

WEB-BASED MEDIA AND STUDENTS' INTEREST IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract

This study aims at finding out the influence of web-based media on the learning interest of fourth-semester students in the English Education Study Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Palu. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, the researcher gathered data through observation, documentation, and structured interviews. The findings indicate that students exhibit a high level of interest in utilizing web-based platforms for English learning. Popular tools such as Canva, Padlet, YouTube, Duolingo, and Google Translate have become integral to their learning experience, driven by factors such as accessibility, interactive content, and perceived effectiveness. While students reported positive engagement and increased motivation, challenges like unstable internet connections and device limitations remain significant barriers. Overall, the study suggests that web-based media offers diverse resources that effectively enhance English language skills and understanding, provided that technical infrastructures are adequately supported.

Keywords: Learning Interest, Web-Based Media, English Language Teaching (ELT), Qualitative Study.

BACKGROUND

Education plays an important role in this globalization era, with every country competing to improve the quality of its education, particularly through the integration of information technology (Bachtiar & Puspitasari, 2024). Rapid technological advancements can be applied in the field of education as a means to facilitate the learning process and make it more effective. The use of technology in the classroom has proven to increase students' interest in learning by presenting material in a more engaging and interactive way (Eden et al., 2024; Gupta, 2021).

However, the implementation of technology in education still faces significant challenges. The transition from conventional systems to high-tech systems requires a considerable amount of time

(Safari & Noori, 2019). Furthermore, the successful adoption of technology must be supported by the competence of teaching staff in designing and implementing technology-based learning media (Fadli et al., 2020). Field observations indicate a shortage of educators with professional competencies in information and communication technology (ICT), as well as a lack of adequate supporting facilities (Rohita, 2020).

In the context of language learning, the use of media is essential as a tool to actively engage students in learning activities. Appropriate media ensures that messages or content delivered by instructors are effectively received by students. The use of engaging learning media not only stimulates students' attention and thinking

but also their emotions and interest in the material being studied. Fitri & Ma'rifah, 2022; Laila et al., 2023; Mayer, 2017). One potential innovation is web-based learning. This medium offers various benefits, such as creating a pleasant learning atmosphere, enhancing the efficiency of the learning process, and providing access to a wide range of global information sources that foster user creativity (Maesyaroh et al., 2023; Yulianti et al., 2021).

Despite its great potential, the use of web-based learning media in the English Language Education Program at Muhammadiyah University of Palu has not yet been optimally utilized in the teaching-learning process. Currently, the use of the university website remains limited to serving as an information medium for institutional promotion and branding. Only a small fraction of educators utilizes web-based media functionally within the classroom.

Based on initial observations, it was found that students' interest in learning has not yet reached an optimal level. The learning process tends to be one-sided, with a lack of student engagement in discussions or practical activities, as well as a lack of variety in the use of learning media, which leads to boredom among students. Based on these issues, this study aims to investigate the effect of the use of web-based learning media on students' interest in learning in the English Education Study Program.

LITERATURE REVIEW

English Language Learning

English language learning is a process significantly influenced by advancements in technology and information in the era of globalization. Rapid technological advancements have brought positive changes to education, particularly in language teaching and learning, by enhancing engagement, motivation, and personalized experiences through interactive multimedia and web-

based tools (Bachtiar & Puspitasari, 2024; Eden et al., 2024; Gupta, 2021). Technology facilitates both students and instructors in the teaching-and-learning process, enabling access to diverse resources anytime and anywhere (Mulyadi dkk., 2020; Yulianti et al., 2021).

In language teaching, media are essential tools to actively engage students and ensure they effectively receive instructors' messages (Fitri & Ma'rifah, 2022; Laila et al., 2023). Engaging learning media, such as multimedia presentations and web-based platforms, are crucial as they stimulate students' attention, interest, thoughts, and emotions, thereby increasing motivation and retention (Laila et al., 2023; Mayer, 2017). (Laila et al., 2023; Mayer, 2017) is aligns with communication principles requiring media to enable reciprocal interaction. Thus, learning media are vital for achieving objectives, with psychological interest serving as a key internal factor in mastering English (Fitri & Ma'rifah, 2022).

