ENHANCING LEXICAL COMPETENCE THROUGH THE ENRICHED VIRTUAL MODEL: A MULTIMODAL APPROACH TO DIVERSE LEARNING STYLES

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Abstract

Vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role in successful language acquisition, and blended learning approaches have increasingly been adopted to enhance lexical development in higher education. However, existing studies have predominantly focused on general blended learning designs without fully exploring the specific contribution of the Enriched Virtual Model (EVM) in strengthening different dimensions of lexical competence. Moreover, limited research has examined how diverse learning preferences, such as those identified through the VARK framework, influence students' engagement and vocabulary development within EVM-based instruction. Addressing these gaps, this study investigates the effectiveness of EVM in improving students' lexical competence and examines how different learning styles contribute to learners' engagement and vocabulary growth. Employing a mixed-methods design, the research integrates quantitative data from pre- and post-tests with qualitative insights obtained from reflections, observations, and open-ended responses. Participants were undergraduate students enrolled in a Lexical Studies course, who engaged in a combination of multimodal online modules and targeted face-to-face sessions throughout the intervention. Quantitative findings revealed substantial gains across all dimensions of lexical competence—vocabulary breadth, depth, collocational knowledge, and contextual use—with contextual vocabulary demonstrating the highest improvement. Differences were also observed across learning-style groups, with Visual and Read/Write learners showing the greatest lexical gains, while Auditory and Kinesthetic learners benefited most from modality-congruent strategies. Qualitative findings further indicated that EVM supported learner autonomy, enhanced multimodal engagement, and strengthened vocabulary retention through structured online learning and collaborative face-to-face consolidation. Overall, the results demonstrate that EVM provides an effective, flexible, and learner-responsive framework for vocabulary instruction in blended learning environments.

Keywords: Enriched Virtual Model (EVM); lexical competence; learning styles; VARK; blended learning

INTRODUCTION

Lexical competence is a critical component of language proficiency, encompassing an individual's ability to understand, produce, and manipulate vocabulary in a given language. It involves not only the knowledge of words and their meanings but also the ability to use them appropriately in various contexts. This competence is essential for effective communication, comprehension, and overall language acquisition.

The significance of lexical competence can be traced back to foundational theories in linguistics and language education. According to Nation (2001), "Vocabulary is the most important component of language proficiency and provides the basic building blocks for

communication." This highlights the idea that a robust vocabulary is fundamental to both spoken and written language, enabling learners to express their thoughts clearly and understand others effectively.

Moreover, lexical competence is closely linked to reading comprehension and academic success. Research indicates that a strong vocabulary correlates with better reading skills, which are crucial for learning across all subjects. As noted by Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2002), "The more words students know, the more they can learn from reading." This underscores the importance of vocabulary instruction in educational settings, as it directly impacts students' ability to engage with texts and acquire new knowledge.

In addition to its role in communication and comprehension, lexical competence also involves understanding the nuances of word usage, including connotation, collocation, and register. As Schmitt (2000) points out, "Knowing a word involves knowing its meaning, its grammatical behavior, its collocations, and its associations." This multifaceted nature of vocabulary knowledge emphasizes the complexity of lexical competence and the need for comprehensive instructional approaches that address these various dimensions.

Furthermore, lexical competence is influenced by individual factors such as age, exposure to language, and learning styles. Different learners may acquire vocabulary through diverse methods, including direct instruction, incidental learning, and contextual exposure. As stated by Oxford (1990), "Learners have different styles and strategies for acquiring language, and effective instruction must take these differences into account." This highlights the necessity of tailoring vocabulary instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners, ensuring that all students can enhance their lexical competence effectively.

In summary, lexical competence is a vital aspect of language learning that encompasses a wide range of knowledge and skills related to vocabulary. Its importance in communication, comprehension, and academic success cannot be overstated. As educators seek to improve students' lexical competence, it is essential to adopt instructional strategies that consider the diverse learning styles and needs of learners, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and effective language learning environment.

Importance of lexical competence in language learning

Lexical competence plays a pivotal role in language learning, serving as the foundation for effective communication, comprehension, and overall language proficiency. The ability to understand and use vocabulary appropriately is essential for learners at all levels, influencing their success in both academic and social contexts.

