

Enhancing Tourism Students' Vocabulary Mastery through Online Blogging Integrated with Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses the limited vocabulary mastery among eleventh-grade tourism majors at SMKN 4 Yogyakarta, which hinders their ability to meet industry-specific communication demands. It aims to improve students' vocabulary mastery by integrating the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS) with Blogger.com. This integration aligns with global educational trends emphasizing ICT integration and the development of vocational competencies. Blogger.com was a digital platform to enhance student engagement, promote independent learning, and support reflective vocabulary practice. Utilizing a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design, the study was implemented in two cycles involving 35 students. Data were collected through pre-tests, post-tests, interviews, and classroom observations. The findings showed a significant improvement in vocabulary mastery, with average scores rising from 60.88 (pre-test) to 91.88 (post-test in Cycle 2). Students also demonstrated increased motivation and engagement, supported by Blogger.com's interactive features and peer feedback mechanisms. Nevertheless, initial technical difficulties and challenges with phrasal verbs were identified. This study underscores the global relevance of integrating ICT tools like Blogger.com in vocational education to enrich vocabulary learning outcomes and recommends further technical training to optimize implementation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors globally, demanding professionals with practical expertise and strong communication skills. For students majoring in tourism, mastery of specialized vocabulary is essential to interact effectively with clients, colleagues, and stakeholders, enhancing their career readiness and

professional competence. “Developing students’ communication skills supports their knowledge, mutuality, and professionalism” [1]. However, the dynamic and context-specific nature of tourism-related language makes acquiring and mastering such vocabulary a persistent challenge for vocational high school students.

Despite the recognized importance of vocabulary mastery in language proficiency, many vocational students still struggle to acquire domain-specific terms. These difficulties stem not only from the complexity of the vocabulary itself but also from limited instructional time, insufficient student engagement, and traditional teaching methods that lack contextual application. Furthermore, integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into the classroom, though encouraged by national curriculum frameworks, is often hindered by challenges such as unequal access to technology, lack of teacher training, and varying levels of student motivation [2]. These obstacles are particularly evident in vocational schools, where language instruction must align with the practical and professional needs of the tourism industry.

The central research problem addressed in this study is the limited vocabulary mastery among vocational students majoring in tourism, particularly regarding domain-specific terms essential for real-world communication. Based on preliminary observations at SMKN 4 Yogyakarta, students struggled to apply relevant vocabulary in tourism contexts, and teachers faced challenges in integrating ICT tools with effective pedagogical strategies.

To address these challenges, the study proposes a dual-intervention approach that combines the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS). This student-centered method allows learners to select and analyze vocabulary from authentic texts with Blogger.com, a digital platform for publishing and reflecting on vocabulary learning. The author plans to leverage VSS to promote learner autonomy and contextual understanding, while Blogger.com serves as an interactive space for students to document vocabulary, receive peer feedback, and engage with multimedia resources. VSS fosters collaborative and meaningful learning [3], blogging enhances communication and engagement in language learning [4], and multimedia elements support different learning styles [5]. This integration aligns with the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, which encourages the development of 21st-century competencies through meaningful use of technology in education [6].

Vocabulary plays a vital role in language development. Vocabulary is a fundamental component of language skills [7], strongly linked to reading comprehension and academic success [8]. “A strong vocabulary enables learners to engage in meaningful communication” [9], [10]. Vocabulary can be categorized into general and special types [11], with this study focusing on special vocabulary relevant to the tourism sector. These include concrete common nouns [12], phrasal verbs [13], descriptive adjectives [14], and adverbs of manner [15], all of which are essential for describing services, experiences, and operations in tourism.

Haggard introduced VSS in 1982, which has been widely recognized as a practical approach to vocabulary acquisition. “It enables students to identify unfamiliar words, research their meanings, present findings, and engage in peer discussion, thus fostering an interactive and reflective learning environment” [16], [17]. Blogger.com complements this

strategy by allowing students to publish digital content, receive feedback, and personalize their learning experience through multimedia integration [18], [19].

