

## The Influence of Digital Media on Improving Nursing English Language Ability at Timor University

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### Abstract

*This study is a qualitative descriptive study. The researcher interviewed 15 nursing students at Timor University. In addition to using the interview method, the researcher also used literature review and observation. In the literature review, the researcher collected literature related to digital media containing English learning content. Meanwhile, in the observation, the researcher observed 15 nursing students at Timor University. The results of the study indicate that digital media has an influence on improving the English language skills of nursing students at Timor University. The advantages of digital media are lower costs, richer learning spaces, communicative, providing more specific materials, saving more time, more flexible learning time, and increasing learning motivation. This has an impact on improving the English learning skills of nursing students at Timor University.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Digital media as a learning tool offers new conveniences in mastering any field, including English. The presence of digital media as a learning tool brings about a new shift in learning. Learning is no longer limited to books, but also through learning apps. One such digital media-based learning object is English. The presence of English learning apps brings new conveniences to learning English, including English for nursing.

English for nursing is an important aspect in the medical world, especially in border areas. Belu Regency, a border area with the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste, is a preferred choice for foreign citizens seeking healthcare access. Although the national language used by Timor Leste and the local language of the Atambua city community in Belu Regency is Tetum, the Atambua city community tends to use Indonesian because the regional languages spoken by the Atambua city community are not only Tetum but also Kemak, Bunaq/Marae, and several minor languages such as Dawan, Javanese, Bugis, and others. The diversity of local regional languages in Atambua city makes the community more inclined to use Indonesian in public spaces, including in hospital services.

This issue demands an internationally accepted language. Therefore, English is quite urgent. This is because Atambua also serves as a gateway for several countries, such as Australia and the surrounding countries. Data from the Motaain Cross-Border Post (PLBN) indicates that in 2025, 235,110 people entered Indonesia through the Motaain PLBN. These travelers entered Atambua and continued their journey to other regions in Indonesia for various purposes. Some wanted to shop, travel, and undergo health check-ups. Furthermore,

the use of English in hospitals to serve foreigners demonstrates the hospital's readiness to embrace global developments.

English language proficiency is a challenge because English is not a native language. Not everyone has a strong interest in learning English. Another challenge is that English is not yet widely accepted in Atambua. It is still considered a foreign language. This indicates a lack of cultural preparedness for using English in healthcare services in the Atambua border area. However, there are several supporting factors. These include the demands of global change and the availability of various English learning apps. These apps are very helpful for those who want to master English because they make learning easier. Learners don't need to carry around a lot of books; they can simply use a laptop or mobile phone to read, write, look up new words, ask for explanations, listen, and practice conversation. Learning using apps is quite easy because it can be done anytime.

Some English learning apps include Readle, Duolingo, Babbel, Busuu, Hello Talk, Memrise, and LingoDeer. Each has its own unique features. Besides these apps, people can learn through podcasts, YouTube, Facebook, and other platforms.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODS**

This research is a qualitative descriptive study. Qualitative research, according to Moleong, is research that aims to understand phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects, such as behavior, perception, motivation, actions, and others. Data collection techniques used in this study are interviews, literature studies, and observations. According to Sugyono, interviews are a data collection technique to identify problems that must be studied. Interviews are also a data collection technique carried out if researchers want to know more in-depth about the things being studied. The author conducted interviews with 15 nursing students from Timor University regarding the influence of digital media on improving English learning skills in nursing. Some of the learning applications used were Readle, Bookvo, Lingodeer, Duolingo, as well as Facebook, podcast, and YouTube accounts.

In the literature study, the author collected literature related to improving nursing English language learning skills through digital media. According to Roth, a literature study is a researcher's effort to gather relevant materials and information to be studied, read, recorded, or utilized. Using the direct observation method, the author observed students learning using digital media as an effort to improve nursing English skills. According to Sugiyono, the observation method is a data collection technique that involves direct observation of the phenomenon being studied.

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Research result**

The results of a study of 15 nursing students at Timor University showed that the presence of digital media containing English learning, such as Readle, Duolingo, Babbel, Busuu, Hello Talk, Memrise, LingoDeer Facebook, and YouTube, has an impact on improving English learning abilities. The presence of digital-based learning media accounts has a positive impact on learning English. Some of the advantages of learning English through digital media are lower costs, a richer learning space, communicative/interactive, providing more specific materials, saving more time, and more flexible learning times. These conveniences have become a new encouragement in learning English for nursing students at Timor University.

### **3.2 Discussion**

Digital media provides an easy and flexible means of learning English. This is because digital media is easier to search for. Explanations are more comprehensive because they allow for questions and answers, dialogue, and listening skills. Learning is more flexible because it can be accessed anytime. This is more effective and efficient than learning English from textbooks. This significantly impacts English language skills, including nursing English.