At its core, lexical competence is central to effective communication. A rich and well-developed vocabulary enables learners to comprehend and produce a wide range of texts and participate meaningfully in diverse communicative contexts (Nation, 2021). Vocabulary knowledge allows speakers to convey precise meanings and subtle nuances, thereby facilitating meaningful interaction. In this regard, lexical competence constitutes a fundamental component of communicative competence, as it involves mastery of the lexical resources necessary for effective interaction (Savignon, 2022). Moreover, lexical competence is closely associated with reading and listening comprehension. Adequate vocabulary knowledge supports learners in decoding written texts and processing spoken language more efficiently. As vocabulary functions as a foundational building block of language, insufficient lexical knowledge may hinder individuals' ability to express ideas clearly and accurately, potentially resulting in misunderstandings and ineffective communication. In educational settings, lexical competence is essential for academic achievement across various subjects. Students who possess a strong vocabulary are more likely to excel in writing assignments, oral presentations, and standardized tests.

The Enriched Virtual Model (EVM)

The Enriched Virtual Model is a blended learning approach that combines online learning with face-to-face interactions. It primarily allows students to engage in most of their coursework online while providing opportunities for in-person support and collaboration. This model originated from online schools aiming to enhance their educational offerings. The Enriched Virtual Model provides a unique blend of online and face-to-face learning, allowing students to take control of their educational journey while still benefiting from essential human interactions (Horn & Staker, 2015).

The Enriched Virtual Model offers several advantages, including flexibility, personalized learning and enhanced engagement. In the term of flexibility, students can learn at their own pace, accessing materials, and completing assignments according to their schedules. In personalized learning, the model allows for tailored instruction that meets individual student needs, accommodating different learning styles and paces. While in enhanced engagement, face-to-face interactions foster a sense of community and belonging, which can enhance student motivation and engagement.

Blended learning models like the Enriched Virtual Model can lead to increased student engagement and improved learning outcomes by combining the best of online and in-person education (Graham, 2013). Successful implementation of the Enriched Virtual Model requires

careful planning and consideration of how to integrate online and face-to-face components effectively. Educators must design curricula that leverage the strengths of both modalities, ensuring that online activities complement in-person sessions (Poon, 2013).

While the Enriched Virtual Model offers many benefits, it also presents challenges, such as ensuring equitable access to technology and maintaining student motivation in an online environment. Educators must be prepared to address these challenges to maximize the model's effectiveness. Challenges such as technology access and student motivation must be addressed to fully realize the potential of the Enriched Virtual Model in enhancing educational outcomes (Barbour & Reeves, 2009).

Lexical Competence

Recent second language acquisition (SLA) research conceptualizes lexical competence as a cognitively complex system involving both declarative and procedural knowledge. Declarative knowledge allows learners to recall meanings, forms, and semantic relations, while procedural knowledge allows them to retrieve and use vocabulary automatically during communication. Studies in cognitive linguistics show that lexical competence relies heavily on the strength of mental lexical networks, which are built through repeated and meaningful exposure to words in varied contexts (Webb et al., 2020). This view emphasizes that lexical knowledge is not static but dynamically reorganized as learners encounter, process, and use vocabulary over time.

Lexical competence is now widely recognized as a multi-dimensional construct comprising sub-components such as phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic word knowledge. Contemporary research stresses that knowing a word includes the ability to understand how it behaves across linguistic levels (e.g., morphological variations, collocational tendencies, register constraints). Recent modeling studies confirm that learners' lexical competence develops unevenly across these levels, with collocational and phraseological competence typically lagging behind basic meaning recognition (Gyllstad & Siyanova-Chanturia, 2021). This highlights the need for instruction that targets multiple dimensions of word knowledge rather than focusing solely on definitional meaning.

Breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge remain the two most studied dimensions of lexical competence. Breadth refers to the quantity of words learners know, whereas depth refers to the richness of knowledge about each word. Updated empirical work demonstrates that these dimensions contribute differently to language skills: vocabulary breadth strongly predicts decoding and general comprehension, while vocabulary depth plays a crucial role in

inferencing, discourse construction, and accurate language production (Qian & Lin, 2020). Therefore, curriculum design must incorporate both extensive exposure strategies to expand breadth and targeted deep-processing tasks to strengthen depth.

Modern corpus-based and psycholinguistic studies argue that lexical competence is grounded in the quality of learners' lexical networks—how words are interconnected in memory through semantic, thematic, and collocational links. Learners with denser lexical networks retrieve words more efficiently and use them more fluently. Research using word association tasks and reaction-time studies shows that advanced learners activate semantic and collocational associations faster and more accurately than lower-proficiency learners, indicating stronger lexical organization (Zhang & Koda, 2022). This perspective highlights the importance of repeated exposure to word relationships, not only isolated words.