Previous studies have investigated the independent use of VSS and blogs. VSS significantly improved junior high school students' vocabulary mastery in a quasi-experimental setting [20]. VSS in virtual classroom action research with vocational students in audio-video engineering reported increased learner independence and vocabulary retention [21]. Regarding blogging, web-based platforms like Wordwall.net helped students retain vocabulary more effectively than printed materials [22], enhancing vocabulary acquisition and writing fluency in university students [23].

However, a clear research gap exists: no study has explored the integrated use of VSS and Blogger.com for teaching tourism-specific vocabulary in a vocational high school context. Prior research focused on general vocabulary or employed ICT tools without structured strategies like VSS. This study seeks to bridge that gap by providing a replicable model that simultaneously improves students' vocabulary mastery and digital literacy within an ESP (English for Specific Purposes) framework. Based on these foundations, this study sets out with two main objectives:

- (1) to enhance vocational high school students' mastery of tourism-specific vocabulary through the integration of the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS) with Blogger.com, and
- (2) to foster students' digital literacy by engaging them in collaborative, technology-mediated vocabulary learning activities.

The potential benefits of this research are substantial. For students, it supports vocabulary mastery, digital communication skills, and preparation for real-world interaction in the tourism industry. For teachers, it offers a flexible and engaging instructional model that combines effective pedagogy with accessible technology. This study provides empirical evidence for curriculum developers and policymakers aligned with the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, advocating for digital integration in vocational education. Moreover, this research contributes to the broader discourse on ICT integration in language education, offering a scalable model for other contexts seeking to modernize English instruction for specific purposes.

2. METHOD

This research employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) to improve students' vocabulary mastery through the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS) integrated with Blogger.com. CAR was chosen due to its suitability in addressing practical classroom problems cyclically and reflectively, allowing for immediate pedagogical improvements. This method aligns well with the research objective to enhance vocabulary learning outcomes through technology-enhanced instruction, making it ideal for educational contexts where continuous development and teacher collaboration are emphasized.

The study was conducted in an eleventh-grade tourism class at SMK Negeri 4 Yogyakarta during the academic year 2024/2025. The research site was purposively selected based on the students' identified vocabulary deficiencies in tourism-specific English and the availability of ICT infrastructure. The class consisted of 35 students,

representing diverse socioeconomic backgrounds but sharing a common vocational focus in tourism. The researcher also collaborated with the classroom teacher to ensure authentic instructional implementation and to promote reflective teaching practices.

The study followed two CAR cycles, each comprising four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The process began with a pre-test to diagnose students' vocabulary difficulties, followed by lesson plan development and digital material design using Blogger.com. During each cycle, VSS activities were implemented through Blogger posts, enabling students to collect, document, and collaboratively share unfamiliar vocabulary items. Students were encouraged to select words, explore meanings, and apply them contextually, fostering deeper lexical engagement.

Pre-tests and post-tests were administered to measure the strategy's effectiveness, and qualitative data were gathered through observation, documentation, and interviews. Students' digital vocabulary submissions served as authentic learning artifacts. Triangulation was applied to validate findings and ensure reliability. The research procedure is summarized through the following algorithm for vocabulary mastery enhancement:

1. Diagnose students' vocabulary mastery level (Pre-Test).
2. Plan the integration of VSS with Blogger (Cycle 1).
3. Implement VSS activities with Blogger posts.
4. Observe students' engagement and collect data.
5. Reflect on findings and adjust strategies.
6. Repeat steps 2–5 for Cycle 2 (if needed).
7. Administer the Post-Test to measure improvement.

This iterative cycle ensured ongoing improvement and responsiveness to classroom dynamics, which are fundamental principles of CAR.

