Indonesian Law Students' Experiences in Mastering Legal Vocabulary through a Legal English Words Application

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study analyses the legal vocabulary acquisition experiences of law students in Indonesia using a Legal English application with focus on its use as an educational tool in digital environment. A qualitative case study approach was adopted whereby data were gathered from 5 th semester law students in one of the State Islamic Institute in Central Kalimantan Indonesia who implemented the application for a week. Results show that although students perceived the app as easy to use and helpful for improving their legal vocabulary, several issues were revealed as necessitating urgent attention, especially the app's ability to monitor progress. Learners appreciated several of the lessons which the instructors felt were fun and linked to law practice. However, such assessments of the app were constrained by app limitations and short usage duration. The app and its accompanying programs contributed to some degree, to the development of vocabulary suggesting that more varied interactions and adequate tracking features should accompany such programs.

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INTRODUCTION

As the fields of education continue to develop, the need for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has increased as well, incorporating English teaching into the fields of law and its practice. It is known that language is important in achieving professional competency (Herlina & Said, 2022). In this case, however, in Indonesia, law students have specific problems when it comes to the scope of mastering Legal English—a part of English which comprises advanced lexis and sentences used in legal settings (Susanti et al., 2024). Being aware of these linguistic assumptions, it is understandable why teachers of courses concerned with the legal aspects of the English language discuss the aforementioned ESP courses designed for law students, enabling them to understand, evaluate, and argue legal issues (Nhac, 2023).

A reliable connection exists between the academic success of law students and their proficiency in Legal English. Integrative ESP programs incorporating legal wotd and scenarios for memorization have proven effective in this regard (Herlina & Said, 2022) Additionally, research highlights the positive feedback students have given for digital tools adaptive to learning paces, enhancing practice possibilities (Nevia et al., 2024). Akhter et al. (2022) emphasize that hypermedia tools tailored to learner needs effectively support legal vocabulary mastery through personalized content and engagement. Furthermore, the challenges faced by Algerian law students in traditional grammar translation methods, as noted by Lamri (2019), highlight the importance of content-integrated learning approaches to foster structured, contextualized language acquisition. In Indonesia, persistent challenges in acquiring specialized legal vocabulary—a critical skill for legal comprehension and professional success—continue to hinder students' engagement with legal studies (Andriani & Sriwahyuningsih, 2019). Many studies focus on general English learning issues but overlook the distinct demands of Legal English vocabulary. The introduction of integrative methodologies and advanced digital tools, as Ignjatović (2020) discusses, could bridge this gap.

Moreover, the novelty of employing adaptive, hypermediabased learning systems for ESP is an underexplored area in legal education, despite the promising results in enhancing vocabulary acquisition through context-specific applications engage with legal studies effectively (Toska, 2023) Vocabulary acquisition in Legal English courses remained essential as it determined students' readiness to enter professional legal environments, where precise terminology and fluency were required for competence and credibility (Andriani & Sriwahyuningsih, 2019). Previous studies often addressed general English learning challenges but paid less attention to the distinct demands of mastering Legal English vocabulary. In multilevel classrooms, teachers encountered difficulties in providing targeted vocabulary instruction that suited students at varying English proficiency levels (Toska, 2023). This gap suggested that there was an unmet need for vocabulary-learning resources designed specifically for the legal field. Additionally, the reliance on traditional methods such as rote memorization made it difficult for students to

retain and apply specialized vocabulary effectively in real-world contexts (Rofi'i et al., 2023)

While mobile-assisted learning applications emerged in general English studies, limited research explored their application in legal education, particularly in Indonesia. Studies indicated that mobile applications improved learning engagement and retention for vocabulary in other academic fields (Rofi'i et al., 2023). However, a few studies explored how such technology could support the acquisition of complex legal terms, which were more nuanced and domain-specific than general English vocabulary (Toska, 2023). The gap pointed to the need for research examining the effectiveness of mobile learning tools in legal vocabulary development. Recently, Legal Digital English applications have been received as a new approach which enables the learner to self study the vocabulary of English language and use it in real professional contexts. Yet, different applications of the same are effective to different extents depending on the layout of the application and the level of active engagement required (Amirbayeva, 2021). This research analyzes the experience of Indonesian law students with a Legal English application and intends to determine how it would impact the users' vocabulary development and if it meets their requirements as English for specific purposes in legal education (Samsudin & Sukarismanti, 2020). It is therefore the objectives of this study to shed light on the prospects offered by technology in the field of vocabulary learning and its relevance in legal practice orientation.