Recent usage-based approaches to SLA emphasize that lexical competence is shaped by learners' repeated participation in meaningful language use. According to usage-based theory, frequency, salience, and contextual richness determine how quickly learners internalize lexical forms and their functions. Empirical findings indicate that learners acquire vocabulary more effectively when instruction includes authentic input, contextually embedded examples, and opportunities for communicative use (Laufer & Goldstein, 2023). This aligns lexical competence with real-world communicative ability, stressing that word knowledge must be functional, contextualized, and adaptable across interactional settings.

Role of Vocabulary in Language Acquisition

Vocabulary plays a central role in second language acquisition (SLA) because it enables learners to process and interpret input efficiently. Research in input processing theory demonstrates that learners cannot extract grammatical or discourse features from input if they lack sufficient lexical recognition (Van Zeeland & Schmitt, 2013; Webb & Nation, 2017). More recent studies confirm that vocabulary size strongly predicts learners' ability to decode spoken and written input, especially in contexts requiring rapid semantic integration (Stæhr, 2020). Without access to adequate vocabulary, learners struggle to comprehend texts, conversations, and academic discourse, resulting in slower acquisition of other linguistic subsystems such as morphology and syntax.

Current empirical evidence shows that vocabulary breadth and depth are among the strongest predictors of reading and listening proficiency in both foreign language and second language contexts. Large-scale assessments reveal that vocabulary knowledge accounts for more variance in reading comprehension than grammar or background knowledge (Jeon &

Yamashita, 2014; Uchihara & Saito, 2019). Furthermore, listening comprehension studies indicate that vocabulary size significantly enhances learners' ability to segment speech, infer meaning, and integrate contextual clues during real-time processing (Stæhr, 2020). These findings highlight vocabulary as an essential component of receptive language development, making it indispensable for academic success.

In productive language skills, vocabulary functions as the primary resource that shapes learners' ability to express ideas accurately, fluently, and appropriately. Research on speaking and writing development shows that lexical diversity, lexical sophistication, and collocational accuracy are key determinants of communicative competence (Kyle & Crossley, 2016; Hakim et al, 2024). Updated corpus-based studies also emphasize the role of multiword expressions, phraseological units, and formulaic sequences in facilitating fluent speech production and coherent writing (Paquot & Granger, 2021). Learners with richer lexical repertoires are better able to construct complex messages, negotiate meaning, and engage in higher-order academic discourse.

Recent developments in cognitive and usage-based approaches to SLA highlight that vocabulary acquisition is driven by the quality of linguistic exposure and the depth of mental processing during learning tasks. Incidental vocabulary learning occurs during meaning-focused input, but retention increases substantially when learners engage in elaborative processing, such as inferencing, semantic mapping, and productive use (Pellicer-Sánchez, 2020). Moreover, multimodal learning environments have been shown to enhance retention by providing repeated encounters with words through varied modalities—audio, visual, textual, and interactive tasks—which strengthen lexical representations and support long-term acquisition (Bisson et al., 2020). These insights position vocabulary not only as a linguistic outcome but also as a mechanism that accelerates overall language development.

Learning Styles

Different Learning Styles

The Visual, Auditory, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic (VARK) framework categorizes learners according to their preferred sensory modality: Visual, Auditory, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic. Recent research positions VARK as a model that helps educators understand how learners perceive, process, and retain new information differently. Studies show that learning preferences influence attention, cognitive processing, and engagement levels, making VARK an effective tool for personalizing instruction in language learning contexts (Dobrowolska et al., 2022). Although learning styles are not deterministic of achievement, current SLA literature

supports the idea that instruction aligned with learner preferences can enhance motivation and the perceived ease of learning tasks.

Visual learners rely on imagery, diagrams, color-coded notes, and spatial representations to process information. Recent multimodal learning studies demonstrate that visual input—such as infographics, semantic maps, and annotated texts—facilitates deeper comprehension and faster lexical retrieval among learners who prefer visual modalities (Yang et al., 2023). Visual scaffolding is particularly effective in vocabulary learning because it strengthens connections between form and meaning, enabling learners to build semantic networks. These findings reinforce the role of visual stimuli as a crucial component of differentiated vocabulary instruction.

