorporating real-life scenarios could further improve the app's effectiveness by helping learners connect vocabulary with meaningful context.

3.2 Discussion

Based on the data, researchers identified various perspectives on the effectiveness of Rosetta Stone in teaching English vocabulary. Participants believe that the Rosetta Stone application is interactive learning where this application emphasizes speaking and listening from the start so that it can increase self-confidence. Also the feature contained in it is real-time pronunciation feedback which helps users improve their speaking skills effectively.

Use of Rosetta Stone results in important progress in vocabulary acquisition, demonstrating its effectiveness as a useful additional resource. This trend reflects the broader digital transformation movement in education, where technology is being progressively leveraged to improve learning outcomes and provide personalized educational experiences. Moreover, the cultural relevance of educational materials is a crucial factor. Access to culturally diverse content can boost student engagement and make learning more applicable to their daily lives.

In conclusion, the results of this study highlight the effectiveness of applying Rosetta Stone in improving vocabulary mastery among students. These findings suggest that integrating digital tools into language education can result in significant improvements in student learning outcomes. However, the effectiveness of these

interventions may differ across student groups, highlighting the importance of personalized and culturally relevant approaches in educational practice. data, giving code to the data, categorizing the code based on the themes, defining and naming each themes, and lastly presenting the data.

4. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the perceptions of Indonesian EFL undergraduate students regarding the Rosetta Stone app as a digital tool for vocabulary learning. The findings indicate that students view Rosetta Stone as an effective resource for enhancing pronunciation and vocabulary acquisition. The app's interactive features, such as real-time feedback on pronunciation and a dynamic immersion approach, contribute significantly to students' learning experiences. However, challenges such as occasional inaccuracies in pronunciation recognition and a complex interface for beginners were noted. Overall, the integration of digital tools like Rosetta Stone shows promise in improving vocabulary mastery among EFL learners.

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