

Integrating Culturally Responsive Teaching and Audio-Visual Tools to Boost Vocabulary Skills of Students Junior High School of Dharma Wanita Medan

Muliawan Prayuda Putra^{1*}, Yulia Sari Harahap², Ahmad Laut Hasibuan³, Nazriani Lubis⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Universitas Muslim Nusantara Al Washliyah, Jl. Garu II A No.93, Harjosari I, Kec. Medan Amplas, Kota Medan, Sumatera Utara

E-mail: muliawanprayudaputra@umnaw.ac.id

* Corresponding Author



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ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini menyelidiki pengaruh pendekatan Pengajaran Responsif Budaya (CRT) yang terintegrasi dengan media audiovisual terhadap penguasaan kosakata siswa di SMP Dharma Wanita Medan. Metode kuasi-eksperimental digunakan dengan melibatkan 80 siswa kelas delapan yang dibagi menjadi kelompok kontrol dan eksperimen. Kelompok eksperimen menerima pengajaran melalui materi audiovisual berbasis CRT, sementara kelompok kontrol diajarkan menggunakan metode konvensional. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan tes awal dan tes akhir, kemudian dianalisis dengan uji-t sampel independen. Temuan menunjukkan peningkatan skor kosakata yang signifikan secara statistik pada kelompok eksperimen (Sig. 2-tailed = 0,004), yang menunjukkan bahwa media yang relevan secara budaya dapat meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata, motivasi, dan keterlibatan siswa secara signifikan. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa integrasi CRT dengan media audiovisual efektif dalam meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa, pembelajaran kontekstual, dan retensi kosakata dalam konteks EFL. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan agar para pendidik mengadopsi prinsip-prinsip CRT dan memanfaatkan konten audiovisual lokal untuk mendorong pengalaman belajar bahasa yang inklusif dan bermakna.

This study investigates the effect of a Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) approach integrated with audio-visual media on students' vocabulary mastery at SMP Dharma Wanita Medan. A quasi-experimental method was employed involving 80 eighth-grade students divided into control and experimental groups. The experimental group received instruction through CRT-based audio-visual materials, while the control group was taught using conventional methods. Data were collected using pre-tests and post-tests and analyzed with an independent sample t-test. The findings showed a statistically significant improvement in vocabulary scores in the experimental group (Sig. 2-tailed = 0.004), highlighting that culturally relevant media can significantly enhance vocabulary acquisition, motivation, and student engagement. This demonstrates that the integration of CRT with audio-visual media is effective in promoting student engagement, contextual learning, and vocabulary retention in EFL settings. The study recommends that educators adopt CRT principles and utilize localized audiovisual content to foster inclusive and meaningful language learning experiences.



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INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, English language proficiency is essential. However, vocabulary mastery remains a challenge for many students due to unengaging and culturally disconnected instructional methods. This research addresses these issues by applying a Culturally Responsive

Teaching (CRT) approach integrated with audio-visual media to improve vocabulary outcomes at SMP Dharma Wanita Medan.

It's crucial for building a foundation of linguistic knowledge and abilities, particularly in vocabulary acquisition, particularly at the junior high school level. One measure of success in learning English, which is now required of students is vocabulary mastery. Some sources claim that children with a huge vocabulary are more self-assured and have better communication skills.

An educational approach known as "culturally responsive teaching" values and acknowledges students' identities, experiences, and cultural origins as valuable resources for the learning process. A more inclusive and stimulating learning environment is produced by CRT, which incorporates students' cultural references into the curriculum. This method makes learning more memorable and meaningful by assisting students in finding connections between new words and their personal experiences. Culturally responsive approaches can help close the gap between home and school language experiences for junior high school children, who are at a critical juncture in their cognitive and social development, increasing their motivation and involvement.

Audiovisual media is one of the tools that can be used in learning. The combination of sound and images can grab students' attention and improve their understanding of the material being taught. Through videos, films, or interactive presentations, students can directly see the context of using vocabulary in real-life situations. This is very effective in improving student memory retention compared to traditional learning methods that tend to be monotonous.

Videos, interactive applications, and multimedia presentations are examples of audio-visual aids that enhance CRT by offering multisensory learning opportunities. These resources make learning vocabulary easier and more pleasurable by accommodating several learning methods, including kinaesthetic, visual, and auditory. Videos that show cultural settings or tales that are pertinent to students' origins, for instance, can effectively illustrate word meanings, and interactive games can strengthen recall through repetition and practice. By providing contextual cues and clear pronunciation models, audio-visual aids also help students with a variety of needs and language learners.

CRT emphasizes the inclusion of students' cultural backgrounds in teaching to foster inclusivity and engagement (Hammond, 2015). Audio-visual media, meanwhile, facilitates better retention through dual coding and contextual learning (Mahmoud, 2020). Combining both strategies is believed to optimize vocabulary instruction (Abrigo & Kim, 2022).

In line with (Harahap, Y.S. et al 2025), The project-based learning model was effectively implemented in learning activities, allowing students to develop their skills during the learning process. This also indicated that the project-based learning model can be integrated with the CRT approach.