Auditory learners benefit most from oral explanations, discussions, and listening-focused tasks. Current research shows that learners with auditory preferences demonstrate higher recall and comprehension when vocabulary is taught through lectures, dialogues, repetition drills, or multimedia audio materials (Alharbi, 2021). Additionally, auditory learners show improved retention when exposed to prosodic cues—intonation, rhythm, and stress—which contribute to more accurate pronunciation and lexical encoding. These findings highlight the importance of integrating oral modeling, group discussions, and listening comprehension activities into L2 vocabulary instruction.

Read/write learners prefer engaging with printed or digital texts, note-taking, and written exercises. Studies in academic literacy emphasize that learners with this preference excel when vocabulary instruction includes definitional tasks, reading passages, vocabulary logs, and summarization activities (Khezrlou, 2021). Because these learners process information linguistically rather than visually or auditorily, text-heavy activities promote deeper lexical understanding and long-term retention. Recent research also supports the use of digital reading platforms and hyperlinked glosses, which significantly enhance vocabulary acquisition among read/write-oriented learners.

Kinesthetic learners rely on movement, physical engagement, and experiential activities. Updated SLA research demonstrates that embodied cognition learning through physical interaction significantly enhances vocabulary memorization and retrieval among kinesthetic learners (Mathias et al., 2023). Activities such as role-play, task-based learning, manipulatives, and gamified tasks have proven particularly effective for this group. Kinesthetic learners benefit from learning environments that simulate authentic language use, as these hands-on tasks strengthen procedural lexical knowledge and promote greater engagement.

Impact of Learning Styles on Language Learning

Learning styles play a significant role in shaping how learners perceive, process, and retain linguistic information. Within the field of second language acquisition (SLA), learning styles are considered an essential part of individual learner differences, influencing learners' engagement with instructional materials and their overall pace of acquisition. Recent research demonstrates that aligning instructional methods with learners' preferred modalities can improve motivation, self-efficacy, and task engagement, which are critical predictors of long-term language success (Riding & Rayner, 2020). Although learning styles are not deterministic of linguistic outcomes, they function as influential mediators that affect how learners respond to various input and output tasks during language learning.

Empirical evidence shows that learning styles directly influence vocabulary development by shaping how learners encode and store lexical information. Visual learners tend to benefit from imagery-based lexical representations, while auditory learners show greater gains with oral repetition and phonological cues. Kinesthetic learners, on the other hand, retain vocabulary more effectively through embodied or task-based activities that involve physical engagement. Cognitive processing studies further suggest that learning-style-congruent activities facilitate deeper semantic elaboration, leading to improved retention and faster retrieval of vocabulary items (Chen & Sun, 2021). Such findings highlight the need for multimodal instructional design that accommodates diverse cognitive processing preferences.

Different learning styles also influence the development of receptive and productive language skills. Visual and read/write learners often excel in reading comprehension and writing tasks due to their strong preferences for text-based input. Auditory learners typically demonstrate improved listening comprehension and oral fluency because they process spoken language more efficiently. Meanwhile, kinesthetic learners perform well in communicative tasks that require interaction, role-play, or real-world simulation. A recent cross-skill analysis found that incorporating learning-style-responsive strategies leads to measurable improvements across all macro-skills, particularly when multimodal input is combined with interactive meaning-focused tasks (Khezrlou, 2022). This underscores the pedagogical importance of diversified instructional modes.

Learning styles also affect affective variables such as motivation, confidence, and willingness to communicate—factors known to strongly influence SLA outcomes. When instructional practices align with learners' preferences, students report greater enjoyment, reduced anxiety, and higher task persistence. According to recent motivational L2 research,

mismatched learning environments can lead to disengagement, poor strategy use, and decreased intrinsic motivation, ultimately limiting language progress (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2019). Conversely, inclusive and multimodal learning environments promote psychological comfort, encourage risk-taking in communication, and support the development of positive learning identities.

The impact of learning styles on language learning carries significant implications for instructional design. Research consistently supports the use of differentiated instruction the practice of tailoring input, tasks, and assessment to match learner variability. Multimodal teaching strategies, such as combining visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities, have been shown to benefit not only learners with strong modality preferences but also those who rely on multiple modalities depending on task demands (Zhang & Zhang, 2023). Incorporating flexible, learner-centered approaches within blended and technology-enhanced environments ensures that instruction remains accessible, equitable, and conducive to deeper language learning.

