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Submission date: 03-Jul-2024 12:40PM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 2411952092

File name: Titin_Sri_Mulyawati_Article_6.docx (60.45K)

Word count: 3778

Character count: 21486

The Impact of Guessing Games on Vocabulary Mastery in Elementary School Students?

Titin Sri Mulyawati Siswanto

208820300026

English Education Study Program, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo

E-mail : titinmulyawati699@gmail.com

yuliasitik@umsida.ac.id

Abstract

This study investigates the efficacy of guessing games in enhancing vocabulary mastery among elementary school students. Given the essential role of vocabulary in mastering a foreign language, effective teaching methods are crucial. Traditional methods often fail to engage young learners, leading to a lack of interest and poor retention. This research addresses the gap by exploring an interactive approach through guessing games, which has shown promise in making learning more enjoyable and effective. The research was conducted with 25 fifth-grade students at SDN Suko, utilizing a pre-test and post-test experimental design to evaluate vocabulary improvement. The study employed quantitative methods, administering a pre-test to assess initial vocabulary knowledge, followed by a series of guessing game sessions as the treatment, and concluding with a post-test to measure the impact of the intervention. Statistical analysis of the pre-test and post-test scores revealed a significant increase in vocabulary mastery, with the average score rising from 60.6875 to 86.6667. The results underscore the potential of guessing games to create a more engaging and effective learning environment. The interactive nature of these games not only reduced student anxiety but also promoted active participation and enthusiasm for learning. This method also fostered better retention and application of new vocabulary, demonstrating its value as an educational tool. The implications of this research are significant for educators seeking innovative approaches to language teaching. By incorporating guessing games into their teaching strategies, educators can enhance student motivation and learning outcomes. This study contributes to the broader understanding of interactive teaching methods and supports their implementation in elementary education to improve vocabulary acquisition.

Keywords : Guessing games, vocabulary mastery, elementary school, language learning, interactive teaching methods.

Introduction

English is currently thought to be essential for any citizen of a nation to communicate with the rest of the world. English is taught as a foreign language in Indonesia. Students who study English acquire four skills in addition to linguistic elements like grammar and vocabulary. Learning vocabulary is just as important to learning a foreign language as acquiring its meaning in the classroom [1]. By understanding vocabulary, one can enrich their vocabulary, improve reading comprehension, improve writing ability, improve speaking ability, become more productive, and maximize language mastery.

Vocabulary includes all the words that exist in a particular language, whether nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and others. [2] say that vocabulary is used in all forms of communication, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Vocabulary is very important to master first because vocabulary is an important means of communication [3]. For students to be proficient in a foreign language, they need to learn a sufficient amount of vocabulary and be able to apply it correctly.

Understanding the meanings of new words is not the only thing involved in learning them. Being able to comprehend and correctly employ new terms in writing or speech is essential for learning new words in English. Understanding word definitions is at the core of developing one's vocabulary. [4]. As a result, learning English vocabulary comes before learning English. If they are not proficient in vocabulary, they will not be able to communicate their emotions in a clear and concise manner. There are numerous approaches to help children increase their vocabulary, and as educators, we should be able to select the most effective one to use. Teaching vocabulary to elementary school students is a challenge for a teacher. Most students are not interested and easily bored in learning vocabulary and the problem that arises when teaching vocabulary to elementary school students is that they find it difficult to memorize the given vocabulary because they are not only required to memorize but also required to understand. According to [5] Students faced three types of difficulties: (1) nearly all of them had trouble pronouncing the words correctly; (2) they had trouble writing and spelling; and (3) one of the reasons they had trouble learning vocabulary was the many grammatical forms of words, or inflections. Furthermore, (4) the students struggled to select the word's right meaning.