This research contributed to the evolving dialogue on ESP by examining how Indonesian law students engaged with a Legal English application and evaluated its impact on vocabulary mastery. By identifying the practical and theoretical shortcomings in previous approaches, the study highlighted the potential of technologyintegrated solutions to address the gaps in ESP pedagogy, thereby offering valuable insights into its role in preparing students for professional legal environments.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the experiences of Indonesian law students in mastering legal vocabulary through a Legal English Words application by Nelli Latypova which is free in Play Store and App Store. Qualitative research was suitable for this investigation as it allowed for an in-depth understanding of participants' perspectives, feelings, and experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The participants in this study consisted of five fifth-semester law students at a State Islamic Institute in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia, who had used the Legal English application for at least one week. Data was collected through questionnaires and a checklist designed to gather detailed information about the students' experiences. The questionnaire used consisted of close-ended questions aimed at exploring students' perceptions of the app's ease of use, features, and benefits in improving their mastery of legal vocabulary.

The checklist used was the App Checklist for Educators (ACE) developed by Lubniewski, McArthur, and Harriott (2016). The App Checklist for Educators (ACE), created by Lubniewski, McArthur, and Harriott (2016), was employed to evaluate the app's impact based on various criteria. These included ease of use, clarity of instructions, the usefulness of exercises, progress tracking, device compatibility, ease of access, feedback provision, vocabulary retention, and content engagement. This checklist guided the analysis of students' experiences, ensuring that essential aspects of their interactions with the app were effectively captured and assessed.

The checklist included the following criteria to evaluate the application's impact:
1. The app is easy to use.
2. The app helps me learn legal vocabulary.
3. The instructions are clear.
4. The app has useful exercises.
5. The app tracks my progress.
6. The app works well on my device.
7. I can use the app without problems.
8. The app gives feedback after exercises.
9. The app helps me remember new words.
10. The app has interesting content.

FINDINGS

Table 1 presents the evaluation results of the Legal English application based on user feedback. The ratings reflect students' perceptions of various app features, including usability, functionality, and engagement.

Table 1. The App Evaluation Results

No.	Statements	Ratings
1	The app is easy to use.	Strongly Agree
2	The app helps me learn legal vocabulary	Agree
3	The instructions are clear.	Agree
4	The app has useful exercises.	Agree
5	The app tracks my progress.	Disagree
6	The app works well on my device.	Agree
7	I can use the app without problems.	Agree
8	The app gives feedback after exercises.	Agree
9	The app helps me remember new words.	Agree
10	The app has interesting content.	Agree

The findings from the questionnaires and checklist revealed Indonesian law students' experiences with the Legal English application. Students generally responded positively to the app's design and functionality, though some areas for improvement were identified. Most students found the app easy to use and intuitive, as reflected in their rating of "Strongly Agree" for usability. They reported that the application facilitated learning legal vocabulary, noting that its exercises and interactive elements helped them understand and remember complex legal terms. Students expressed that the exercises provided within the app were useful, engaging, and closely aligned with their learning objectives. Additionally, they agreed that the instructions within the app were clear, making it straightforward to follow each lesson.

However, a few limitations emerged, particularly regarding the app's ability to track

progress. A number of students disagreed with the statement regarding the progresstracking feature, suggesting that they felt the app did not provide adequate tools to monitor their improvement over time. Although students could complete exercises, the absence of a visible progress-tracking element made it challenging for them to gauge their vocabulary development accurately. Most students agreed that the app worked reliably on their devices, reporting no major technical issues that interrupted their use of the app. They also noted that the app offered immediate feedback after each exercise, which they found helpful for understanding their mistakes and reinforcing correct vocabulary usage. Furthermore, students indicated that the app helped them retain new words effectively, crediting the structured activities and spaced repetition for aiding memory retention.

