

The Implementation of Word Wizard Game in Learning Vocabulary

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Abstract

This research was conducted to discover the student's interest in learning vocabulary and focused on investigating student's perspectives on the implementation of the game in learning vocabulary. This research contain one research question namely how are the student's responses toward the use of Word Wizard game in learning vocabulary. The research employed a qualitative narrative to investigate a student's responses in learning English vocabulary using Word Wizard game. The participants of this research were thirteen students of grade one SMP Terpadu Semayoen Nusantara in Bener Meriah regency. Further, the researcher conducted observation and interview as a research instrument. The interview addressed some questions that were leading the students to be interested in responding the questions related to learning English vocabulary with the Word Wizard game. The interview was then transcribed to analysis this study. Thematic analysis was then used to analyze the student's interest from the script of the interview. The result showed that the students were very excited and interested in learning English vocabulary with Word Wizard game. The game helped students to remember and to find new words in English. The students also assert that learning English vocabulary by using Word Wizard game was much easier and they can be more enthusiastic. This media had a positive impact on students in learning English vocabulary.

Keywords: Media used; Word Wizard game; Learning English Vocabulary

1. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is a large collection of words in a language that contributes a lot to the ease of communication. Without a proportional amount of vocabulary, a person will have difficulty in speaking, reading, listening, and writing. Therefore, vocabulary mastery is needed by every learner of a language. This is because vocabulary is an important and

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crucial element in the communication process. In this case, Schmit (2004) finds that a person can say a lot about this world if they had a number of words to say.

Brown (2001, p. 377) stated that a list of boring words that every student must memorize and define the vocabulary. Lexical forms are seen in their central role in contextual and meaningful language. Vocabulary is one of the important aspects of learning English, as stated by Kamil & Hiebert (2005, p. 13), vocabulary is generally defined as word knowledge and word meaning. More specifically, vocabulary was used to refer to the types of words. Students must know to read texts that are increasingly demanding with understanding. Richard & Renandya (2002) considered vocabulary as an important element of language skills and is a benchmark of how well a language learner speaks, hears, reads, and writes. Vocabulary mastery is the most important skill to facilitate learning language skills because vocabulary is one of the language elements that need to be mastered. If the students master vocabulary, they can easily improve language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Cahyono & Widiati, 2008). However, teachers must be creative in teaching vocabulary to make their students easy to remember or remember foreign words. In junior high school, English lessons are mandatory because English is the language spoken all over the world. In learning vocabulary, students must know the meaning used in a context. Tozcu & Coady (2004, p. 473) stated that learning vocabulary is a very important aspect of foreign language acquisition and academic achievement, it is very important for reading proficiency and students' understanding which is closely related.

In general, vocabulary is taught by remembering new words by looking at the meaning of those words in a bilingual dictionary (Ivone,

2005). Teachers usually ask their students to translate new words into their native language and memorize them. This traditional method is applied to most schools in Indonesia. There are two main problems in using this method in learning vocabulary. Ivone (2005, p. 4) finds that the first limitation of the dictionary method is that the two languages rarely correlate with each other. The word "rice", for example, has various meanings because there are many types of rice in Indonesia. The second problem is that in obtaining the target language, translation can slow down the process. When students are given text in the target language, they need to translate it into their native language first, because it will spend more time and more process in accessing the target language.

According to John (2000, p. 16), vocabulary is knowledge to know the meaning of words, and therefore the purpose of the vocabulary test is to find out whether students can match each word with synonyms, dictionary - definition of ribbons, or their equivalents. Words in their own language in learning vocabulary they must automatically know the meaning of the word itself and be able to use it in sentences.

The key to understand what students hear and read is vocabulary because vocabulary is grammar. According to Astya (2010, as cited in Cahyono & Kusumaningrum, 2011, p. 127) what students need to master is vocabulary, because when studying English vocabulary is a language component that must be mastered by students. Furthermore, the mastery of vocabulary required several efforts that must be done. According to Graves (2000), there are four components of an effective vocabulary program:

1. wide or extensive independent reading to expand word knowledge

2. instruction in specific words to enhance the comprehension of texts containing those words
3. instruction in independent word-learning strategies, and
4. word consciousness and word-play activities to motivate and enhance learning

Wardaningsih (2014) stated that one thing that can make students happy and not bored in the class is games. Accordance with the statement, this research focused to investigate students' perspectives on the implementation of the game in learning vocabulary. One of the games that related to vocabulary mastery is Word Wizard Game, which is a game where the teacher asks the students to write down a few words then each student must come to the front of the class to give some clues about the word that has been written, and the other students must be able to guess the word with the instructions that have been given correctly. If the other student's answer is still wrong, then the student standing in front of the class must give another clue that refers to the word written down until the other students guess it true. Ideally, if students can play many games in English, their vocabulary mastery will increase. This can be seen from the less vocabulary they memorized, and they cannot mention the meaning of simple vocabulary. Therefore, this research aims to investigate how are the students' responses toward the use of Word Wizard game in learning vocabulary.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Word Wizard Game

