USING THEME-BASED SCRABBLE GAMES TO ENRICH VOCABULARY MASTERY OF VIII G STUDENTS OF SMP N 1 SEWON IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2017/2018

PENGGUNAAN SCRABBLE BERBASIS TEMA UNTUK MENINGKATKAN PENGUASAAN KOSAKATA PADA SISWA SMPN 1 SEWON KELAS VIII TAHUN AKADEMIK 2017/2018

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Abstract

This study was aimed at improving the vocabulary mastery of the VIII G students of SMP N 1 Sewon through the use of theme-based Scrabble games. This research was a classroom-based action research which was conducted in two cycles. The subjects were 26 students of VIII G class. The data collection techniques were observations, interviews, pre-test and post-test. The data comprised vignettes, interview transcripts, and scores of pre-test and post-test which were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The result of the research showed that the use of Scrabble games improved the students' vocabulary mastery. It was reflected in the students' average scores which increased from 74.50 (in the pre-test) to 86.00 (in the post test). The results of the observation also indicated that the students enthusiastically participated in the class activities because the Scrabble games could attract their attention and generate their motivation.

Keywords: Scrabble games, vocabulary mastery, classroom-based action research

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa kelas VIII G SMP N 1 Sewon melalui penggunaan media permainan Scrabble bertema. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian tindakan kelas yang dilakukan dalam dua siklus. Subjek penelitian adalah 26 siswa kelas VIII G. Teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, pre-test dan post-test. Data terdiri dari catatan lapangan, transkrip wawancara, dan nilai dari pre-test serta post-test yang dianalisis secara kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan media permainan Scrabble Bertema meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa. Hal ini dapat dilihat dari peningkatan nilai siswa dari 74,50 di pre-test ke 86,00 di post-test. Hasil pengamatan penelitian ini juga mengindikasi bahwa partisipasi siswa meningkat di kelas karena permainan tersebut dapat menarik perhatian mereka dan motivasi mereka.

Kata kunci: permainan Scrabble, penguasaan kosa-kata, penelitian tindakan kelas

INTRODUCTION

In learning a language, vocabulary is the most important thing to be learnt first, since vocabulary links the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Furthermore, without an adequate vocabulary, students cannot express their ideas or feelings both in the spoken and written forms. Vocabulary can also support students' ability to grasp ideas and help students to think more logically. The greater number of words the students have, the more they can understand the ideas from others, and express their own ideas.

Renandya and Richards (2002: 255) say that vocabulary is an important component of language competence and it supports the basis for how the learners speak, listen, read, and write. Ur (1996: 60) says that vocabulary can be defined roughly as the words which a teacher teaches in the foreign language. The term 'words' here means that the new item of vocabulary maybe more than a single word. Nunan (2003: 130)

states that words are clearly vocabulary. In addition, vocabulary is not only words, but it is also in the form of word combinations or multiple units, and lexical items are also counted as vocabulary.

Scrabble Game is a word game that uses tiles or blocks and a game board. The definition of Scrabble game is explained by Protzner et. al (2016: 205) i.e. Scrabble is a popular board game in which two players alternate strategically form words out of seven randomly drawn lettered tiles.

In reality, the researcher still found some problems related to the vocabulary teaching and learning process. Based on the preliminary study, the researcher found the major problem in the students' vocabulary mastery. First, the students had low vocabulary mastery and lack of motivation to consult the dictionary by themselves when they found uncommon/unfamiliar words. The students tended to be lazy to memorize the uncommon words that they found in the text. The students' lack of motivation to remember a lot of different words and the meanings was because they had to do it without some interesting media that might help them to remember the words and meanings easily. This made them had difficulties in understanding and memorizing the meanings of the uncommon words in the texts. The second reason was their motivation to consult the dictionary when they faced some words that they did not understand the meaning was low. The students would directly asked the teacher about the meaning of the uncommon words rather than consult the dictionary by themselves. Moreover, they preferred to ask questions to the teacher using Indonesian language. The students were afraid of making mistakes when they had to speak in English during the teaching and learning process. They sometimes used Indonesian or Javanese language when they wanted to ask questions or answer questions from the teacher.

Based on the problems, the researcher noticed that the vocabulary mastery of the students was still low and it needed to be improved. Therefore, the researcher found that there were many possibilities for her to implement the Classroom Action Research (CAR). The researcher chose to do an action research entitled "Using Theme-Based Scrabble Games to Enrich Vocabulary Mastery of VIII G students in SMP N 1 Sewon in the Academic Year of 2017/2018".

