

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY WEBSITE AS A LEARNING MEDIUM IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION

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### Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengevaluasi efektivitas Situs Web Kamus Cambridge sebagai media pembelajaran dalam meningkatkan pelafalan siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode quasi-eksperimental (non-equivalent design) yang melibatkan siswa kelas X di SMKN 3 Kota Serang. Teknik pengambilan sampel yang digunakan adalah "purposive sampling," dengan kelas X TKJ 2 sebagai kelas eksperimen dan kelas X TKJ 1 sebagai kelas kontrol. Instrumen pra-tes dan pasca-tes digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data, yang dianalisis menggunakan IBM SPSS versi 29.0.1.0 (171). Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa ada efektivitas dalam penggunaan Situs Web Kamus Cambridge untuk meningkatkan pelafalan siswa, sebagaimana ditunjukkan oleh peningkatan yang signifikan dalam hasil pra-tes dan pasca-tes kelas eksperimen berdasarkan kriteria prestasi siswa. Selain itu, uji sampel berpasangan, yang menunjukkan nilai-p dua sisi  $< 0,001$ . Hasil ini mengkonfirmasi penerimaan hipotesis alternatif ( $H_a$ ), yang menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan di kelas eksperimen antara nilai rata-rata pra-tes dan pasca-tes. Sebaliknya, uji sampel independen untuk pra-uji menunjukkan nilai signifikansi sebesar 0,31, yang mengarah pada penerimaan hipotesis nol ( $H_0$ ), yang menunjukkan tidak ada perbedaan signifikan dalam nilai rata-rata pra-uji antara kelas eksperimen dan kontrol. Namun, hasil pasca-uji menunjukkan nilai signifikansi  $< 0,01$ , yang mendukung penerimaan hipotesis alternatif ( $H_a$ ) dan menunjukkan perbedaan signifikan dalam nilai rata-rata pasca-uji antara kedua kelas.

**Kata Kunci:** Pengucapan, Situs Web Kamus Cambridge, Media Pembelajaran Berbasis Teknologi, Fonem.

### Abstract

*The objective of this research was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Cambridge Dictionary Website as a learning medium in improving students' pronunciation. The research employed a quasi-experimental method (non-equivalent design) involving tenth-grade students at SMKN 3 Kota Serang. The sampling technique used was "purposive sampling," with class X TKJ 2 serving as the experimental class and class X TKJ 1 as the control class. Pre-test and post-test instruments were used to collect the data, which were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 29.0.1.0 (171). The findings revealed that there was effectiveness in using the Cambridge Dictionary Website to improve students' pronunciation, as indicated by the significant improvement in the experimental class's pre-test and post-test results based on student achievement criteria. Additionally, paired sample test, which showed a two-sided p-value of  $< 0.001$ . This result confirmed the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ), indicating a significant improvement in the experimental class between the pre-test and post-test average values. In contrast, the independent samples test for the pre-test showed a significance value of 0.31, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), indicating no significant difference in the pre-test average values between the experimental and control classes. However, the post-test results showed a significance value of  $< 0.01$ , supporting the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) and demonstrating a significant difference in post-test average values between the two classes.*

**Keywords:** Pronunciation, Cambridge Dictionary Website, Technology-Based Learning Medium, Phonemes



## INTRODUCTION

Mispronunciation remains an issue for many EFL international students. Pronunciation is one of the most common issues in students' speaking skills in several Asian nations (Ammar, 2022). Therefore, the teaching of pronunciation must be emphasized more in learning English, especially in the classroom, in order for students to become accustomed to learning pronunciation.

In speaking, it is critical to pronounce the words appropriately. Due to mispronouncing a word, it might change its meaning and confound the listener's understanding of what the speaker means. AbdAlgane & Idris, (2020) stated that if English learners want to be proficient speakers, having a proper way of pronouncing words is essential; incorrect pronunciation can make it difficult for listeners to comprehend or may lead to misunderstandings of the speaker's meaning

In the classroom, when the students are learning to pronounce words, English teachers rarely teach the students about phonemes; the students learn without knowing the sound construction of the word (Fadillah, 2020). In addition, the lack of awareness that several alphabetic letters in a word can alter the phoneme makes it difficult for students to pronounce English words correctly and often leads to mispronunciations.