That is what makes students limit their opportunities to interact or engage in active learning. The quality of one's ability to speak English is highly dependent on the quality and quantity of vocabulary mastered [6]. Therefore, it is important to teach vocabulary to students from an early age. If they don't have a strong vocabulary, they won't be able to communicate their emotions effectively. But according to recent research, the biggest barrier to vocabulary teaching is the teacher's uninteresting, repetitive and unvaried teaching methods. Students will lose focus in learning vocabulary and feel bored with the teacher's monotonous teaching approach. Elementary school students love to play and learn by having fun, so teachers must find a suitable learning method and must adjust to the learning interests of primary school students in order to make vocabulary learning look interesting and can improve students' vocabulary. Teachers who teach young students should spend a lot of time examining and understanding how their students operate and think [7]. Teachers are required to be more creative in teaching elementary school students.

There are many types of activities and methods that teachers can give to students. However, for elementary school students, it is recommended to give activities or learning methods that are easy, interesting, and fun games. While adult learners may learn best by enabling their abstract thinking, younger learners may benefit more from games when learning a foreign language [7]. Games serve as one of the most ideal and appropriate teaching techniques to use because games are fun activities and offer an informal atmosphere that allows students not to be afraid to communicate and also develop their fluency, which is a very important communication skill. Utilizing guessing games, such as: sharing the process of teaching vocabulary [8]. A guessing game involves an individual or a group attempting to provide a response to a question that has a few keywords associated with the pictures, titles, or words. Through this game, children can learn new language [9]. The guessing game is one that can be utilized with primary school students. In guessing game, essentially, someone knows something and the others must discover what it is. In this game, students take turns guessing the identity of an object through the submission of questions [10]. Guessing games are frequently used in classroom settings [11]. Primary school students will love school and learning vocabulary if they are given games during learning. Children's motivation to learn English will also increase. [12] also say that guessing game is a useful teaching tool since it encourages pupils to come up with ideas prior to learning. It is clear that guessing games will increase students' motivation in learning English and improve their vocabulary learning.

Numerous researches has been conducted on how to increase English vocabulary through the Guessing Games. According to [13] Guessing Games can improve students' vocabulary and the use of Guessing Game in teaching vocabulary for first grades of Vocational High School is effective. According to [14] The guess word game was utilized more effectively to increase the vocabulary of the eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Enrekang, students are very motivated and engaged in learning vocabulary when they use the Guess word game. According to [15] Guessing games have been proven to be effective in increasing vocabulary levels among students in the seventh grade at a state Islamic junior high school in Tangerang Selatan, according to the findings of a study on the subject. According to [16] A guessing games helps improve students vocabulary and guessing games were a fun way for students to learn vocabulary. From a number of studies that the author has reviewed. Since no research has been carried out at SDN Suko, the authors will proceed to conduct research at SDN Suko. Based on the problem this research has research questions "Does the Guessing Games media improve the vocabulary mastery of elementary school students in English learning at Sekolah Dasar Negeri Suko?"

Method

Research Design

This study utilizes a quantitative research design, specifically a pre-experimental design, to assess the effectiveness of guessing games in enhancing vocabulary mastery among elementary school students. The pre-experimental design involves a pre-test and post-test with a single group of participants. This approach allows for the measurement of changes in vocabulary knowledge before and after the intervention of guessing games. The study aims to provide empirical evidence on the impact of this interactive teaching method on students' vocabulary acquisition.

Research Setting

The research was conducted at SDN Suko, an elementary school located in Indonesia. The setting was chosen based on accessibility and the willingness of the school administration to participate in the study. The participants were 25 fifth-grade students, selected through purposive sampling. The class was chosen based on the recommendation of the teacher, who identified the group as suitable for the study due to their availability and the potential benefits they could gain from the intervention.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection involved three main stages: pre-test, treatment, and post-test.