Students' Interest in Learning

Interest in learning is one of the internal psychological factors that significantly determines students' success in mastering course material, particularly in English language learning (Fitri & Ma'rifah, 2022). Interest can be defined as a persistent mental inclination to pay attention to and recall certain activities or objects, accompanied by a sense of enjoyment (Gupta, 2021). In an educational context, interest plays a crucial role in encouraging students to actively engage in the learning process.

The use of engaging learning media is expected to stimulate students' attention, thoughts, feelings, and interest (Fitri & Ma'rifah, 2022; Laila et al., 2023; Mayer, 2017). When students have a high level of interest, they tend to receive the messages conveyed by instructors more effectively and functionally. Interest in learning is not

static; rather, it can be influenced by external factors, such as the use of technology and web-based media that offer dynamic interaction and varied content (Eden et al., 2024; Gupta, 2021; Yulianti et al., 2021). Therefore, creating an enjoyable learning environment through digital media is a strategic step toward optimizing student engagement and academic performance (Eden et al., 2024; Gupta, 2021; Yulianti et al., 2021).

Web Based Media

Web-based media, sometimes referred to as *Web-Based Training* (WBT) or *Web-Based Education* (WBE), is defined as the use of web technology in education for the purpose of knowledge transfer. Simply put, any learning process that takes place online can be considered web-based learning as long as the individuals participating in it perceive that a learning process is underway.

According to Sibero (2013), the web is a document-based system used as a medium to present text, images, videos, and other content via the internet. Additionally, Kustiyahningsih and Devie (2011) explain that the web is one of the services available to computer users connected to a hypertext facility for displaying data in the form of text, graphics, sound, animation, and other multimedia. By using a browser as the access software, it can be concluded that the web is a hypertext facility for presenting data and contains multimedia documents in various formats.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design aimed at exploring and providing an in-depth description of the situation. Unlike experimental studies, this research does not involve the application of a *treatment*. The researcher observes phenomena occurring

naturally in the field and provides a transparent description of the findings. According to Sugiyono (2008), the descriptive method is particularly suitable for investigating the conditions of human groups, objects, situations, systems of thought, and current events.

Research Setting and Participants

This study was conducted in the English Language Education Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP), Muhammadiyah University of Palu. The research location is at Jl. Rusdi Toana No. 1, Talise, Palu City, Central Sulawesi. The study took place from November 1, 2023, to June 20, 2024. The research subjects were fourth-semester students in the English Language Education Program at the university.

Data Collection Technique

To collect comprehensive data, the researcher used three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. The data collection process was conducted in two main stages:

- 1) **Observation Stage:** The researcher conducted direct observations of the conditions of students and instructors, as well as the dynamics of the teaching-learning process in the classroom.
- 2) **Interview Phase:** The researcher conducts structured interviews with students to gather in-depth information regarding the impact of using website-based learning media on their interest in learning.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted descriptively by classifying discussion themes based on information obtained from respondents. The researcher followed the qualitative data analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman (as cited in Sugiyono, 2018), which consists of three concurrent processes:

- 1) **Data Reduction:** Summarizing, selecting key points, and focusing on essential elements to make the data easier to understand.
- 2) **Data Display:** Presenting data in the form of brief descriptions or charts so that the relationships between phenomena are clearly visible.
- 3) **Data Verification:** Drawing preliminary conclusions supported by valid evidence to answer the research questions.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Based on an analysis of data from observations, interviews, and documentation, the findings of this study are grouped into three main points: students' level of interest, the types of platforms used, and the obstacles encountered.

Students' Interest and Engagement

The results of the study indicate that the use of web-based learning media is highly appreciated by the majority of students in English language learning. Most respondents stated that these resources are effective in boosting their enthusiasm, engagement, and understanding of the material. Students with high levels of interest reported more positive learning experiences, which directly led to:

- An increase in overall learning motivation.
- Better timeliness in completing and submitting assignments.
- A sense of enjoyment and the elimination of the boredom previously felt in one-way learning systems.

Preferred Web-Based Platforms

Research findings reveal that web-based media have become an integral part of students' learning experiences. There is

significant variation in the types of platforms used regularly, including:

- **Most Popular Platforms:** YouTube, Duolingo, and Google Translate serve as the primary tools for students to practice language skills independently.
- **Creative & Collaborative Media:** Students also actively use platforms such as Canva, Padlet, Google Slides (G-Slide), and Google Sites (G-Site) for presentation and collaboration tasks.
- **Institutional Systems:** The university's Learning Management System (LMS) is now routinely used as the central hub for accessing learning materials.