Furthermore, students' pronunciation problems were exacerbated by a lack of knowledge of phonemes in English and the absence of a few English phonemes in Indonesian. As evidenced by the research findings (Tambunsaribu & Simatupang, 2022), many students hesitate to pronounce things in English. For the reason that several English sounds do not exist in the Indonesian language and there is no consistency in the pronunciation of numerous English letters. Understanding phonemes in English is critical for student to avoid pronunciation problems. Due to changing phonemes in a word can affect its meaning (Jones, 2006).

Based on the observations conducted by the researcher during the Teacher Training Duty at SMKN 3 Kota Serang, many students face difficulties in pronouncing English words and often experience mispronunciation. There are several reasons for this issue. Firstly, English is still a relatively unfamiliar language and is not widely studied with serious intent. Additionally, the influence of regional languages, particularly Javanese, contributes to pronunciation errors. This is consistent with the statement by (Fitriah et al., 2022), which notes that Serang Javanese accents can create challenges in English pronunciation for certain students.

During the observation phase, the researcher observed that when students were uncertain about the pronunciation of English words, the students would directly ask the teacher for the correct pronunciation. This phenomenon occasionally disrupted teaching and learning activities, as the teacher needed to address numerous student inquiries, which could be time-consuming. This heavy reliance on the teacher for pronunciation guidance indicated that students depended significantly on direct instruction rather than engaging in independent learning. Such dependency may have affected the efficiency of teaching and learning activities and overall instruction. To maintain the effectiveness of teaching and learning activities and enhance the learning process, it essential to explore alternative strategies that support the students in developing pronunciation more independently.

On the other hand, when the researcher taught in the classroom and asked students to use smartphones to learn to pronounce English words correctly, many students did not understand how smartphones could assist with pronunciation and were unaware of which media could be accessed for learning pronunciation. In another case, some students used Google Translate to help with pronunciation. However, several complaints arose due to issues with Google Translate, such as discrepancies between the phonemic transcription and the audio. For example, the word "Snooze" in Google Translate's phonemic transcription appeared as (sn̩o̩ʊz). The confusion experienced by students resulted from a lack of familiarity with the phonemic transcription provided by Google Translate, which led to the mistaken pronunciation of "snooze" as 'snoz' or 'sno-oz', based on Indonesian pronunciation.

In the research conducted by Khasanah et al., (2022), several issues were found that students encountered when using Google Translate, including: Google Translate occasionally failing to display certain words, experiencing prolonged loading times, and showing discrepancies between the phonemic transcription of words and their corresponding audio pronunciation. These problems were observed by students, who found that the tool did not always meet their pronunciation learning needs effectively. To address these issues, it is crucial to be aware of alternative media tools to assist students in learning pronunciation. This method provides students with a range of options to choose from, allowing them to select the most suitable and effective way to meet their learning needs.

In an age where technology is increasingly sophisticated, there are so many dictionaries and learning media that are provided digitally, both from applications and websites, which are very helpful for teachers and students in learning English. Technology may significantly assist teachers in improving students' English skills (Ambarwati & Mandasari, 2020).

Cambridge Dictionary Website serves as one of the learning media that may be utilized to learn English, especially pronunciation. For this reason, students can learn to pronounce words properly and correctly. There are choices of American and British accents, accompanied by phonetic transcription and equipped with audio. Talking about the functions of the Cambridge Dictionary. Likewise, Ambarwati & Mandasari, (2020) mentioned that the Online Cambridge Dictionary offers meaning and audible pronunciations of words, phrases, and idioms in both American and British English.

One feature that sets the Cambridge Dictionary Website apart from other dictionaries is the ability for students to identify individual phonemes. As a result, students are able to identify every phoneme in a word as well as its sound. The other advantages of using the Cambridge Dictionary Website are that it is easy to use, has a simple appearance that is not confusing, and there are no significant annoying ads problems.