1. **Pre-test:** Before the intervention, a pre-test was administered to assess the initial vocabulary knowledge of the students. The pre-test consisted of a set of vocabulary questions designed to measure the baseline level of students' vocabulary mastery.
2. **Treatment:** The intervention involved teaching vocabulary using guessing games. This interactive method engaged students in a fun and dynamic learning process, where they had to guess words based on clues provided by the teacher or their peers. The guessing games were designed to be both educational and entertaining, encouraging active participation and reducing anxiety associated with learning new vocabulary. following is the steps of giving treatment to the students:

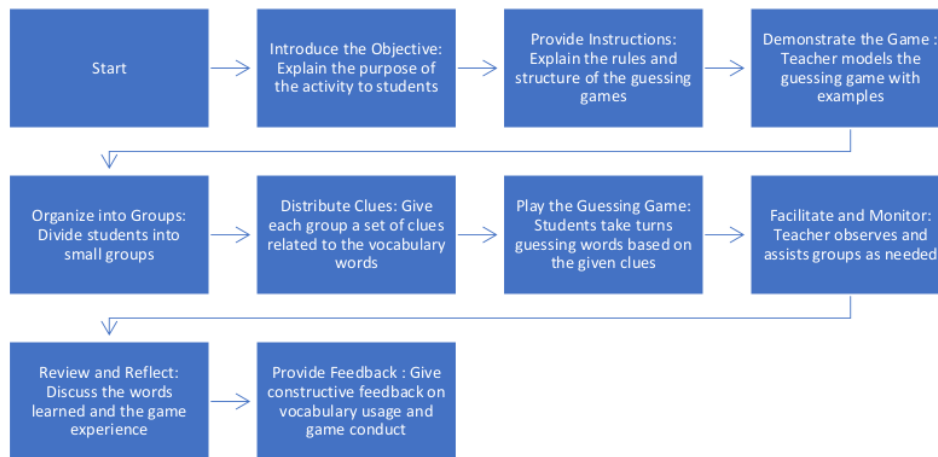


Figure 1. Steps of teaching vocabulary through Guessing game

The Figure 1 shows a vocabulary learning exercise flowchart using a guessing game. When you select "Start," you'll enter the first stage of the procedure, when the teacher explains to the students what the purpose of the exercise is. After then, the teacher breaks the class up into smaller groups. The teacher then provides each group with vocabulary word hints. The teacher also performs a demonstration by providing examples to ensure that the students understand the rules and format of the guessing game. Next, using the given clues, each student guesses a word in turn as they participate in the guessing game. Over this period, the teacher supervises, leads, and offers assistance to the groups as needed. The exercise culminates in a review and reflection session where students talk about the terms they have learned and their gaming experiences, and the teacher offers helpful criticism on vocabulary use and behavior during the game.

3. **Post-test:** After the intervention, a post-test identical to the pre-test was administered to measure the changes in vocabulary knowledge. The post-test aimed to capture any improvements in students' vocabulary mastery resulting from the guessing games.

In addition to the pre-test and post-test, observational data were collected during the intervention to monitor student engagement and participation.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The primary analysis involved comparing the pre-test and post-test scores to determine the effectiveness of the guessing games in improving vocabulary mastery.

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were calculated for both the pre-test and post-test scores. This provided an overview of the central tendency and dispersion of the scores.
2. **Paired Samples t-test:** A paired samples t-test was performed to assess whether the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores was statistically significant. This test helped determine

if the observed improvements in vocabulary scores were likely due to the intervention rather than random chance.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This research aims to determine the effectiveness of the Guessing game approach in enhancing students' vocabulary mastery as well as the reaction of the student responses to the usage of the technique as an alternative to other strategies for vocabulary improvement. This study was conducted in groups, the use of guessing games is actually not difficult to implement. There are several steps to implement it. The first step, the teacher must determine the group and each group consists of 6 people, the teacher will give a picture according to the material that has been given that day, the group that can quickly guess the picture correctly will be awarded points. The group with the most points will get more rewards than other groups. In doing this game, students are expected to have more vocabulary.

Table 1 Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	pretest	60,6875	24	5,30343	1,08256
	posttest	86,6667	24	5,31337	1,08459

Table 1 indicates that the average scores from the pre- and post-tests differ from one another. A total of 24 students from class VB at SDN SUKO provided the pre-test score, which was 60,6875, and the post-test score, which was 86,6667.