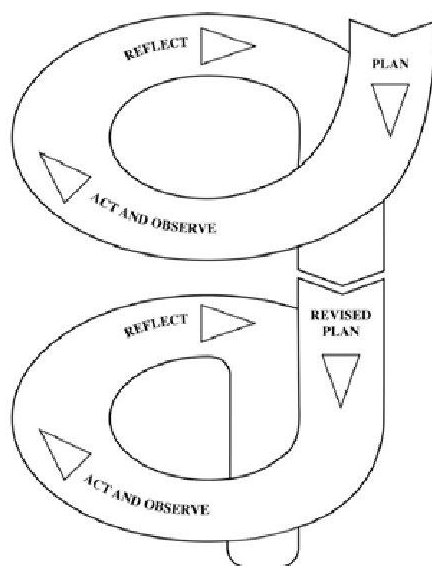


Figure 1. Steps in Conducting Action Research [24]

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Results

3.1.1 Quantitative Analysis

The study's quantitative findings aim to measure the effectiveness of the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS) integrated with Blogger.com in enhancing students' vocabulary mastery. A total of 35 eleventh-grade students from the Tourism Department at SMK Negeri 4 Yogyakarta participated in the research. The evaluation was carried out through three stages of testing: pre-test, post-test in Cycle 1, and post-test in Cycle 2.

To process and analyze the data quantitatively, the researcher employed IBM SPSS Statistics 25, a statistical software package widely acknowledged for its accuracy and efficiency in educational and behavioral research. SPSS was specifically chosen because it provides a comprehensive suite of tools for analyzing repeated-measures data, such as pre-test and post-test scores in Classroom Action Research (CAR). SPSS offers detailed descriptive statistics, allowing the researcher to easily assess mean scores, standard deviations, and percentage distributions. More importantly, SPSS is particularly effective in conducting paired sample t-tests, which are essential in this study to determine whether the differences in students' test scores before and after each cycle were statistically significant. The paired t-test is the most appropriate analysis technique in this context because it compares two related groups (i.e., the same group of students tested at different points in time). SPSS also supports the computation of effect sizes, such as Cohen's *d*, which provide insight into the practical significance of the intervention beyond just statistical significance. The combination of these capabilities makes SPSS a robust and dependable tool for evaluating the impact of pedagogical interventions in CAR-based studies.

Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Mastery

The pre-test average score was 60.88, with only 4 out of 35 students (11.42%) meeting or exceeding the Minimum Mastery Criteria (*KKTP*) score of 75. This result confirmed the initial problem: low mastery of tourism-specific vocabulary among students.

After implementing the VSS strategy using Blogger.com in Cycle 1, the average score rose to 75.05, with 19 out of 35 students (54.28%) achieving *KKTP*. Although progress was evident, the success criteria (minimum 75% of students achieving *KKTP*) had not yet been met.

In Cycle 2, after refining the teaching strategy based on reflection from the first cycle, the post-test average increased significantly to 91.88, and 31 out of 35 students (88.57%) surpassed the *KKTP*, indicating high intervention effectiveness.