In the context of SMP Dharma Wanita Medan, the application of audio-visual media that is integrated with the CRT approach is expected to have a positive impact on the acquisition of students' vocabulary. By adapting the teaching materials to Dharma Wanita Junior High School, Medan was chosen as the research site for several important reasons. First, the school has a diverse student population with diverse cultural backgrounds, making it an ideal environment to implement and assess culturally responsive teaching strategies. The varied nature of students offers a valuable opportunity to investigate how different cultural aspects can be incorporated into vocabulary teaching.

Based on the observations at Dharma Wanita Junior High School Medan reveal that pupils encounter typical obstacles when acquiring English vocabulary, including a lack of interest in conventional teaching techniques and trouble relating newly learnt words to their cultural background. Schools are a representative sample for these solutions since these difficulties mirror more general problems in the setting of EFL Indonesia.

METHOD

A quasi-experimental design was employed, involving 80 eighth-grade students divided into two groups: experimental and control. The experimental group used CRT-integrated audio-visual media in vocabulary lessons, while the control group used conventional methods. Pre-tests and post-tests were administered to measure vocabulary acquisition. Data were analyzed using independent sample t-tests.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Overall, the condition of the school both in terms of human resources and infrastructure supports the implementation of research that aims to integrate *the Culturally Responsive Teaching* approach with audiovisual media in learning English vocabulary.

Data Description

This study aims to determine the influence of *the Culturally Responsive Teaching* (CRT) approach integrated with audiovisual media on improving students' vocabulary mastery. To measure the effectiveness of the approach, data was collected through pre-test and post-test in two groups: the experimental group and the control group. Pre-tests were carried out before treatment was given to both groups. This test aims to determine students' initial ability to master English vocabulary. The result of the pretest were used to ensure that there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups before the treatment was performed.

Table 1. Experimental Group
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test X1	18	37.00	71.00	51.6111	8.95176
Post-Test X2	18	52.00	75.00	62.3889	6.31654
Pre-Test Y1	18	39.00	65.00	50.6111	7.08884
Post-Test Y2	18	45.00	72.00	55.2778	7.29065
Valid N (listwise)	18				

Based on the the descriptive statistical table of the experimental group, its known that the number of samples (N) is 8 students. The average pre-test score was 51.61 with a minimum score of 37 and a maximum of 71, as well as a standard deviation of 8.95 which showed a fairly variable distribution of scores before treatment. After treatment using *the Culturally Responsive Teaching* (CRT) approach based on audiovisual media, the average post-test score increased to 62.39 with a minimum score of 52 and a maximum of 75, and the standard deviation decreased to 6.32. This decrease in standard deviation indicated a narrowing of score variations, indicating that the intervention not only improved overall learning outcomes but also created an equitable distribution of vocabulary comprehension among students in the experimental group.

Table 2. Control Group
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test X1	18	37.00	71.00	51.6111	8.95176
Post-Test X2	18	52.00	75.00	62.3889	6.31654
Pre-Test Y1	18	39.00	65.00	50.6111	7.08884
Post-Test Y2	18	45.00	72.00	55.2778	7.29065
Valid N (listwise)	18				

Based on the the descriptive statistical table of the control group, it was obtained that the number of samples (N) was 18 students. The average pre-test score was 50.61 with a minimum score of 39 and a maximum of 65, as well as a standard deviation of 7.09 which indicates a moderate variation in students' initial abilities. After learning using conventional methods, the average post-test score increased to 55.28 with a minimum score of 45 and a maximum of 72, as well as a standard deviation of 7.29. Although there was an increase in the average score of 4.67 points, this increase was not as large as that which occurred in the experimental group. The almost unchanged standard deviation

Pre-test scores indicated no significant difference between groups (Sig. = 0.713), confirming group equivalence. However, post-test analysis revealed a significant difference (Sig. = 0.004) in favor of the experimental group. These findings suggest that CRT and audio-visual media are effective in enhancing vocabulary learning. Students were more engaged and could relate vocabulary to familiar cultural contexts, leading to deeper understanding and retention.

In addition, the use of audiovisual-based CRT also allows students to be more active in showing self-expression through cultural projects such as making videos, role-playing, and composing digital stories. These activities not only strengthen their vocabulary mastery, but also build confidence and pride

in their local culture. The implementation of culture-based projects like this has also been proven to be effective in the research of Rochmawati and Susanti (2024), who used digital storytelling as a vocabulary learning strategy and found that the involvement of local culture in digital content greatly strengthens students' engagement and understanding of language

CONCLUSION

The integration of Culturally Responsive Teaching with audio-visual media significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate culturally relevant materials and media in language instruction. Further research is recommended to explore this approach in other language skills such as writing and speaking.

Combining audio-visual aids with culturally sensitive instruction presents a viable strategy to improve junior high school pupils' vocabulary. This method encourages inclusivity, involvement, and cultural knowledge in addition to language growth. Adopting such cutting-edge tactics will be crucial to preparing kids for both academic and social success as education continues to change in a diverse and digital world.

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