Identified Challenges

Although the level of interest and media usage is relatively high, this study also identified several technical challenges that hinder the optimization of web-based learning. These factors include:

- Unstable internet connections that disrupt access to multimedia content.
- Limitations in the hardware (devices/laptops) owned by some students.
- Variations in students' digital skills when operating specific platform features.

Overall, despite these technical obstacles, students demonstrated a strong desire to continue expanding their use of these media due to their ease of access and the interactive nature of the content.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the use of web-based media has a significant positive impact on students' interest in learning at Muhammadiyah University of Palu. The high level of student enthusiasm and engagement aligns with the theory of Almekhlafi and Almeqdadi (2010), which states that the integration of technology in education can effectively enhance learners' motivation and active

participation. Theoretically, this also supports the view of Harmer (2007) that success in language acquisition depends heavily on students' emotional engagement and enjoyment of the media used. These findings are further supported by the research of Holandyah et al. (2023), which emphasizes that interactive out-of-class activities provide students with a strong sense of benefit in boosting their confidence in communication.

The popularity of platforms such as YouTube, Duolingo, and Google Translate in this study reflects the global trend of digital media use in higher education as identified by Kemp (2021). This phenomenon indicates a shift toward more autonomous and self-directed learning. This is closely related to the research by Duong and Suppasetsee (2024), which found that the use of modern digital tools can yield significant results for students' speaking skills through self-directed practice. Furthermore, student engagement with collaborative platforms such as Canva and Padlet demonstrates that web-based media serve not only as sources of information but also as spaces for creativity and innovation. According to Garrison and Kanuka (2004), the potential of this interactive content holds transformative power in fostering dynamic interactions between instructors and learners.

Although student interest is relatively high, technical challenges such as unstable internet connections and device limitations remain significant barriers in practice. These challenges align with the findings of Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2010), who state that infrastructure and digital skills often act as major barriers to the adoption of educational technology. These findings also resemble the research by Ahmed (2024), which notes that environmental and facility constraints at the university level often limit the full potential of digital learning media. This underscores that while student interest is already strong,

ultimate success still requires adequate infrastructure support as well as student self-regulated learning, as discussed by Agustina et al. (2022).

Overall, the integration of web-based media has paved the way for more inclusive and innovative educational approaches, in line with the views of Huang, Spector, and Yang (2019). Students' desire to continue using this media in the future indicates significant opportunities for developing more varied content in the coming years. These findings also provide a comparative perspective for the research by Raghdah et al. (2025), which indicates that the correlation between supportive activities and language proficiency will become stronger if the media used can sustain student engagement over time. Thus, this paper demonstrates that web-based media is no longer merely a supplement but a core component within the modern English language learning ecosystem.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that students' interest in web-based learning media for English language learning at Muhammadiyah University of Palu indicates a high level of appreciation, although there are variations influenced by factors such as accessibility, content type, and the effectiveness of these media. Web-based media has become an integral part of the students' learning experience, where digital platforms such as Canva, Padlet, LMS, YouTube, Duolingo, and Google Translate have been routinely used to support their language acquisition. Overall, although technical challenges such as internet connection stability and device limitations remain obstacles, the integration of web-based media has proven to make a positive contribution to enhancing students'

enthusiasm and English language skills by offering more varied and interactive resources.

Suggestion

Based on the findings of this study, there are several strategic recommendations that can be implemented to optimize the use of digital learning media. First, instructors are strongly encouraged to systematically integrate the use of web-based media into the English language curriculum through learning activities that utilize platforms such as Padlet, Canva, YouTube, Google Slides, Google Sites, Duolingo, or an LMS. In practice, instructors must provide clear guidance and technical support, including tutorials or brief guides, to ensure students can utilize these platforms effectively and purposefully. Additionally, instructors need to enhance their own digital competencies by participating in educational technology training or workshops to fully master various digital learning tools. To maintain student enthusiasm, instructors are also advised to provide motivation in the form of appreciation or recognition for their efforts and achievements in using web-based media to enhance engagement in the learning process. Finally, it is crucial for instructors to optimize the use of resources already available at the institution, particularly the university's Learning Management System (LMS), to create a more efficient and structured web-based learning ecosystem.

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