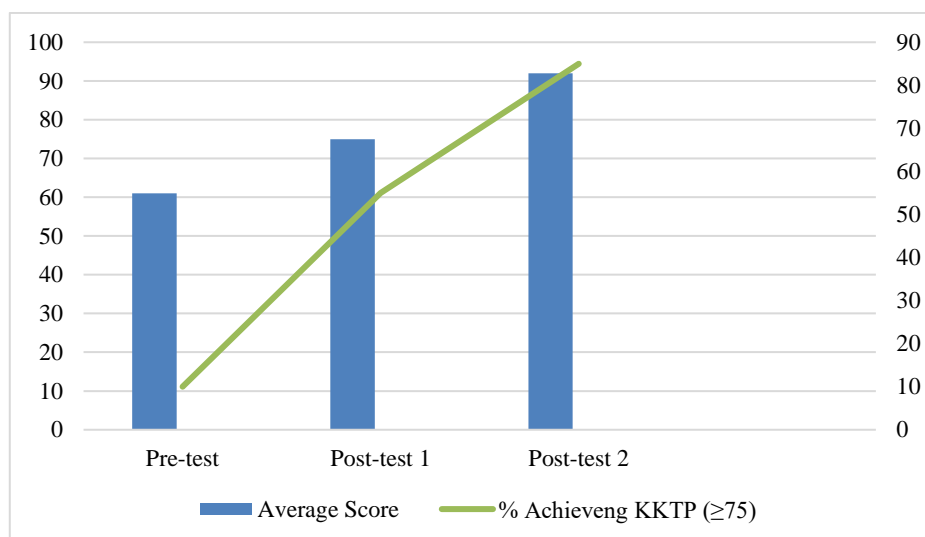


Figure 2. Vocabulary Mastery Progress Across Cycles

Table 1. Vocabulary Mastery Test Scores and *KTTP* Achievement

Test Phase	Average Score	Students \geq <i>KTTP</i>	Percentage (%)
Pre-test	60.88	4/35	11.42%
Post-test Cycle 1	75.05	19/35	54.28%
Post-test Cycle 2	91.88	31/35	88.57%

Inferential Analysis Using Paired Sample T-Test

A paired sample t-test was conducted using SPSS to evaluate the significance of score improvement. The results showed that all comparisons yielded a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000, less than the alpha level of 0.05. This means the differences between the pre-test and both post-tests are statistically significant.

Table 2. Paired Sample T-Test Results

Comparison	Mean Difference	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-test vs Post-test 1	14.17	0.000
Post-test 1 vs Post-test 2	16.82	0.000
Pre-test vs Post-test 2	30.99	0.000

Effect Size Analysis (Cohen's d)

Using the mean and standard deviation from the test results, the calculated Cohen's *d* value was 2.93, which falls into a huge effect size category. According to Cohen's standard criteria (0.2 = small, 0.5 = medium, 0.8 = large, >1.5 = very large), this result provides strong evidence that the integration of VSS and Blogger.com had a substantial and meaningful impact on students' vocabulary mastery.

Validity and Reliability of The Instruments

All test instruments were developed based on the basic competencies outlined in the tourism-English syllabus used at SMK Negeri 4 Yogyakarta to ensure validity. The test items covered a range of tourism-specific vocabulary types (e.g., concrete nouns, phrasal verbs, adjectives, and adverbs), matching the scope of classroom instruction. Content

validity was further confirmed through expert judgment involving two senior English teachers and one university lecturer who reviewed the items for relevance, appropriateness, and clarity. The vocabulary used in the test was also selected from authentic materials, ensuring ecological validity in a vocational context.

A pilot test was administered to a different class of similar characteristics for reliability, and internal consistency was assessed using the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20). The resulting reliability coefficient was 0.83, indicating high internal consistency and that the test items reliably measured students' vocabulary knowledge. In addition, procedures such as standard timing, consistent instructions, and uniform administration ensured procedural reliability across all test sessions. Furthermore, the careful development, validation, and testing of the research instruments ensured the reliability and validity of the results. These findings confirm the success of the intervention and underscore the potential of integrating learner-centered strategies with ICT tools in vocational language instruction.

3.1.2 Qualitative Analysis

Enhanced Vocabulary Mastery

The platform allowed students to repeatedly engage with new vocabulary in meaningful contexts, making internalizing and applying the words easier. The reflective aspect of Blogger.com, where students could revisit their posts and refine their understanding of vocabulary, was instrumental in building confidence and accuracy. This is evidenced by a student who mentioned how practicing specific terms in their blog posts helped them better understand and use the vocabulary in context:

“Learning through Blogger.com made it easier to find and apply vocabulary because I could always review what had been posted.” (Student 3)

The ability to revisit previously created posts allowed students to reinforce material and deepen their understanding of vocabulary. Through this process, students were not only able to recall new vocabulary but also gained confidence in using it in various contexts. This activity underlines that the repetition and reflection facilitated by Blogger.com significantly improved vocabulary mastery. A similar sentiment was expressed by another student, who noted:

“I feel more confident using new words like 'heritage' and 'itinerary' after practicing them in my blog posts.” (Student 4)

Students grasped their meanings by engaging with new words through writing and successfully integrated them into appropriate sentences. This means that the integration of VSS with Blogger.com supported the enhancement of vocabulary acquisition and its long-term retention and application, especially regarding tourism-specific vocabulary such as heritage and itinerary.