Finally, the app's content was well-received by the students, with most agreeing that it was interesting and engaging. They appreciated the relevance of the app's exercises to realworld legal contexts, which made the learning experience more meaningful and enjoyable. Overall, students viewed the application as a valuable tool for enhancing their legal vocabulary, despite certain areas that could benefit from further refinement. This study aligned with previous research on mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) and the use of applications in enhancing vocabulary acquisition. However, this study had limitations that impacted its scope and depth, especially when compared to prior studies. First, this study employed a limited sample size of fifth-semester law students from a single institution. While prior research recommended having a sample size between 10 and 20 participants for a comprehensive qualitative study (Creswell & Poth, 2018), time constraints and participant availability restricted this study to fewer participants. Consequently, the generalizability of these findings is limited, and future studies could expand the participant pool to provide broader insights.

Another limitation of this study was the short duration participants spent with the Legal English application. Research on mobile language learning indicates that prolonged engagement with language applications typically yields more significant gains in vocabulary retention and language skills (Amoako Atta & Brantuo, 2021). However, due to scheduling conflicts and the limited time participants could allocate to this study, most students only used the app for one week. This restricted time frame may have influenced the participants' experiences, as they did not fully explore the app's range of features or become entirely familiar with its functionality. Extending the study duration in future research would allow for a more comprehensive assessment of the app's effectiveness in supporting legal vocabulary mastery.

Furthermore, participants highlighted specific limitations of the application itself, such as the lack of a robust progress-tracking feature. In contrast, previous studies on language-learning apps emphasized that well-designed progress-tracking systems enhance student motivation and provide essential feedback on learning progress (Madadizadeh, 2022). This discrepancy suggests that an improved progress-tracking mechanism could make the application more effective by enabling students to visualize their learning achievements over time, thereby fostering a sense of accomplishment and encouraging sustained engagement. Additionally, while the students generally found the app's exercises engaging and helpful, the limited number of in-app activities may have constrained the learning experience compared to applications that offer a broader variety of exercises and more immersive, real-life contexts for language practice (Toska, 2023). As suggested in previous research, a variety of interactive features, such as scenario-based exercises or vocabulary games, can significantly enhance vocabulary acquisition and retention (Rofi'i et al., 2023). Therefore, incorporating a

more diverse range of exercises into the Legal English application could potentially enhance the learning experience and make it more enjoyable and effective.

Lastly, the limited sample size and short duration of this study also influenced the depth of insights into students' preferences and feedback. Previous studies have underscored the value of longitudinal data for understanding learning progress and user adaptation to language applications over time (Asih et al., 2021). Extending the study period and increasing the sample size would allow researchers to gather more nuanced data on students' evolving interactions with the app, as well as its long-term effects on vocabulary retention. Future studies should address these limitations to gain a more detailed and generalizable understanding of how legal vocabulary applications can support law students' language mastery in diverse contexts. In summary, while this study provided valuable insights into Indonesian law students' experiences with the Legal English application, the findings were constrained by limitations in sample size, study duration, and the application's functionality. Comparing these results with prior studies highlights the need for a more comprehensive approach in future research, including extended study periods, larger participant groups, and applications with enhanced interactive features.

CONCLUSION

This research focused on how Indonesian law students interacted with a Legal English application, specifically discussing its benefits in facilitating vocabulary learning in law. The results suggest that although students found the application relatively easy to use and beneficial in learning legal terminologies, some aspects need improvement. For instance, students could not assess themselves sufficiently because the application lacked a proper progress monitoring tool; such a system would increase activity and interest levels among students as well as help them in mastering the vocabulary. Additionally, the somewhat narrow scope of the activities available in the application could limit the range of learning which may be experienced, highlighting the necessity of including a variety of interactive activities to keep the participants focused while encouraging their language learning. While it should be noted that these results are limited by the small sample size and the short period of usage of the app, it is still evident that the content and the design of the app are useful for law students in mastering legal vocabulary. In order to assess the long-term impact and versatility of the application in the field of legal education, it was suggested to include more participants in the study and last, to increase the length of interaction with the application. This study serves as the initial basis for further investigation on the introduction of technology in the English Language for Specific Purposes with particular emphasis to the law thus improving the teaching and learning resources.

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