Enriched Virtual Model (EVM)

Components of the Enriched Virtual Model (EVM)

The first and most central component of the Enriched Virtual Model (EVM) is the online learning environment and digital curriculum. In this model, most instructional content, multimedia materials, and asynchronous tasks are hosted within a structured learning management system (LMS). The digital curriculum must be modular, scaffolded, and equipped with analytic tools that allow instructors to monitor learner progress. Recent studies highlight that well-designed online modules enhance learner autonomy and ensure continuity between virtual and in-person activities (Arnett, 2023; Staker & Horn, 2022).

A second key component is the purposeful, limited face-to-face (F2F) instruction that complements the online portion. Rather than meeting daily, learners attend targeted sessions focused on collaborative work, clarification, troubleshooting, and skill application. These in-person meetings are strategically scheduled to maximize learner support and deepen conceptual understanding. Research shows that alignment between online tasks and F2F sessions is crucial for maintaining instructional coherence in EVM (Arnett, 2023; Tucker et al., 2022).

A third component involves assessment systems, progress monitoring, and adaptive feedback. EVM relies heavily on formative online assessments, automated scoring tools, and learning analytics dashboards that help instructors differentiate instruction based on real-time data. Such tools enable flexible pacing, allowing students to advance once mastery is

demonstrated. Recent findings note that timely feedback and consistent progress monitoring significantly enhance student engagement and learning outcomes in blended environments (Tucker et al., 2022; Zheng & Wang, 2023).

The fourth component is the redefined teacher role, where instructors function as facilitators, designers, and coaches rather than traditional content deliverers. Teachers curate digital resources, design online modules, analyze learner analytics, and lead targeted F2F sessions. Research emphasizes that professional development and institutional support are essential to help teachers successfully transition to these new roles in EVM (Staker & Horn, 2022; Zheng & Wang, 2023).

Finally, EVM requires strong infrastructure, learner agency, and scheduling flexibility. Appropriate digital tools, reliable internet access, and clear institutional policies provide the foundation for effective implementation. At the same time, EVM encourages students to develop self-regulation, such as time management and goal setting, which are crucial for navigating the hybrid structure. Recent studies underscore that equitable access to technology and explicit scaffolding for independent learning are decisive factors in successful EVM adoption (Arnett, 2023; Tucker et al., 2022).

Strategies in the Enriched Virtual Model (EVM)

A central strategy of the Enriched Virtual Model (EVM) is designing modular, media-rich online learning units that support independent progression. Online modules are intentionally short, goal-oriented, and supported with multimodal resources such as videos, simulations, and interactive quizzes to reduce cognitive load and maintain learner engagement. Scaffolding elements such as guided practice, hints, and glossaries help students navigate complex content autonomously. Recent learning-analytics studies demonstrate that modular digital design significantly enhances learner self-regulation and mastery in blended environments (Zheng & Wang, 2023).

A second strategy involves structuring targeted face-to-face (F2F) sessions that complement, rather than duplicate, online instruction. EVM uses in-person meetings primarily for collaborative problem-solving, clarification, hands-on practice, and formative assessment. These F2F sessions are purposeful, limited in frequency, and tightly aligned with the progression of online modules to reinforce continuity and coherence. Studies in contemporary blended learning implementations show that tightly coordinated online–offline alignment leads to higher retention and deeper understanding (Stanja, 2023).

A third strategic component is embedding continuous formative assessment and learning-analytics-driven feedback. Low-stakes quizzes, real-time progress dashboards, and automated feedback loops enable instructors to monitor student needs and provide timely intervention. Learning analytics have been shown to reveal patterns of misunderstanding early, helping teachers personalize instruction and enabling students to adjust their strategies. Systematic reviews confirm that such analytics-supported feedback improves engagement, pacing, and learning outcomes in blended formats (Zhang et al., 2023).

A fourth strategy focuses on personalization through adaptive learning pathways and learner profiling. EVM incorporates flexible pacing, differentiated tasks, learner-choice pathways, and adaptive digital tools that respond to students' performance and preferences. Personalized pathways help ensure that learners receive targeted challenges and support aligned with their readiness. Recent empirical work shows that personalization, when implemented with valid diagnostics and educator guidance, significantly improves motivation and achievement (Liu, 2024).

Finally, effective EVM implementation requires strategies related to teacher role redefinition, professional development, and equitable technological infrastructure. Teachers shift from content transmitters to facilitators, instructional designers, and data interpreters roles that require sustained institutional support and training. At the same time, equitable access to devices, stable connectivity, and clear scheduling policies are essential. Evidence from recent blended-learning research shows that teacher capacity and infrastructural readiness are decisive in determining EVM success across diverse learner populations (Bekele, 2025; Prayitno, 2023).