## **Literature Review**

### **Learning Media**

In the field of education, media and learning complement one other, particularly in the classroom. Following are some professional definitions of learning media. First, Fathoni et al., (2023) described learning media as a means or container used by educators as a transmitter of information (material) to the students both individually and in groups of people, which may ignite the students' ideas, emotions, focus, passions, and motivation in the learning process, enabling the students to achieve effective learning aligned with the learning objectives.

Following that, Smaldino et al., (2019) explain that learning media is a trustworthy source for information that may be utilized in the learning that assists students acquire insights, attitudes, and abilities.

Lastly, Hasan et al., (2021) explain that learning media are essential to helping students acquire new concepts, skills, and competences. The foregoing description of learning media may be summarized as follows: learning media is any intermediate or facility that may be employed during the learning process, obviously teaching. Learning media may consist of digital or non-digital, media used to access information, and some roles of learning media include developing students' understanding, mindset, and abilities, as well as facilitating the teaching process.

### **Cambridge Dictionary Website**

The Cambridge Dictionary is a dictionary created by the Cambridge University Press in 1995 for English students. The Online Cambridge Dictionary is a free dictionary that has been published since 1999. Moreover Ambarwati & Mandasari, (2020) explain that the online Cambridge Dictionary is a dictionary that contains a variety of features, including idioms in American and British English, phrases, definitions, and audio of words. In relation to the above description, the Cambridge Dictionary Website is an online dictionary published by Cambridge University Press that may be used by language learners, particularly English, and can be accessed by individuals worldwide by visiting the official Cambridge Dictionary Website. Keywords "Cambridge Dictionary" can be used to direct visitors to the website page.

### **Pronunciation**

According to Richards & Schmidt, (2013), pronunciation is the process by which sounds are generated and perceived. Furthermore, (Quoc et al., 2021) conclude that pronunciation is the generation of an intelligible voice to transmit the speaker's meaning for communicative purposes. Pronunciation may be defined as the manner in which a word is spoken in order for the speech or communication to be understood. According to Kelly, phonemes are sounds that exists in language. Kelly explains that there are two categories of sounds in English, vowels and consonants (Kelly, 2000). Furthermore, (Underhill, 2005) describe a phoneme is the tiniest sound that may change the meaning of a word. Phonemes are a component of phonological studies, which investigate the sounds that make up language that help to differentiate meaning (Al-Hamzi et al., 2021). According to the explanations of the two scholars above, it can be inferred that phonemes are the tiniest sounds that serve as a component of the language.

### **METHOD**

A quasi-experimental approach with a nonequivalent control group design was employed in this research. This method has been implemented considering that in this research there are two classes for comparison (the experimental and the control classes) that are not randomly generated. In accordance with Creswell, quasi-experimental methods have intact groups. The quasi-experimental method poses far greater challenges to internal validity than the true-experiment (Creswell, 2012). Since the researcher does not assign individuals to groups at random. the risks of maturation, selection, death, and selection's interplay with other dangers are all possible. Furthermore, in this research, the two classes are not chosen at random. Thus, both of them employ integral classes and have some characteristics. However, the researcher

does not have complete control over the variables that constitute the control class (nonequivalent).

### **Population**

Creswell denotes a population is a group of people who have the same traits (Creswell, 2012). The tenth-grade students at SMKN 3 Kota Serang are the population in this research. It consists of 7 majors: 1. DKV (Visual Communication Design) 2. TKJ (Computer and Network Engineering) 3. TSM (Motorcycle Engineering) 4. AKL (Accounting and Institutions 5. MP (Office Management) 6. TB (Culinary) 7. LP (Banking Institutions).

### **Samples**

The research samples come from two classes X at the Computer and Network Engineering (TKJ/Teknik Komputer Jaringan) department. Each class contains 36 students. Thus, the overall sampling population is 72 students. The experimental class, X TKJ 2, is consist of 27 male and 9 female students. Furthermore, the control class, X TKJ 1, consists of 28 male and 8 female students.