English learning apps include Readle, Bookvo, Duolingo, Babbel, Busuu, Hello Talk, Memrise, and LingoDeer. In addition to the apps mentioned above, digital English learning tools can be accessed through podcasts, TikTok accounts, Facebook, YouTube, and more. Each app has its own unique features. Some focus on grammar, others on dialogue, others on speaking skills, and others on reading. While digital English learning tools have their drawbacks, they offer several advantages, including:

a. It costs less

Based on the interview results, it was found that the presence of English learning apps makes learning English more affordable. Students don't have to buy books; they can simply install English learning apps like Duolingo, Hello Talk, or follow accounts that offer English learning. The campus provides internet access. This is considered slightly cheaper than learning from books. Students must purchase books or borrow them from the library. Furthermore, learning from books doesn't allow for Q&A sessions. Students must purchase books repeatedly and carry many books with them when they want to study. Using apps only requires an internet connection and a cell phone or laptop. Students don't have to spend a lot of money because the campus provides the internet.

b. The learning space becomes richer

Learning using digital media is richer than learning from textbooks. Digital media provides deeper and broader material. In digital media, we can learn to listen, engage in dialogue, and even ask questions if explanations are unclear. Students can ask questions according to their concerns. If they don't understand, they can ask questions repeatedly. Explanations in digital learning media are usually accompanied by examples or comparisons and more engaging images. These images serve as visual aids that facilitate students' understanding of English. Digital media offers a wider variety of material than textbooks. With English learning apps, students can easily find friends to talk to, learn about pronunciation, and practice listening from a richer source. In learning media, we can hear speakers of various languages, both native and non-native, thus optimizing listening skills.

Students can learn to read through digital applications. Reading-specific applications, such as Readle and Bookvo, specifically train students who want to read, thereby improving their reading skills. Learning applications practice correct pronunciation. Learning applications that focus on reading and pronunciation train students to pronounce words correctly. Additionally, there are English learning media that provide reading excerpts that are listened to and then discussed, words considered new. At the same time, students learn to listen, pronounce, and expand their vocabulary.

There are also learning tools that focus on specific accents, such as American or British. In these tools, students can learn words spoken very quickly by American or British speakers. This allows them to learn more about listening. Learning apps that focus on listening training also vary. Some speak quickly, very quickly, and slowly. This allows students to practice their English listening skills. In these apps, students will meet speakers of various languages, thus practicing their interaction skills. At this point,

students not only learn English but also learn interaction skills, enhancing their social skills with people from various countries.

c. Communicative/interactive

Digital media provides a more communicative approach to English learning. Students can ask questions and engage in more intensive dialogue, helping them understand the material more deeply. Digital media that focuses on speaking trains students to speak in English. If students make pronunciation or grammar mistakes, the application corrects them by using correct grammar. This approach is considered more communicative because students not only learn to speak but also receive guidance on how to speak grammatically.

d. Provide more specific material

Digital media that present English lessons have their own characteristics and patterns. Some focus on listening, others on grammar, and still others on speaking. Digital media learning spaces offer listening exercises with several alternatives. Some speak slowly, others speak faster, and some specifically address British or American accents. In digital learning media, students can submit questions to obtain discussion.

e. Save more time

Learning English through digital media saves time. For example, to discuss a question you don't understand, you simply enter the question into the app and receive answers and explanations within a relatively short time. This makes it easier for students to acquire knowledge. They don't need to waste time searching for references in the library. Students can solve several problems in a relatively short time.

f. More flexible study time

Learning English digitally can be done anytime and anywhere. The time is more flexible. Students can choose to study according to their needs and abilities. With digital learning, we can ask questions repeatedly, study while lying down, or learn while playing. For example, we can practice listening while writing or reading. If we encounter a new word, it won't take long to understand it because the app helps us find its meaning.

g. Increase learning motivation

Based on interviews with several nursing students, the presence of digital learning media increases motivation to learn English. Digital media makes learning English faster, easier, and more affordable. This fosters a new enthusiasm, hope, and courage to learn and gain broader insights into English, even though English is not their mother tongue. This convenience attracts students to learn English because it allows them to learn independently, provides easier access to explanations, and is more affordable because the campus provides supporting learning facilities such as Wi-Fi, computer labs, and others.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The presence of digital English learning media brings a new atmosphere to learning and makes it easier for students to understand English. Digital learning applications offer easy, affordable, and more engaging learning methods. Their easy, affordable, and engaging concept can foster interest in nursing students studying and deepening their English for nursing. Although learning English presents several challenges, the presence of digital media-based learning is a significant support factor for students in learning English.

English is the international language of instruction. English is crucial for hospital services, especially in border areas like Belu Regency. English-language services represent a readiness for the medical community in Belu Regency to embrace the global era and address the challenges of being a border region frequently used as a gateway for foreign nationals to access healthcare services.

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