In learning English, especially for junior high schools, teachers must have an interesting strategy. Teachers who only focus on manuals for teaching English will make students feel bored. To overcome this, the teacher must use interesting and different strategies, for example by

giving games. Cahyono & Mukminatien (2011, p. 40) claimed that games are activities that have rules, goals, and an element of fun. In-class activities, the fun element of a game serves to make the teaching and learning process more interesting and doesn't make students bored. According to Nurhajati & Wicaksono (2011, as cited in Cahyono & Mukminatien 2011, p. 41), the advantages of using games in class include games that can make the class more fun, playing games in class has good goals and results for students, students can use language as long as the time during the game to train students' self-confidence, and games will prevent them from becoming restless and bored in the classroom so that students become more enthusiastic about learning English.

Cahyono & Mukminatien (2011) added, "If the teacher is connected to the world of student material, in language preparation the students will find it easier to communicate". When students are introduced to games that make them excited, they don't know that they are learning because the teaching techniques are more interesting. To get to know the language taught by the teacher, the teacher must be able to provide a pleasant and motivating experience for them. So that students want to be excited and follow lessons well, games are the right solution because games make learning more interesting and fun.

Klippel (1984, p. 77) made a game called Word Wizard which was adapted from Brandes & Phillips (1997). In his book, he explained that the teacher will ask students to imagine that a magician has taken some important words in the world. Nowadays, the use of games as a medium in teaching and learning is increasing. Games have been developed to provide many benefits to the process. Most of the teachers use games to develop and improve students' knowledge as well as entertain them. The use of games can improve students' abilities, especially in learning

English because students will get information and material from the teacher easily.

The students will only save one important word and they will write those words on the teacher's paper. Word Wizard is a game where the teacher asks the students to write down a few words then each student must come to the front of the class to give some clues about the word that has been written, and the other students must be able to guess the word with the instructions that have been given correctly. If the other student's answer is still wrong, then the student will stand in front of the class to give another clue that refers to the word written down until the other students guess it true.

The characteristics of the word wizard game:

1. Materials: to play the word wizard game we need one paper for each student
2. Dynamic: The games will be played individually by students.
3. Time: Time will depend on how quickly students finish the game by telling the clues

Based on the theory above, it can be stated that Word Wizard is a game that can be used in the teaching and learning process of English. Word Wizard is not only a great game to use as a medium for teaching vocabulary but also an interesting method for creating a pleasant classroom atmosphere.

2.2. Vocabulary

It is important to learn English; that children who are able to learn foreign languages will have many abilities such as better intellectual, academic, communication, and social skills (Khairani, 2001, p. 6). That way, when they enter the social context, they are ready with various languages and cultures. In addition, Macaro (2001) said that to get good vocabulary mastery, students need more practices. Learning vocabulary

in the classroom requires students to have time to review lessons at home. With Word Wizard the game makes it easy for students to remember and memorize easily. In language skills and determining how well learners speak, listen, read, and write, vocabulary is a core component of these four abilities Richards (2002, p. 213). Mastery of vocabulary is closely related to the successful mastery of these four skills. In speaking vocabulary greatly affects the fluency and variety of word choices. In having a conversation, one must understand what is being said in order for the conversation to be meaningful. If someone lacks vocabulary in listening, it is very likely that someone is unable to understand messages and ideas about what is heard. With a lack of knowledge of vocabulary to read, the information that has been conveyed by the author in the text, one cannot understand the meaning of what the author describes. Moreover, in writing, the way the writer conveys ideas through text, the mastery of vocabulary will affect this. In doing so, it can make the existing text clear or even biased. This is because the written language vocabulary is much larger and more diverse than the spoken language vocabulary Hayes, Wolfer, & Wolfe (1996, as cited in Hiebert & Kamil, 2005, p. 7). Therefore, vocabulary has an important role in mastering English language skills.

Cameron (2001, p. 73) said that vocabulary is about learning words; children are not only expected to know a word but also have to know what the word means. Learning languages cannot be separated from learning vocabulary. Vocabulary will help the speaker to express their opinions, ideas, and feelings in communicating. Vocabulary is the most important language unit because it affects four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Related to the importance of vocabulary learning is important for language acquisition, whether first,

second, or foreign languages (E-Murcia, 2001, p. 285). In general, vocabulary is knowledge of the meaning of words (Elfrieda, et.al, 2005, p. 3).