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was a classroom action research which included 26 students of VIII G students of SMP N 1 Sewon as the participants, the English Education student as the collaborator, and the English teacher as the consultant. This study gathered two kinds of data which are the qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data were obtained through the interviews and observations of the classroom activities during the teaching and learning process.

This research used the Kemmis and McTaggart model (1988) in Burns (2010: 8). The collaborator and the researcher carried out the action research and worked together in collecting data of the problems and weaknesses of the English teaching and learning process related to the students' vocabulary mastery. Both the researcher and the collaborator identified the research problems. After that, the researcher and

the collaborator planned and carried out the actions. During the implementation of the actions, the researcher and the collaborator observed the teaching and learning process. Then, the implemented actions were evaluated and reflected by the researcher and collaborator. Finally, according to the result of reflection, the researcher and the collaborator planned some other actions to improve the English teaching and learning process. The number of cycles that the researcher and the collaborator applied was based on the students' improvement. There would be more cycles if the students did not show any improvement in their vocabulary skills.

In collecting the data, the researcher used some research instruments. Each research instrument supported each other. First, to gain the real situation and the condition of teaching and learning, some observations were carried out. During the observation process, observation checklists were needed to record the observation data. Second, to get deeper information related to the research, some interviews were conducted. The researcher interviewed some of the students and the English teacher using the interview guideline that had been prepared.

The quantitative data were used to know the students' test scores before and after the implementation and to identify whether there was any improvements or not during the teaching and learning process. The quantitative data were also used to complement the qualitative data and support the research findings and interpretations. Finally, from the findings and interpretations, the conclusions and suggestions of the research were made.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this research were drawn from the students' scores, the interview transcripts, observation checklists and field notes. In cycle 1, there were some improvements regarding the students' vocabulary mastery. In the beginning, not all of the students could play the Scrabble correctly, there were students who placed the tiles wrongly, and they still found it difficult to form the words that were in the text. The students could not fulfill the criteria of the game to form at least 5 words including adjectives, verbs or nouns that were in the text. The time allocation was too short and the researcher could not manage the time allocation well.

In cycle 2, there were some improvements in all aspects. The students' enthusiasm increased after the researcher emphasized the rules and gave rewards for the winners. The game was more competitive and made the students more active in participating in the game. The students were also successful to memorize and understand the new words by their own desire. The students finally could arrange the words including adjectives, verbs and nouns that they found in the text when they played the game. The researcher could manage the time better. The students had already recognized and understood the expressions of greetings, instructions, and questions. Thus, the researcher minimized the amount of Bahasa Indonesia translations and the students could respond well without many repetitions.

Based on the findings, the theme-based Scrabble games helped the students to improve

their vocabulary mastery in terms of academic vocabulary or high frequency words, and also improve their ability to distinguish the part of speech of the words and the meanings according to the context. The students could identify the adjectives, verbs, or nouns in the text given and also could guess the meanings of certain words related to the context. The improvements can be seen from the worksheets that the students did during the teaching and learning activities and also the post-test scores. The use of classroom English had a significant impact on their ability to recognize some expressions in English and also their vocabulary mastery.

Furthermore, giving feedbacks to the students related to their participations and pronunciation also helped them to be more confident and not afraid to speak up in class. The students were braver to ask the researcher about several things during the teaching and learning process and also during the game. They did not reluctant anymore to ask or answer questions.
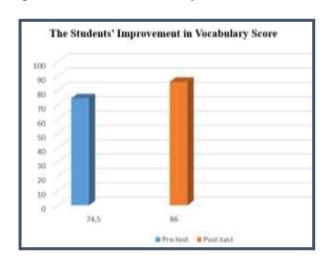
Table 1: The Students' Mean Scores in Pre-test, and Post-test

	Minimum	Maximum	Total Score	Mean
Pre-test	52.5	97.5	1937.5	74.5
Post-test	72.5	100	2077.5	86

Based on the result of the pre-test, the data showed that the mean of pretest was 74.5. There were 14 students who got the score below the Minimum Mastery Criterion-*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal* (KKM) of 75. After the researcher

administered the post-test, although there were two students who did not come when the post-test was administered, the data showed that the mean score of the class increased to 86 in which there was only one student who did not pass the Minimum Mastery Criterion-*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM)* from 24 students out of 26.