### **Data Collecting Technique**

In order to gather data, administering pre- and post-tests to both research classes were the first step that researchers accomplished. Students were given a total of 20 words in the pre-test and a further 20 in the post-test. Each word that is pronouncing correctly has a point of 5; if the student succeeds in pronouncing the whole of 20 words, the student will get a point of 100, and that applies to both the pre- and post-tests.

### **Instrument of the Research**

Creswell emphasized that an instrument is a tool for observing, documenting, alongside measuring quantitative data (Creswell, 2012). The pre- and post-tests are instruments that was utilized to collect accurate data. Following that, the data was utilized to compare the differences in students' pronunciation between control and experimental classes.

### **Techniques of Data Analysis**

#### **1. Descriptive Statistics Analysis**

According to Gay et al., (2012), descriptive statistics allow researcher to effectively characterize large amounts of data using a limited number of indices. Moreover, Creswell describes descriptive statistics will help to summarize overall facts or trends within the data, provide knowledge of how diverse your scores are, and provide insight into where one score compares to another (Creswell, 2012). In this research, a descriptive statistical analysis is performed to summarize the test findings for both classes. After receiving the scores from the students' tests, then the researcher classified the achievement criteria based on scores (Natsir, 2015)

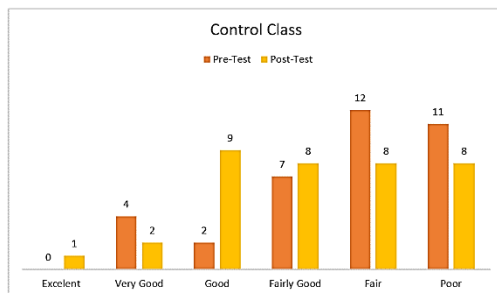
#### **2. Inferential Analysis**

Inferential analysis is used to compare groups or connect two or more variables. The primary concept is to look at sample scores and use the data to make inferences or forecast population trends (Creswell, 2012). Inferential statistics are data analysis approaches that determine the likelihood that the findings acquired from a sample or samples will be the same as those obtained from the complete population (Gay et al., 2012). In this research, inferential analysis

is utilized to answer issues concerning problem formulation. Is there an important distinction comparing students who were treated with the Cambridge Dictionary Website and those who were not. The t-test is the statistical method utilized in this research. And the results were obtained using the IBM SPSS application version 29.0.1.0 (171).

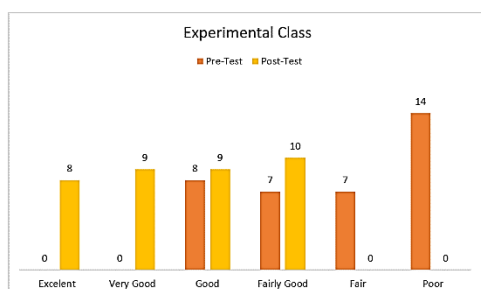
## DISCUSSION

### 1. Students' Achievements Based on Criteria.



From the pre-test and post-test results of the control class, it is evident that a large number of students remain in the two lowest categories, Fair and Poor. Additionally, only three students reached the top two categories, indicating little to no improvement among those who did not receive treatment using the Cambridge Dictionary Website.

Chart 2. Degree Mastery of Experiment Class



The chart diagram above shows a significant improvement in the performance of students in the experimental class, as evidenced by the increase in all high-achieving categories and the absence of students in the lower criteria in the post-test. This indicates a significant improvement in students' performance after using the Cambridge Dictionary Website.