According to Beck, McKeown & Kucan (2002, as cited in Haynes & Zacarian, 2010, p. 58), individual vocabulary consists of three levels. Level one has the most basic words, such as the pillow, sister, sun, and path. Most students already know the meaning of Level One words. Level Three consists of rare words such as apogee, precinct, peninsula, and ecclesiastical which tend to be confined to certain domains. Level Two, in the middle, consists of words such as compromise, conscientious, diligent, and typical which have a high frequency for adult users and are found across multiple domains.

Many experts interpret the term vocabulary in many ways. In general, all notions have the same idea, namely the number of words used to communicate. Vocabulary (which is identical to 'lexis' or 'lexicon') is seen as a "collection of words" or "a sub-set of words used in a particular context" (Siriwan, 2007). Vocabulary is a word that we used in our daily life to communicate. It means that vocabulary is the most important in learning a second language, but acquiring a large amount of vocabulary is one of the most difficult aspects of learning a second language for most second language learners (Pikulski & Templeton, 2004).

Furthermore, Thornbury (2002, p. 2) stated that conditions will help students to get a large number of important words to use in understanding and producing language. In addition, it will be easier for them to remember the words. It can develop strategies to overcome gaps in words, including overcoming words that the students did not know or using unknown words. Like the other expert opinions, Coxhead (2006) stated that vocabulary is a major part of the language. The more

vocabulary mastered by students, the easier they can communicate in various conditions and circumstances.

From the definition above, it can be concluded that vocabulary is the center of language and is very important in learning English. The speakers of language need to communicate and express the speaker's intent. That is the reason why vocabulary is important in learning English. Vocabulary can support the learner to learn language skills. Vocabulary helps students to express their ideas because vocabulary is very supportive of students to learn target language skills.

3. METHODS

This research used qualitative narrative methods. Qualitative methods, according to William (1970, as cited in Moleong, 2008), are data collection in a natural background by using a natural method and was done by the researcher who was interested naturally. The researcher and everyone involved in it are the main data collection tools. The first thing the researcher did was the researcher introduced the Word Wizard game to the teacher by provided explanations and examples of how to play before the Word Wizard game was implemented in the classroom. Furthermore, the researcher not only acted as a observer, data collector, data processor, and research answer finder, but also acted as a friend of the research subject. Thus, the research results be more accurate and valid, because the more trust the research subject has in the researcher, the more valid the data be obtained. The researcher took 13 students of the first-grade as a group of participant at SMP Terpadu Semayoen Nusantara in Bener Meriah. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling. The first-grade students were chosen because they were at the first level with a standard capacity of mastering English and the

researcher assumed that they were the right sample because they not master too much vocabulary yet.

In addition, this study used semi structured interview that allow for variations and disclosure of questions and additions to protocols, such as additional questions and investigations for specific individuals (Creswell, 2007). The interview consisted of 6 questions that involved students' opinions about this research problem. Furthermore, the researcher used Indonesian Language to get the deep information from the participants easily. The results of the interview are recorded properly, and the researcher has evidence of informant interviews or data sources.

4. RESULT

As has been explained in the previous chapter, the interview is a data collection technique in this research. In this interview, the researcher tried to find out what are the students' responses in mastering English vocabulary using the Word Wizard game. There are 6 (six) questions that are asked to be answered by students based on their own perspective. There were 13 first graders out of the 26 students interviewed; they are 8 (eight) males and 5 (five) females. The following is the analysis of students' answers in the interview section:

1. How did you learn English vocabulary without using any media such as word wizard game?

Based on the interview answer, there were 6 students AR, Y, YI, ZH, Ab, and JF explained that usually they learned English Vocabulary by writing the vocabulary and after that they memorized it. Then 4 students that are F, DB, Fd, and PA showed that they learn English vocabulary by writing and reading it. Then ZCA said that she only memorized the vocabulary without writing it, and there is a student only who read and memorized without writing it first. However, there is one student that is

Sh said that he is still confused about how to learn English vocabulary well.

From this question, the researcher concluded that more students who learned vocabulary used the writing and memorizing method, and then some students used the written and repeated reading method to learn vocabulary. Then there are students who are still confused about how to learn vocabulary.

2. What is the problem you may encounter while learning the English vocabulary without using media?

In this question, 5 students answered the problem that they encounter in learning English vocabulary is hard to pronounce the vocabulary. Then 5 students said that they did not find any problems in learning English vocabulary. However, there were 3 students AR, ZCA, and ZH who answered that they still had difficulty remembering the vocabulary they learned. From the students' answers above, the researcher concluded that some students still had difficulty in how to pronounce and how to read vocabulary in English, although there are also some of them who did not find any problems in learning vocabulary in English.

3. What do you think about learning the English vocabulary by using media such as the word wizard game?

Based on the results of interviews with the participants, it was found that after using the Word Wizard as a learning media for English vocabulary 6 students, FAS, F, YI, JF, Ab, and Sh said that learning circumstances will be more fun by using the Word Wizard game. Other 5 students stated that it became easier for them to understand vocabulary, and two other students Fd and PA stated that it was fun and challenging to learn English vocabulary using the Word Wizard game. It can be

concluded that most of the students said it was fun and exciting and they could more easily understand every word given when learning English vocabulary using the Word Wizard game.