Challenges in Learning

The challenges in learning revolved around two main areas: mastering specific vocabulary types, especially phrasal verbs, and navigating the technical aspects of Blogger.com. Thereby, students found it difficult to fully grasp the usage of phrasal verbs, which require contextual understanding and repeated practice. A student's remark supports this:

"I need more examples and practice to understand phrasal verbs." (Student 6)

The common struggle is mastering complex vocabulary types that require nuanced comprehension, such as phrasal verbs. The Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS) provided a foundational framework for students to identify and analyze these challenging terms independently. However, understanding phrasal verbs through VSS could be further enhanced by incorporating explicit instruction and collaborative discussions, allowing students to explore contextual meanings and receive feedback. Another challenge related to technology is captured in the statement:

"How do I format my posts properly?" (Student 6)

These challenges echo some students' technical difficulties while using Blogger.com, mainly regarding formatting and navigating the platform's features. The students needed detailed tutorials and step-by-step demonstrations in the initial phase to get used to the interface. Once these were overcome, the students could give full attention to the content and engage in learning.

Engagement and Motivation

The platform's multimedia features encouraged students to express themselves while applying their learning creatively. The ability to design their blog posts made the learning process feel authentic and relevant, increasing students' enthusiasm for the tasks. Furthermore, the collaborative environment created through peer feedback reinforced students' sense of community and purpose, making the learning experience more interactive and enjoyable. This is evidenced by the student interview, where one student stated:

"I enjoyed learning because I could add pictures and videos to my posts, which made the tasks fun." (Student 3)

Including multimedia elements such as images and videos allowed students to personalize their posts, transforming a standard assignment into an enjoyable, creative activity. Integrating visual and audiovisual content helped students connect with the tasks on a deeper level, reinforcing their motivation to participate actively. Another student expressed a similar perspective, stating:

“Posting on Blogger.com felt like real work, not just an assignment.” (Student 1)

This comment highlights how the design and context of the tasks on Blogger.com simulate real-world scenarios, such as creating content for professional purposes. By framing the activities in a professional context, the platform allowed students to see the relevance of their learning to potential future careers, especially in tourism.

Real-World Relevance

Students could see the practical value of mastering professional vocabulary by engaging with tasks such as creating tourism-related texts. These activities developed the language and gave them an idea of the demands of the industry they had chosen. A student’s remark supports this:

“Creating advertisements and announcements made me realize how important English is for my future career in tourism.” (Student 4)

Students were exposed to authentic scenarios requiring specific vocabulary, such as advertisements and announcements. This hands-on approach helped them connect their classroom learning with real-world expectations, fostering a deeper appreciation for the relevance of English in tourism. The task developed their vocabulary and ability to structure and present information professionally, which is critical for their future careers. Another student shared a similar perspective, stating:

“This helps me learn the professional vocabulary I will need in the tourism industry.” (Student 1)

This insight highlights how focusing on professional terms and contexts equips students with the linguistic tools necessary to succeed in their chosen field. Tasks designed to simulate industry-specific communication, such as writing itineraries or preparing advertisements, enabled students to practice using professional vocabulary in meaningful ways.

3.2. Discussions

The findings revealed a steady increase in students’ scores across all stages of the intervention. Integrating the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS) with Blogger.com led to a substantial improvement in students’ vocabulary mastery, as evidenced by the quantitative data. The mean score increased from 60.88 in the pre-test to 75.05 in post-test 1 (Cycle 1) and 91.88 in post-test 2 (Cycle 2). This progression indicates the effectiveness of the intervention in developing students’ ability to understand and apply specific vocabulary relevant to their tourism major. Additionally, the decreasing standard deviation from the pre-test to post-test 1 suggests a narrowing gap in performance, highlighting the strategy’s ability to support students with varying proficiency levels.

The statistical analysis using IBM SPSS confirmed the significance of the improvements. Paired sample t-tests revealed a p-value < 0.05 for all test comparisons,

establishing that the differences in scores were not due to chance. The high Cohen's *d* value of 2.93 further underscores the outstanding effect of the intervention on vocabulary mastery. These findings validate the first action hypothesis and align with studies such as digital tools in combination with contextual vocabulary strategies significantly improve learners' language acquisition [25]. Moreover, vocabulary learning strategies focusing on active engagement, like VSS, enable learners to retain and apply vocabulary effectively in communication, a result reflected in this study [26].