The researcher then compared the score by focusing on the total score and the average. Based on the table above, the total score of the pre-test was 1937.5, and the the total score of the post-test was 2077.5. It could be concluded that the total score and the average score in the post-test increased 42.31% from the total score and the average score of the pre-test. There were 23 students or 88.46% of the students who passed the Minimum Mastery Criterion on the post-test. Meanwhile, a student was still below that criterion, and 2 students did not do the post-test. It implied that the criterion had been fulfilled by 75% of the total number of students who should pass the Minimum Mastery Criterion.

The students' vocabulary score had improved based on the results of their test scores. It indicated that the use of theme-based Scrabble games could motivate the students to enrich their vocabulary mastery. Although two students could

not join the post-test, most of the students gained good scores at the end of the cycle. The students's average score in pre-test was 74.5 that was below the passing grade or *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal* (KKM) which should be 75. That being said, the students' average score of the post-test improved to 86. In addition, the result of the research study of improving vocabulary mastery through theme-based Scrabble games indicated that there were improvements in the students' participation and vocabulary mastery. It was proved by the students' engagement and involvement during the teaching and learning process, they could give appropriate responds to the researcher's questions or instructions and greet the researcher appropriately. It was in line with the theory proposed by Kobzeva (2015:371), who claims that Scrabble games will develop the social and personal skills naturally. Thus, it made the students feel encouraged to be more active in the teaching and learning process because they experienced the great atmosphere of team play and friendly competition.

The researcher and the collaborator found that in the implementation of theme-based Scrabble game, the students' enthusiasm and motivation improved when they played the game. This was in line with Wright, Betteridge and Bucky's theory (2006: 1) about the meaning of word 'game:' an activity which is entertaining and engaging, and often challenging; and an activity in which learners play and usually interact. The students kept speaking up actively during the teaching and learning process and Scrabble games could keep the learners being interested and participating actively in the learning activities.

In the learning vocabulary using theme-based Scrabble games, the students seemed to enjoy it and they were motivated to memorize new vocabulary and learn English. The students were also motivated to consult the dictionary on their own initiative. It could be seen from their interests and participation in the teaching and learning activity. The increase of their understanding and ability to memorize vocabulary was seen from their score improvement. It was in line with Klimova (2015: 1158) notion that Scrabble is one of the most popular board games that specifically highlight language. When we play Scrabble we work through challenges calmly, since it is a pleasant mental stimulant. The purpose of the game is to build words with a higher score as possible. Scrabble is an indirect learning. When the students play the game, they do not realize that they are learning because their mind are busy playing the game instead of thinking that they are actually studying. Students also get new words or vocabulary naturally. Through this game, the students give their full attention and concentration to study.

CONCLUSION

This study is action research which was conducted in SMP Negeri 1 Sewon. The subjects of this research were the students of grade VIII G. This research was begun on 29th March 2018 and ended on 3rd May 2018. The actions were carried out in two cycles, the first cycle consisted of two meetings and the second also consisted of two

meetings. It was supported by several supplementary actions. They were applying theme-based Scrabble game to teach vocabulary, using the classroom English during the teaching and learning process, giving feedbacks to the students, stating the objectives of the lessons to the students, asking students to bring a dictionary, and asking the students to work in groups.

Before the actions, the students were less active and they tended to be silent when the teacher explained learning materials and when they were asked to do the tasks. Since the classroom activities were less varied, the students were not enthusiastically engaged in learning by giving less attention, and talking to each other.

The implementation of theme-based Scrabble games to vary class activities could affect the students' behavior. They improved the atmosphere of the English class. The game got them in groups, the students became more active and confident in the classroom activity. The students could learn vocabulary in fun and enjoyable way. It was also an effective progress in the view of the fact that the students' vocabulary mastery improved. The changes of behavior could be observed from their improvement in self-confidence to use the new words. The students expressed a great enthusiasm for joining the teaching and learning during the actions of the study.

The use of theme-based Scrabble game contributed much to the improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery. Furthermore, the various activities and media made the teaching and learning process became more interesting. The students became more motivated, confident and active. The research findings also indicated that the students' mean scores in writing increased. In conclusion, the research on using theme-based Scrabble games to enrich students' vocabulary mastery could be considered successful.

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