4. Are there any problems in learning the English vocabulary by using the word wizard game?

Based on the students' answers, 11 out of 13 students answered that there were no difficulties they faced after learning English vocabulary using the Word Wizard game. There was one student FAS who said that there was still a number of English vocabulary that he did not know. Then another student JF said that he still had difficulty reading words in English. The researcher concluded that the average students did not experience such difficulty when learning English vocabulary using the Word Wizard game.

5. Can you explain whether it is interesting to learn the English vocabulary by using the word wizard game?

From the fifth question, 11 students said that they were interesting for different reasons. One student AR said that it is moderate, because it is easier to think but still difficult to pronounce the word in English. Other students FAS said that it was very interesting because I could play while studying. Student F also said that it is interesting and easy because it is not difficult after knowing the word. Two students, ZH and JF, answered the questions with almost similar answers that are it is interesting because it can communicate with friends while studying and it is interesting because learning with friends is more fun. Furthermore, 8 students with the initials Y, ZCA, DB, YI, Fd, PA, Ab, and Sh answered almost the same, interesting, because it is fun, fun, and easier to remember every word. Therefore, it can be concluded that 12 out of 13 students stated that it was interesting and very interesting to learn English vocabulary using the

Word Wizard game. They conveyed their answers for a variety of reasons, and most students answered that it was fun to use the word wizard game in learning vocabulary because they could easily remember each word by using that kind of game.

6. How is your experience after learning the English vocabulary by using the media word wizard game?

In the last question, 2 students, AR, and Fd answered that they felt happy after learning English vocabulary using games. Then 9 students ZH, FAS, Y, ZCA, DB, YI, PA, Ab, and JF gave almost the same answers, their feelings after learning English vocabulary using the Word Wizard game became more enthusiastic, more excited, easier, and less bored in learning English. Furthermore, one student F said "happy and proud" and another student Sh said, "There was no feeling whatsoever". From the answers that have been described, the researcher concluded that most students had almost the same feelings, those are making them feel more excited and less bored in learning English.

5. DISCUSSION

After the researchers conducted interviews with students before they got to know the Word Wizard game, the teacher taught them by writing the vocabulary on the whiteboard, and then the students take notes and memorized them. The average student answered in learning their writing vocabulary was then read over and over and then memorized. In learning, students must be better understanding the concept of learning so that what has been conveyed by the teacher can be well received. The learning concept given by the teacher must also be interesting as a game so that students are able to learn without feeling overwhelmed. This is in accordance with Wardaningsih's (2014, p.14) who stated that games are one of the methods used to make classroom learning more enjoyable and

happier. After the students learned the vocabulary using word wizard games, they were more enthusiastic in learning and it was easier for them to remember what has been taught by the teachers regarding the vocabulary.

In the interview section, for the question 'how they felt and their interest in this game', all students answered that they were interested and their responses were very good in receiving the games that the researchers applied in their class. Almost all students interviewed agreed that the Word Wizard game was an interesting method to apply in the classroom and Word Wizard game is a fun game for the students. This is in accordance with Nurhajati & Wicaksono (2011, as cited in Cahyono & Mukminatien 2011, p. 41), who said that there are many functions of games that are used as a learning method in the classroom, the class becomes more fun, students will not feel bored in the classroom and students become more enthusiastic in the classroom when English learning takes place.

With the Word Wizard game students can understand each word quickly and make it easier for them to remember every word, as Cameron (2001, p. 73) stated that vocabulary is learning about words, so students are expected to being able to understand the meaning of a word that has been given is not just knowing but they can apply new words they know in a sentence or conversation. From the students' perspective, the previous method was monotonous therefore they had the tendency to be bored while learning. After the implementation of word wizard game, the researcher saw that the responses given by students were very good. Their vocabulary learning goes well with the game implementation. Particularly, the games applied by the teacher leaded them to easily understand and reckon the vocabulary given. The students added that

after the implementation of the Word Wizard game they were more enthusiastic and excited because the method used was interesting since it triggered them to compete in learning with an enjoyable way.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of interviews about the implementation of the word wizard game in learning vocabulary, it can be concluded that the Word Wizard game was interesting to be applied in the classroom to increase students' focus in learning vocabulary. The reason is that before students know about the existence of games that make the classroom atmosphere fun during learning, they learn English monotonously and that makes them boring in the classroom. With the Word Wizard game, they admit that learning English, especially learning English vocabulary, is easier and it allows them to remember every word faster. The students added that the Word Wizard game made them more enthusiastic about learning English vocabulary.

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