The purpose of the study is to figure out the enhancement of the lexical competence of students as seen from the learning styles through the Enriched Virtual Model. To facilitate a thorough investigation, the following research objective are: (1) To identify and analyze the most effective multimodal strategies (e.g., visual, auditory, read/write, and kinesthetic) in enhancing students' lexical competence within the Enriched Virtual Model; and (2) To examine the influence of different learning styles (e.g., visual, auditory, read/write, and kinesthetic) on the effectiveness of the Enriched Virtual Model in improving students' lexical competence.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design to examine the improvement of students' lexical competence through the Enriched Virtual Model (EVM) and to explore the influence of learning styles within this blended-learning environment. Mixed-methods designs are widely used in educational research because they allow researchers to capture both measurable learning outcomes and contextualized learner experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The quantitative component measured changes in lexical competence using pre- and post-tests, while the qualitative component explored students' engagement, preferences, and perceptions during EVM implementation. The integration of the two approaches enabled triangulation and provided a more comprehensive understanding of how EVM supports multimodal vocabulary learning (Graham, 2013; Poon, 2013).

The selection of a mixed-methods approach was appropriate because lexical competence is a multidimensional construct that benefits from both statistical evidence and descriptive insights (Webb et al., 2020). Additionally, the blended nature of EVM combining online and face-to-face learning necessitates investigating how learners interact with varying instructional modalities. This design therefore aligned directly with the study's research questions, focusing on effective multimodal strategies and the moderating effect of VARK learning styles.

Respondents

The participants were undergraduate students enrolled in a Lexical Studies course at English Education Study Program, Universitas PGRI Semarang, Indonesia during the second semester in which the EVM intervention was implemented. Convenience sampling was used because all participants were part of an intact class, which is commonly applied in classroom-based research (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). To identify learning-style preferences, students completed the VARK questionnaire, a validated instrument widely used in educational settings to classify sensory learning modalities (Fleming & Mills, 1992).

Inclusion criteria required that students (1) attended online and face-to-face sessions, (2) completed the pre-test and post-test of lexical competence, and (3) engaged in all EVM learning activities. The sample reflected diverse learning-style profiles: Visual, Auditory, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic which enabled comparison across groups, consistent with previous research on individual differences in SLA (Riding & Rayner, 2020).

Data Collection

Data were collected using a combination of Lexical test, the VARK learning-style inventory, and qualitative reflection instruments. The Lexical test measured lexical breadth and depth,

including word recognition, meaning recall, and collocational knowledge dimensions commonly used in vocabulary research (Nation, 2021; Qian & Lin, 2020). The test was administered before and after the intervention to determine learning gains attributable to the EVM.

The VARK questionnaire was used to categorize students' learning styles, as this model is widely applied to analyze learners' modality preferences in multimodal learning environments (Dobrowolska et al., 2022). Qualitative data including student reflections, observation notes, and responses to open-ended questions were collected to provide insight into learners' engagement with online modules, multimedia resources, and face-to-face sessions. Collecting multiple data types is consistent with recommendations for evaluating blended-learning interventions (Tucker et al., 2022; Staker & Horn, 2022).

During implementation, the EVM included asynchronous multimedia lessons, interactive online quizzes, and targeted face-to-face sessions, reflecting the essential components of enriched virtual learning models as described in contemporary blended-learning literature (Horn & Staker, 2015; Arnett, 2023).

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the pre- and post-tests were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean scores and percentage gains). Comparative analysis across VARK categories was conducted to determine whether certain learning-style groups demonstrated greater lexical improvement. Such between-group comparisons are recommended when examining learner differences in educational research (Khezrlou, 2021).

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines for coding and identifying recurring patterns in learner reflections and observational data. Themes focused on learners' engagement, modality preferences, and perceptions of online versus face-to-face components. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings allowed for methodological triangulation, strengthening the validity of the interpretations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

This analytical approach made it possible to answer the research questions: (1) identifying effective multimodal strategies for enhancing lexical competence through the EVM, and (2) examining the extent to which learning styles moderated learners' outcomes within the enriched virtual environment.

