

The Effect of Using Cake Application on Students' Vocabulary Mastery of Junior High School

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A B S T R A C T

Cake application is an excellent English-learning tool for mastering English. The study aims to determine whether the Cake app affects students' vocabulary mastery. The present study used a quantitative method of experimental design. The data were collected from forty second-grade students at Junior High School (SMP) HKBP Sidorame Medan, Indonesia. The sample was divided into twenty students in the experimental group and twenty students in the control group, in which pre-and post-tests were given separately to each group and a vocabulary test was taken. The results demonstrate that the average pre-test score for the experimental group in this study was 42.8 points, while the average post-test score was 72. The average pre-test score for the control group was 42.65 points, while the average post-test score was 6.8. It was also found that H_a was accepted. However, H_o was rejected due to the fact that $T\text{-count} > T\text{-table} = 4.41 > 1.686$, indicating that this program is highly effective and helpful for learning English vocabulary. These findings suggest that traditional or existing methods may be less effective, highlighting the necessity for innovative approaches to vocabulary learning. Educational policymakers can use these findings to support decisions regarding the integration of successful programs into the curriculum, potentially leading to enhanced English language education standards. Furthermore, the results indicate a need for additional research to identify the specific elements of the program that most significantly impact its effectiveness. This further investigation could facilitate the refinement and optimization of the program to achieve even better outcomes.

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Introduction

Mastering the vocabulary of the target language is one of the most essential components of language comprehension. Without vocabulary, it is difficult for language learners to master a new language. Some experts and researchers believe that vocabulary is more important than grammar, contending that the interlocutor's ability to fully understand what the speaker is saying is no longer essential when his speech is poor. Most of the vocabulary is necessary and helpful for everyday use, conversation, and future study. According to (Paksi, 2018), English communication will be challenging for students with limited vocabulary.

Excellent vocabulary facilitates language proficiency, and learners must also acquire additional abilities such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Learners must possess a substantial vocabulary to effectively communicate, as their ability to develop other skills is hindered if they lack language comprehension. English language learners should prioritize the enhancement of vocabularies. Wilson & Sutrisno (2022) assert that possessing an extensive vocabulary enables students to effectively express their thoughts and opinions. This skill arises from their proficiency in utilizing precise

vocabulary to express ideas and participate in communication. Having an excellent knowledge of the vocabulary of a foreign language is extremely important and necessary for all language skills, such as writing, listening, speaking, and reading.

According to Hasan (2018), the ability to express opinions in English is attainable with the acquisition of vocabulary in the language. Putri (2022) adds that possessing an extensive vocabulary assists in acquiring new words. Regrettably, certain educators and learners fail to recognize the significance of vocabulary acquisition in teaching a foreign language such as English. Vocabulary is a fundamental language ability that plays a vital role in English language acquisition (Tawali & Kamarudin, 2022). Individuals with a limited vocabulary will encounter speaking, reading, listening, and writing challenges. Grammar and vocabulary are essential for effective communication between individuals. Multiple studies have demonstrated that having a rich vocabulary is vital to acquiring proficiency in a foreign language, whereas a deficiency in vocabulary poses a significant obstacle to overcome.

After teaching English to high school students, the author discovered a number of issues, one of which is low vocabulary among them. According to Wulandari & Musfiroh (2020), students' limited vocabulary makes it difficult for them to understand the meaning of complicated nature of English vocabulary, which is a key obstacle to their vocabulary development and reduces their enthusiasm for learning the language. Due to the unknown vocabulary and the often boring and monotonous approach to classroom instruction, students are less engaged in studying English and ultimately become lazy learners (Fatimah & Nuriadi, 2022).

Teachers must employ innovative approaches and utilize various media to enhance students' enthusiasm for learning vocabulary during language learning sessions. According to (Pasaribu et al., 2021), utilizing media that allows students to actively engage in the learning process to effectively learn vocabulary is essential. Students should actively engage in their chosen technique and media by applying the newly acquired language in practical exercises and by committing to unfamiliar vocabulary to remember. Vocabulary is an essential component of the English language. To achieve fluency in English, students should strive to acquire a comprehensive range of vocabulary (Br Simamora & Oktaviani, 2020). Additionally, teachers should utilize digital resources to aid in lesson planning during the teaching process. In the 4.0 Industrial Revolution era, characterized by the widespread use of digital technology in all aspects of life, educators must ensure that their instructional resources are updated and relevant.