### 2. Test Hypothesis

#### a. Paired Sample Test

| Paired Samples Test |       |                    |                |            |   |            |              |    |             |             |
|---------------------|-------|--------------------|----------------|------------|---|------------|--------------|----|-------------|-------------|
|                     |       | Paired Differences |                |            |   |            | Significance |    |             |             |
| Pair 1              | Tests | Mean               | Std. Deviation | Std. Error | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |            | t            | df | One-Sided p | Two-Sided p |
|                     |       |                    |                |            | Mea                                       | Difference |              |    |             |             |
|                     |       |                    |                |            | n   | Lower      |              |    |             |             |
| 1                   | Tests | 63.22              | 19.019         | 2.24       | 58.75                                     | 67.69      | 28.20        | 7  | <.001       | <.001       |
|                     |       | 2                  |                | 1          | 3   | 1          | 6            |    |             |             |

The paired sample t-test, which compares the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test for the experimental class, yielded a significance value of  $< 0.01$ , which is less than 0.05. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the null hypothesis

( $H_0$ ) is accepted, indicating that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test for the experimental class. This significant difference is attributed to the use of the Cambridge Dictionary Website as a medium for the experimental class students to learn pronunciation.

#### b. Independent Sample Test

| Independent Samples Test |                             |   |             |                              |        |      |      |              |       |                 |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|-------------|------------------------------|--------|------|------|--------------|-------|-----------------|-----------------------|
|                          |                             | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances |             | t-test for Equality of Means |        |      |      |              |       |                 |                       |
|                          |                             |   |             | F                            | Sig.   | t    | df   | Significance |       | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference |
|                          |                             | One-Sided p                             | Two-Sided p |                              |        |      |      | Lower        | Upper |                 |                       |
| Pre-test                 | Equal variances assumed     | 6.206                                   | .015        | 1.041                        | 70     | .151 | .301 | -3.472       | 3.334 | 10.122          | -3.177                |
|                          | Equal variances not assumed |   |             | 1.041                        | 64.448 | .151 | .302 | -3.472       | 3.334 | 10.132          | -3.187                |

The table above shows that the two-sided p-value is 0.301, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted, indicating that there is no significant difference between the mean pre-test scores of the experimental and control classes.

Based on the results of the independent test (post-test), the two-sided p-value is less than 0.001, which is below the 0.05 threshold. Consequently, the

alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted, indicating a statistically significant difference between the mean post-test scores of the experimental class and the control class.

Table 1 Independent Sample Test (Post-test)

| Independent Samples Test |                             |   |                         |                              |        |       |       |              |             |                 |                       |   |        |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|--------|
|                          |                             | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances |                         | t-test for Equality of Means |        |       |       |              |             |                 |                       |   |        |
|                          |                             |   |                         | F                            | Sig.   | t     | df    | Significance |             | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |        |
|                          |                             |   |                         |                              |        |       |       | One-Sided p  | Two-Sided p |                 |                       | Lower                                     | Upper  |
|                          |                             | Post-test                               | Equal variances assumed | .090                         | .765   | 5.758 | 70    | <.001        | <.001       | 17.639          | 3.063                 | 11.529                                    | 23.749 |
|                          | Equal variances not assumed |   |                         | 5.758                        | 69.700 | <.001 | <.001 | 17.639       | 3.063       | 11.529          | 23.749                |   |        |

Based on the results of the independent test (post-test), the two-sided p-value is less than 0.001, which is below the 0.05 threshold. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted, indicating a statistically significant difference between the mean post-test scores of the experimental class and the control class

## CONCLUSION

The findings from this research confirmed the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ), indicating that there was effectiveness in using the Cambridge Dictionary Website to improve students' pronunciation of tenth-grade students at SMKN 3 Kota Serang. The conclusion was supported by the significant improvement in the experimental class's pre-test and post-test results based on student achievement criteria. Furthermore, the paired sample test produced a two-sided p-value of  $< 0.001$ , confirming that  $H_a$  was accepted and demonstrating a significant difference between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test in the experimental class. On the other hand, the independent samples test for the pre-test showed a significance value of 0.31, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), which indicated no significant difference in the mean pre-test scores between the experimental and control classes. However, the independent samples test for the post-test produced a significance value of  $< 0.01$ , which was less than 0.05, leading to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and indicating a significant difference in the mean post-test scores between the two classes. The role of the Cambridge Dictionary Website was crucial in transforming the equality of mean scores in the pre-test into a significant difference in the post-test scores between the two classes.

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