FINDINGS

Impact of the Enriched Virtual Model on Lexical Competence

Results from the pre- and post-tests demonstrated a clear improvement in students' lexical competence following the implementation of the Enriched Virtual Model. Quantitative data were gathered from pre-test and post-test scores measuring students' lexical breadth, depth, and contextual vocabulary use. Across all dimensions, students demonstrated substantial improvement, indicating that the EVM effectively supported vocabulary development. The largest gain appeared in contextual use and collocational knowledge, suggesting that multimodal and scaffolded learning pathways strengthened deeper lexical processing.

Table 1. Pre-test and Post-test Results on Lexical Competence

Lexical Dimension	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean Gain	Percentage Increase
Vocabulary Breadth	62.4	78.6	+16.2	25.9%
Vocabulary Depth	58.2	74.1	+15.9	27.3%
Collocational Knowledge	55.0	73.4	+18.4	33.4%
Contextual Vocabulary Use	57.1	76.8	+19.7	34.5%
Overall Lexical Competence	**58.2**	**75.7**	**+17.5**	**30.0%**

The data show that all four dimensions improved considerably, with contextual vocabulary use showing the highest increase. These results support other studies reporting that blended multimodal instruction promotes deeper lexical processing and better integration of vocabulary across skills (Yang et al., 2023; Webb et al., 2020).

Students showed gains in lexical breadth, deeper understanding of word meanings, and improved control of collocations. These improvements reflect the effectiveness of multimodal and scaffolded vocabulary instruction, consistent with findings from blended learning and vocabulary research emphasizing that repeated, varied exposure supports lexical development (Webb et al., 2020; Nation, 2021). The largest increase occurred in contextual vocabulary use, suggesting that the combination of online modules and targeted face-to-face sessions facilitated meaningful vocabulary processing, an outcome aligned with research on multimodal learning environments (Yang et al., 2023).

Qualitative findings reinforced the quantitative results. Students reported that the multimedia-rich online lessons were helpful for self-paced learning and enhanced their ability to retain vocabulary. The visual and auditory explanations embedded in the online modules supported comprehension and reduced cognitive load, as noted in multimodal instructional research (Dobrowolska et al., 2022).

Qualitative findings were drawn from reflections, observation notes, and open-ended student responses. A thematic analysis revealed three major themes: multimodal engagement,

increased self-regulation and autonomy, and perceived usefulness of face-to-face consolidation activities.

Table 2. Summary of Qualitative Findings

Theme	Description	Representative Evidence from Data
1. Multimodal Engagement	Students engaged strongly with videos, audio glosses, visual annotations, and interactive quizzes.	Students stated that visuals "helped remember words faster," while audio materials improved pronunciation confidence.
2. Self-Paced Learning & Autonomy	Online modules supported self-regulated learning, allowing repeated exposure and flexible review.	Students noted that they liked completing tasks "at my own pace" and revisiting recordings to reinforce meaning.
3. Effectiveness of Face-to-Face Clarification	In-person sessions were essential for correcting errors, asking questions, and practicing vocabulary in context.	Reflections described F2F sessions as "the time to really understand the words" and "solve what I did not understand online."

These qualitative patterns reinforce the quantitative gains. The alignment between learner preferences and EVM features contributed to increased motivation and cognitive engagement. The findings are consistent with blended learning research that emphasizes the importance of combining multimodal online learning with targeted in-person scaffolding (Tucker et al., 2022; Dobrowolska et al., 2022).

Students also expressed appreciation for the practicality of face-to-face sessions, which allowed them to clarify misunderstandings, practice vocabulary through collaborative tasks, and receive immediate feedback. This aligns with blended learning literature emphasizing the importance of targeted in-person interaction for consolidation (Tucker et al., 2022; Graham, 2013).

Correlation Between Learning Styles and Lexical Competence

Performance across learning-style groups revealed noticeable differences. To analyze whether learning styles influenced achievement, test gains were compared across VARK categories.

Table 3. Lexical Competence Gain by Learning Style

Learning Style	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean Gain	Characteristics Observed
Visual	60.5	80.4	+19.9	Benefited from slides, diagrams, semantic maps
Auditory	58.8	73.5	+14.7	Improved via recordings, oral modeling
Read/Write	63.1	82.0	+18.9	Excelled in text-heavy tasks, glossaries
Kinesthetic	55.2	68.9	+13.7	Improved in role-plays, manipulatives

These results align with the literature, which suggests that learning-style-congruent multimodal instruction enhances lexical gains (Khezrlou, 2021; Mathias et al., 2023).

Visual and Read/Write learners demonstrated the highest increases, while Kinesthetic learners also showed meaningful improvement, though primarily in face-to-face activities.