Technology is now commonly employed in classroom activities to enhance and facilitate language acquisition. This aims to make teachers' work more engaging and efficient. Technology continues to advance and is increasingly crucial in assisting teachers in offering students engaging language learning potential. Technology can enhance students' learning competencies. Students collaborate to create an assignment, review their classmates' work, and learn from one another. Technology-based learning materials offer several advantages, such as stimulating student engagement and improving learning results (Firmadani, 2020). Furthermore, using contemporary tools, equipment, and technology can enhance classroom participation and encourage learning. They find it more involved and exciting when technology is utilized for support. Knowledge transfer becomes remarkably straightforward, valuable, and efficient. Utilizing technology for assistance increases interactivity and offers many captivating locations. Knowledge transfer is simplified, practical, and very effective (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018).

Students today have the opportunity to improve their language skills by utilizing digital media and the Internet to their full potential (Sari, 2020). The use of multimedia technology, including audio, visual, and animation effects, is highly beneficial in English language teaching due to its use in the classroom and its rapid advancement. With appropriate technology, children can be inspired to learn a new language and have access to a variety of learning resources. Technology allows students to learn at their own pace, gain a deeper understanding of themselves, stay in touch with their teachers, and become highly motivated to learn the language (Ahmadi, 2018).

Mobile learning, according to Chao (2019), mobile learning is a learning process in different contexts (place, time, environmental factors) in which learners can benefit from Learning materials through smart mobile devices such as Smartphones and tablets. Theoretically, mobile learning has benefits including accessibility to learning resources at any time and engaging content visualization. Although it is a subset of e-learning, mobile learning is more common because it makes use of the complexity of mobile devices. The desire of learners to study is increased through mobile learning, which offers them convenient access to exciting learning materials.

Based on current statistics, almost all students have smartphones. With smartphones, students who want to learn English can take advantage of technological advances that are developing rapidly by using the various learning applications available to them. Students can use a variety of English learning apps on smartphones in the 4.0 age to expand their English vocabulary. These include Cake, Busuu, Hello Talk, Hello English, Duolingo, and other apps. Technology use in language instruction can improve students' academic achievement (Mandasari, 2020). The Cake application was selected by the author to increase students' vocabulary because it is highly effective and simple to use. This can mobilize the enthusiasm of the students, and the atmosphere of the class will not be boring, but more interesting. The Cake app helps app users remember more words, and the short dialogue provided can be repeated, making it easier to remember each new word. Using the Cake app will help students better retain information they learn and also improve their vocabulary skills.

The author will apply the Cake application to teach English vocabulary for this research. This is because the app can be used to teach English Vocabulary in the classroom and help students develop their verbal skills so that they can memorize words. Students can increase their vocabulary, communicate more clearly, and comprehend word meanings better. According to Wahyuni et al. (2022), this application has many interesting features to improve English language abilities, including the vocabulary of its users. Therefore, it is possible that using it will succeed. The Cake app offers a list of words and their descriptions to aid users in learning English more quickly and effectively. Students can practice using English in a fun way wherever and whenever they wish by simply downloading a free smartphone app. This is the reason the author is interested in examining how the Cake app influences junior high students' learning vocabulary in the class. This exercise intends to test whether it can help them increase their vocabulary. Anticipate a happy environment in class. It might also serve as a method for students to retake their language skills, either alone or in place of another course. The researcher intends to conduct this experimental study entitled *The Effect of Using Cake Application on Students' Vocabulary Mastery of Junior High School*.

Despite the extensive body of current literature on language learning applications, particularly the Cake app, the specific impact of the Cake application on vocabulary acquisition among junior high school students still needs to be explored more. Most previous studies, such as those by Saragih et al. (2023) and Octavianita et al. (2022), have

concentrated on the use of the Cake app to enhance students' speaking and pronunciation skills. Establishing a solid vocabulary foundation and mastering effective vocabulary learning strategies are critical for junior high school students in English learning (Xiaolan & Kunmei, 2023). Research indicates that English vocabulary learning strategies are significantly and positively correlated with English performance among junior high school freshmen (Ye, 2022). Consequently, the analysis of English vocabulary mastery among junior high school students is essential.