The results also indicated that Blogger.com was critical in increasing students' motivation and participation. The qualitative findings from observations and interviews corroborate the positive impact of Blogger.com in fostering student engagement and reflective learning. During the implementation of VSS, students were curious and enthusiastic, especially when creating and publishing their blog posts. Features in Blogger.com, such as post personalization and multimedia integration, motivated students to actively participate in the learning process. Integrating blogs into language learning fosters student engagement by providing a creative and collaborative platform [23].

Reflective learning was facilitated through peer feedback and classroom discussions. In this process, students gained more knowledge about tourism-specific vocabulary as they analyzed their work and that of their peers. For instance, in the traveling gallery activity, students confidently discussed the relevance of their chosen vocabulary to tourism contexts. Thus, blogs promote metacognitive skills, enabling learners to reflect on their language use and improve through feedback [27].

The challenges identified in the first cycle, such as technical difficulties with Blogger.com, confusion in selecting specific vocabulary types, and uneven participation, were successfully mitigated in the second cycle. Structured tutorials and explicit examples helped students navigate the platform and understand vocabulary categories like phrasal verbs, descriptive adjectives, and adverbs of manner. Including individual assignments and group tasks ensured more equal participation, fostering independence and collaboration.

These revisions enhanced the learning process and time management, allowing students to complete tasks more effectively. Consequently, the second cycle surpassed the success criteria, with 88.57% of students achieving the Minimum Mastery Criteria (*KKTP*) compared to 54.28% in the first cycle. Thus, blogs provide a structured yet flexible framework for collaborative and independent learning in language classrooms [28].

The findings highlight the relevance of integrating ICT tools like Blogger.com in vocational education, particularly for tourism majors. By aligning learning materials with real-world applications, such as creating advertisements and announcements, the strategy prepared students for future careers. The combination of VSS and Blogger.com enhanced vocabulary mastery and promoted critical thinking, creativity, and digital literacy skills essential for success in the tourism industry. Blogs are valuable tools for developing language proficiency and critical thinking while preparing students for workplace communication [29].

Despite these promising results, several limitations were encountered during the research. First, the study was conducted in a single vocational high school with a relatively small sample size, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, while

Blogger.com proved effective, some students initially struggled with its technical aspects, indicating a need for extended digital literacy training. Third, the intervention was implemented over a short period, so long-term retention of vocabulary gains could not be fully assessed. In addition, the study did not compare the use of Blogger.com with other ICT tools or instructional strategies, which could have provided deeper comparative insights.

For future research, it is recommended that longitudinal studies be conducted to explore the long-term effects of integrating VSS and blogging platforms on vocabulary retention and language development. Comparative studies involving different vocational schools or departments could also offer a broader perspective on the applicability and effectiveness of the intervention across diverse contexts. Additionally, future researchers may explore integrating other ICT tools, such as Padlet, Edmodo, or Google Sites, to determine which platforms best support specific language learning objectives in vocational education.

4. CONCLUSION

This study confirmed the effectiveness of integrating the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS) with Blogger.com in improving students' vocabulary mastery and engagement in a vocational tourism context. The strategy enhanced students' understanding of and application of tourism-specific vocabulary and fostered digital literacy, collaboration, and reflective learning through interactive blogging activities. These findings suggest that learner-centered strategies supported by accessible ICT tools can successfully address vocabulary challenges in vocational education while preparing students for real-world communication demands in their chosen field. Despite its promising outcomes, the study was limited to one school and a short implementation period, which may restrict the generalizability of the results. Future research should adopt longitudinal designs to assess long-term retention and explore comparative studies across vocational schools and digital platforms. For policymakers and curriculum developers, this study recommends integrating VSS and ICT tools like Blogger.com into vocational curricula to support the *Kurikulum Merdeka's* vision of modern, skill-oriented education. Such integration can strengthen students' language competence, digital readiness, and employability in the global workforce.

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