Visual and Read/Write learners achieved the highest gains, particularly in tasks involving semantic mapping, reading passages, and written vocabulary exercises. These results are consistent with previous studies showing that learners who prefer visual or text-based modalities benefit significantly from materials rich in images, diagrams, and written explanations (Khezrlou, 2021; Yang et al., 2023). Auditory learners also recorded meaningful improvement, especially in pronunciation and listening-based vocabulary tasks, supporting earlier findings that auditory input enhances lexical encoding (Alharbi, 2021).

Kinesthetic learners demonstrated improvement primarily during face-to-face components involving experiential and interactive activities. This aligns with research showing that embodied cognition and hands-on engagement facilitate vocabulary retention among kinesthetic learners (Mathias et al., 2023). Although all groups benefited from EVM, qualitative reflections indicated that learners felt more confident and motivated when instructional activities aligned with their preferred modality, supporting research on the role of learning-style congruence in L2 engagement (Riding & Rayner, 2020).

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the Enriched Virtual Model (EVM) effectively enhanced students' lexical competence by combining the flexibility of online learning with the interactional benefits of face-to-face instruction. The observed vocabulary gains support the argument that multimodal input strengthens lexical acquisition by enabling learners to process vocabulary through multiple sensory channels (Bisson et al., 2020; Dobrowolska et al., 2022). The structure of the EVM supported both self-regulated learning during online modules and guided practice during in-person sessions—an approach aligned with established principles of blended learning (Horn & Staker, 2015; Arnett, 2023).

The differences observed among learning-style groups highlight the impact of individual learner differences on lexical learning. Learners tended to excel when the instructional modalities matched their preferred sensory channels, supporting previous findings that modality congruent instruction enhances engagement and retention (Chen & Sun, 2021). This suggests that the EVM's multimodal nature successfully accommodated the diverse cognitive processing strategies of the learners, resulting in more meaningful vocabulary learning across groups.

The study reinforces the importance of designing vocabulary instruction that integrates diverse multimodal resources to accommodate learners' varying preferences. The results suggest that educators implementing EVM should intentionally incorporate visual, auditory, textual, and experiential learning tasks, ensuring equitable access to multiple pathways of understanding. Such differentiated practices align with calls for flexible and inclusive approaches in blended learning environments (Poon, 2013; Staker & Horn, 2022).

Additionally, the findings highlight the value of learning analytics and formative assessment embedded in EVM. These tools can help instructors monitor progress and tailor face-to-face instruction to target learners' specific lexical needs, as recommended in recent research on adaptive and data-informed pedagogy (Zheng & Wang, 2023). The emphasis on supporting both vocabulary breadth and depth also aligns with contemporary vocabulary acquisition research (Qian & Lin, 2020).

The study was limited to a single cohort within one institutional context, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Learning-style categorizations were based solely on the VARK questionnaire, which may not capture the full complexity of learner preferences. Future research should involve larger samples, multiple institutions, and longitudinal designs to observe long-term lexical development. Additional variables such as motivation, digital literacy, and cognitive load could also be explored to better understand learners' interactions with multimodal input. Furthermore, future studies may examine how specific EVM components (e.g., analytics dashboards, collaborative tasks, adaptive feedback) contribute uniquely to different dimensions of lexical competence.

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrated that the Enriched Virtual Model (EVM) effectively enhances students' lexical competence by integrating multimodal online instruction with targeted face-to-face interaction. The significant gains in vocabulary knowledge across breadth, depth, and contextual use confirm that blended, multimodal approaches foster deeper lexical processing and support learner autonomy. Furthermore, differences among learning-style groups highlight the importance of tailoring instructional strategies to align with learners' preferred modalities. The EVM successfully accommodated Visual, Auditory, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic learners by providing diverse pathways for vocabulary learning.

These findings emphasize the need for language educators to incorporate multimodal resources, adaptive feedback, and differentiated activities in blended-learning contexts. The

EVM framework encourages flexible, student-centered learning while supporting the development of complex vocabulary skills required for academic success. Although the study was limited to a single institutional context, the results offer a strong rationale for implementing EVM and similar models in language education.

Future research should involve broader populations, longitudinal designs, and additional variables including motivation, digital literacy, and cognitive load to better understand the mechanisms that contribute to lexical development in multimodal environments. Continued exploration of blended learning models will provide further insights into effective vocabulary instruction in higher education.

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