The novelty of this study lies in its specific focus on the Cake mobile application concerning English vocabulary acquisition for junior high school students, which has yet to be extensively examined in academic research. By targeting junior high school students, this research addresses a critical developmental stage in which vocabulary acquisition is crucial for language proficiency. Moreover, this study significantly advances mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, offering new insights and practical implications for educators aiming to employ innovative strategies to enhance vocabulary acquisition.

Literature Review

Vocabulary is one aspect of language that needs to be learned. In fact, language learners must be taught the vocabulary necessary to communicate, read, and write in a target language. Additionally, students will comprehend what they hear in the target language more clearly. It means if language learners do not master the vocabulary of their target language, then they will never be successful in learning that language. Vocabulary is the essence of mastering a language, without exception, whether it is the first, second, or even foreign language (Lube & Nuraeni, 2020). In learning vocabulary, practicing listening skills is also important. This is because listening skills have an influence on vocabulary mastery. Therefore, an interesting topic is needed to practice listening skills in order to acquire vocabulary easily and willingly become accustomed to knowing the forms of verbal speech of known words. So, foreign language learners who master the vocabulary of the target language will get a better understanding of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and the possibility of getting an increase.

To develop the four language skills, language learners must first learn vocabulary. Learning vocabulary is a major aspect in learning foreign language, such as English (Ambarwati & Mandasari, 2020). Vocabulary is modestly related to speaking and listening skills and had a stronger positive impact on reading and writing abilities (Dakhi & Fitria, 2019). It is discovered that learners' receptive word count is strongly correlated with their reading and writing skills and relatively significant with their speaking and listening performances. However, this part is rarely taught in class during the foreign language learning process. For instance, students with limited or inadequate vocabulary may encounter difficulties when trying to communicate in a foreign language. Not only do they struggle to speak, but they also face difficulties in interpreting the meaning of the text they read. Skipping vocabulary lessons while attempting to master a language renders the acquisition of the desired language either unattainable or futile. According to Hasan (2018), vocabulary can be defined as: 1) a group of words used by individual groups of people, and other persons, and 2) unit of words that have their own meaning.

In short, a vocabulary is a group of words used to communicate in all languages. Therefore, vocabulary is very important for understanding a language when communicating and transferring ideas in their minds to other people, for example, communicating in English. Learners who wish to learn English can discover an even larger vocabulary only as they develop their target language (Naderiheshi, 2022).

Therefore, they need to have different strategies to practice what they learn, such as guessing and descriptive tasks or creating conversations. Word Classes, Word Families, Word Formation, Multi-Word Units, Collocation, and Word Meaning are the six categories of vocabulary (Syakir & Elihami, 2020).

Cake app is one of many English learning apps or websites. Cake can be accessed on Android and IOS for free. The official Cake website explains that *Cake Learn English for Free* is an application created for English learners. The Playlist Corporation developed this educational app, which also suggests a number of interesting features, such as video conversations with English subtitles and the application user's native tongue, speaking practice with native English speakers, and AI speech recognition to check the user's pronunciation of vocabulary. All of these features can be used for free. The software will enable users to practice the language in either their native tongue or English (Momeni, 2022), which is crucial because many well-known applications, like Duolingo, do not allow users to learn English by studying English.

According to Fitria et al. (2021), Cake English Learning Application assists in the enjoyable study of English. With the help of this program, users may quickly and continually learn English by watching videos and engaging in brief English dialogues and chats that are updated daily. Additionally, users have the option of watching the video at a slower speed. Users will be able to understand and remember terminology more easily as a result, which will help them like, be interested in, and enjoy the learning process. As a result, this software is straightforward, simple to use, versatile, available anytime, anywhere, and cost-free (Wahyuni et al., 2022).

Users require only an internet connection to use this application. To get this app, students can install it from the Google Play Store for Android or the App Store for IOS or iPhone. Students need to take a language test before registering for this app. Therefore, the beginner needs to learn basic lessons of English. If they complete that level, their level will continue to increase. Each level is always set or adjusted according to their English ability to ensure that each level that will be passed has a different difficulty level. During the application's learning process, students can take various types of learning according to their interests, such as trying to listen and practice pronouncing words or sentences that are displayed, filling in missing words in sentences, and so on. Because the application provides useful learnings to increase users' vocabulary knowledge, the Cake Application will become a topic for discussion. To learn English, we need to know the basics of vocabulary. The key to reading and understanding the written text in English and speaking English is vocabulary. Therefore, being a beginner is crucial to learning basic English lessons.

On the contrary, the students naturally obtain their first language by listening (Br Simamora & Oktaviani, 2020). After that, learning to read as the second input, tried to make words or phrases by speaking as the first output, and attempted to write as the second output and advanced level. However, before starting a conversation, students must know beforehand what ideas they will convey in a foreign language or English. Therefore, they need to learn how to have conversations. In this case, students must try to listen to examples of conversations and find some complex vocabulary or incomprehensible meanings, then try to memorize the vocabulary. Then, they can practice the vocabulary at the conversation level. Audio may be used to learn, just like talking. Speech recognition is present throughout this program. They can record their speech. As a result, students can learn from the feedback provided by this application which words should not be said correctly (Suryani et al., 2021). This is what students can obtain from the Cake-Learn English Application. This application can increase vocabulary and master pronunciation.

Two previous researches, related to language learning, especially for mastering English vocabulary, inspire the author to do this research. The first research uses an application called Cake to help MTs NU Ungaran students increase their English vocabulary. This research was conducted by Khoiriyah (2011). This research yielded results by showing that the vocabulary score in the experimental class or the class where students studied using the Cake application was 79.57. Meanwhile, the control class or class where students learnt without the Cake application got a score of 74.57. Both of these scores indicate an increase in students' vocabulary when using the Cake application effectively and have the benefit of making it easier for them to guess the meaning of vocabulary and remember the vocabulary they have acquired longer. These findings provide evidence that the Cake application is good for helping students master more new vocabulary, especially for those with limited vocabulary.

The second research belongs to Fatin (2021) with the title “Effectiveness of Using Cake Applications on Vocabulary Mastery for Class VII MTsS PSM Rejotangan Students”. The purpose of this study is to determine how much of an impact Cake usage has on class VII pupils at MTsS PSM Rejotangan Tulungagung. The findings of this study suggest that using Cake has an impact on increasing vocabulary in English. The pre-test average was 46.59, and the post-test average was 59.14 after the participants had received treatment. The conclusion from the results of the research was the application of Cake succeeded in increasing vocabulary mastery for these students.

There are four skills in mastering other languages: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. All of these skills require vocabulary mastery. So, vocabulary is essential to improve students' ability to master foreign languages. To help students convey their ideas in conversation, they need to learn English vocabulary effectively. The Cake program is one of the best ways to teach English to students who are learning it as a second, third, or later language, helping them to develop their ability to express themselves more.

The application of Cake these days is one of the most popular applications in learning English. That is because a lot of people are downloading the app. The use of this application is said to be good because it makes students active during class learning, and it is considered a fun vocabulary teaching process because students can practice, convey what they think, and discuss the meaning of the vocabulary they get. Trying to use programs or features from Cake can help motivate students to improve their four foreign language skills, especially English and vocabulary knowledge, simultaneously.

Research Method

The study employed an experimental quantitative research method, primarily focusing on assessing the effect of independent variables on other variables and exploring causal relationships between variables. Experimental research entails systemic modification of one variable in order to examine its effect on another variable (Ary et al., 2010). This process begins with formulating hypotheses on the relationships between these variables. The study divided students into two groups: a control group, learning vocabulary by conventional methods, and an experimental group, using the Cake application. The study used a pre-experimental research design in which a single group received a treatment preceded by a pre-test and followed by a post-test. The pre-test assessed specific characteristics before the treatment, whereas the post-test measured them afterward. Creswell (2014) suggests that this design lacks a control group for comparison. The improvement in post-test scores compared to pre-test scores revealed that the treatment effectively improved students' vocabulary, confirming the effectiveness of the Cake application as a teaching tool.

The study was designed to collect data on an exploratory quantitative study from students in the control and experimental groups. By using a standard method, the control group was able to learn vocabulary. In the meantime, using the Cake application, the experimental group learned the vocabulary. The study was performed by administering a single treatment to a single group prior to a pretest; following the treatment, a post-test will be carried out. Pretest evaluates certain features or characteristics that have been identified in an experiment before being treated by a group. In contrast, the post-test assesses some of these attributes or characteristics after treatment has been administered to participants in an experiment. As Creswell (2014) notes, with a pre-experimental study design, the researcher looks at one group and has no control group compared to an experimental group, as seen in Table 4.1. The fact that the post-test score is greater than the pretest score demonstrates that the student's vocabulary has increased and that the treatment is just as effective at teaching vocabulary as the media.

Table 4.1 Research Design

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental	V	X	V
Control	V	Y	V

Explanation:

X: The students will be taught by applying Cake Application

Y: The students will not be taught by applying Cake Application

In this study, experimental research is used. The subject of this study involves second-grade students at SMP HKBP Sidorame in the academic year 2021/2022. This population included three classes: VIII-A, VIII-B, and VIII-C, divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. This study utilized a random sampling technique. The researcher picked this strategy because each of the three classes had an equal chance of being selected. As a result, two out of the three classes were chosen randomly to be the sample. The study's participants were forty students out of a hundred five as total population at SMP HKBP Sidorame Medan. Class VIII-A served as the experimental group, while Class VIII-B served as the control group in the collection of samples. The control group was instructed using traditional methods, whereas the experimental group was instructed using the Cake software. Only the experimental group received the treatment, and this group was evaluated prior to and during the treatment to look for differences.

Result and Discussion

The following table shows the results of the two sets before and after the tests.

Table 4.2 The Result of the Pre-test and Post-test of the Control Group

No	Students' Initial Name	Pre-test (T1)	Post-test (T2)
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1	HT	28	48
2	ML	36	60
3	EN	36	56
4	SP	44	68
5	DS	36	56
6	AFN	44	60
7	CAP	32	56
8	TFB	44	60
9	YK	32	52
10	JS	44	72
11	AM	40	68
12	YH	48	68
13	RS	48	72
14	SS	52	68
15	SP	44	60
16	MP	40	56
17	MS	44	60
18	AS	52	76
19	NS	52	68
20	FM	56	72
Total		853	1.256
Mean		42.65	62.8

Table 4.2 shows the total pre-test and post-test results of the control group: The total Pre-test result is 853, and its mean is 42,65. Meanwhile, the total post-test result is 1.252, and its mean is 62,6.

Data analysis used is to determine the effect on students' vocabulary learning. The results of the tests achieved aim to know the differences between experimental students and control groups of students; both were used in the T-test formula to prove this study. The following table is the calculation of the data:

Table 4.3 Calculation of the Pre-test and Post-test of the Experimental Group

No	Students' Initial Name	Pre-test (T1)	Post-test (T2)	Deviation d=T2-T1	Square of Deviation d ²
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1	JN	36	72	36	1296
2	JT	44	68	24	576
3	AHS	52	76	24	576
4	GN	40	76	36	1296
5	GNP	40	76	36	1296
6	KY	44	68	24	576
7	KAT	32	72	40	1600
8	CN	40	68	28	784
9	TL	44	72	28	784
10	HL	40	68	28	784
11	SJ	52	80	28	784
12	SS	40	72	32	1024
13	UH	52	76	24	576
14	ET	36	64	28	784
15	MP	48	72	24	576
16	DB	44	68	24	576
17	CM	48	80	32	1024
18	WS	40	68	28	784
19	CT	40	68	28	784
20	GS	44	76	32	1024
Total		856	1440	584	17504
Mean		42.8	72	29.2	875.2

Table 4.3 shows that the experimental group's deviation is 584, and the square deviation is 17504. From the calculation above, the experimental group's mean is 29.2, and the deviation is 451.2. Moreover, the control group's deviation is 403, and the square of deviation is 8449.

Table 4.4 Calculation of the Pre-test and Pos-test of the Control Group

No	Students' Initial Name	Pre-test (T1)	Post-test (T2)	Deviation d=T2-T1	Square of deviation d ²
1	HT	28	48	20	400
2	ML	36	60	24	576
3	EN	36	56	20	400
4	SP	45	68	23	529
5	DS	36	56	20	200
6	AFN	44	60	16	256
7	CAP	32	56	24	576
8	TFB	44	60	16	256
9	YK	32	52	20	400
10	JS	44	72	28	784
11	AM	40	68	28	784
12	YH	48	68	20	400
13	RS	48	72	16	256
14	SS	52	68	24	576
15	SP	44	60	16	256
16	MP	40	56	16	256
17	MS	44	60	16	256
18	AS	52	76	24	576
19	NS	52	68	16	256
20	FM	56	72	16	256
Total		853	1256	403	8449
Mean		42.65	62.8	20.15	422.45

Table 4.4 reveals that the deviation of the control group is 403, and the square of deviation is 8449. The writer kept tabs on their scores using the t-test technique as soon as they had received students' evaluations from both groups. In the case of students in second grade students at SMP HKBP Sidorame Medan, it is designed to assess whether using a cake application will affect their vocabulary skills.

The test was significant and reliable since, according to the estimate above, the reliability was 0,46. Reliability ratings fall into four categories: extremely low (0,00 - 0,20), low (0,20 - 0,40), fair (0,40 - 0,60), and good (0,60 - 0,80), also reasonably high (0,80–1,000). As a result of this, the reliability of the above test items was rated as having a fair coefficient for the vocabulary test.

The findings of this study discuss and examine the impact of the Cake Application on second-grade students at Junior High School HKBP Sidorame Medan's vocabulary mastery. Because the mean of the experimental group (72) was more significant than the mean of the control group (62.8), it was evident from the study's statistics that Cake Application had a considerable impact on vocabulary teaching. Additionally, according to the computation results, t-count (4.41) was 10% greater than t-table (1,68) or t-count > t-table-4.41>1,68. It implies that H_a was accepted and H_o was rejected. The calculation of data analysis proves that the Cake Application was more effective in teaching students vocabulary mastery than the conventional method.

In this study, the writer taught English using the Cake application to second-grade learners at SMP HKBP Sidorame Medan. Through the use of vocabulary tests, the author was able to collect data in order to respond to a question. The purpose of the study is to determine whether using Cake app in English classes increases students' vocabulary acquisition. Hopefully, this media will make them more motivated to learn and understand English better. They enjoy learning, and can practice English every day. To give a clear idea of how this research has been conducted, the author would point to the following:

The research question is about the impact of the implementation of the Cake application on students' vocabulary skills. The writer found that almost all of the students got better post-test scores than pre-test. There was an improvement in the student's scores according to the data from the post-test score. The mean of the post-test is higher than the pre-test (7242.8). This means that the student's vocabulary skills have improved. Based on the results, the learners significantly improved their vocabulary.

The results of this study demonstrate that the Cake application had a positive impact on students' vocabulary mastery. It was because the Cake application provided students with an engaging and appropriate medium for teaching English vocabulary through the use of subtitled videos. Students can also retain the language they learn through quizzes that include words from previous videos they have watched. Surely, the tests also assist them in developing their speaking and pronunciation abilities. As a result, the Cake app has proved successful in helping people learn English vocabulary.

According to previous studies, students have a high demand for cake applications during presentation, practice and production activities. When they use the cake application, they pay particular attention to the teaching and learning process because they are given sufficient input, such as vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation, to inspire their thoughts to speak.

Moreover, students will compete with one another to demonstrate the best knowledge of their vocabulary by establishing a positive atmosphere and rewarding them for playing an active part in teaching and learning. They use the Cake app, which does not intimidate them, to take part in classroom teaching and learning.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the Cake Application positively impacted students' vocabulary mastery. The application provided an engaging platform for teaching English vocabulary through subtitled videos and quizzes, which enhanced students' vocabulary retention, speaking, and pronunciation skills. As a result, the Cake Application was demonstrated to be an effective tool for improving students' vocabulary abilities, fostering a positive learning environment, and motivating active student participation in the learning process. The findings support the use of innovative digital applications in enhancing language learning outcomes

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