Table 2 Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	pretest -	-	6,47483	1,32167	-	-	-	23	,000
	posttest	25,97917			28,71325	23,24508	19,656		

It shows in table 2 that the results of the paired samples t-test, which determines if the mean difference between the pretest and posttest scores is significantly different from zero, are given in the "Paired Samples Test" section. The average difference between the pretest and posttest scores is -25.97917, meaning that the posttest scores improved by about 26 points on average. The diversity of the differences around the mean difference is indicated by the difference scores' standard deviation, which is 6.47483. One can estimate the precision of the mean difference by looking at the 1.32167 standard error of the mean difference. The mean difference's 95% confidence interval lies between -

28.71325 and -23.24508. This interval implies that the mean difference is statistically significant because zero is not included in it. The t-value is -19.656, which is calculated by dividing the mean difference by the standard error of the mean difference. This t-value, along with 23 degrees of freedom (df), is used to determine the significance of the results. The p-value (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.000, which is much less than the typical alpha level of 0.05. This indicates that the observed difference in scores is statistically significant, meaning that the increase in scores from the pretest to the posttest is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

In the conducted research, it has been observed that students' speaking skills improve through the use of guessing games. The pre-test average score is recorded at 60.6875, while the post-test average score is 86.6667. The results indicate a significant difference in the average scores before and after the treatment. Students showed enhancement in their English speaking abilities by effectively connecting their own or others' past experiences. Moreover, they felt more relaxed, focused, and eager to engage in the learning process. In earlier research studies that used guessing games, [17] The results of the research showed that the mean score on the post-test (41.14 < 77.36) is greater than the pre-test score. In addition, the t-count value of 11.303 is greater than the t-table value of 1.77093. According to earlier studies on guessing games [18], the t-table's df 32 value is 2.036, indicating that the t-test value is more than the t-table value (16.369 > 2.036). As seen by the t-test results, both the pre- and post-test scores have significantly increased. This indicates that using the guessing whispering spelling game aids in improving students vocabulary mastery.

Guessing games are used in the study as a teaching tool to help students become more fluent in English. Guessing games are used as a teaching tool to help students with their vocabulary learning problems. The purpose of the guessing game is to facilitate learning so that learners will be encouraged to remember the material and won't become easily bored. The results displaying significant vocabulary scores prove this.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the effectiveness of using guessing games to improve vocabulary mastery among elementary school students. The significant increase in the average test scores from 60.6875 in the pre-test to 86.6667 in the post-test underscores the positive impact of this interactive and engaging teaching method. The guessing games not only facilitated vocabulary acquisition but also made the learning process more enjoyable and less anxiety-inducing for students.

The results indicate that guessing games significantly enhance vocabulary mastery. The pre-test and post-test score comparison shows a substantial improvement, with a mean difference of approximately 26 points. This aligns with previous studies, such as those by [13], [14], and [15], which also reported significant vocabulary gains through the use of guessing games. The interactive nature of guessing games encourages active participation, which is crucial for vocabulary retention and application. By involving students in a fun and engaging activity, guessing games help them to internalize new words more effectively.

One of the key observations from this study is the increased level of student engagement and motivation. Elementary school students often struggle with traditional vocabulary learning methods, which can be monotonous and uninteresting. Guessing games, on the other hand, transform the learning environment into a dynamic and interactive space. Students are more likely to participate actively and enthusiastically when the learning activities are enjoyable. The competitive element of guessing games, where students are awarded points for correct answers, adds an extra layer of motivation. This gamification of learning helps maintain student interest and reduces the cognitive load associated with vocabulary learning.

Another significant benefit of using guessing games is the reduction of learning anxiety. Traditional vocabulary teaching methods can often create a stressful environment, especially for young

learners who may fear making mistakes. Guessing games, with their informal and playful nature, create a supportive learning atmosphere where students feel more comfortable taking risks and experimenting with new vocabulary. This reduction in anxiety is critical for language acquisition, as it allows students to focus more on the learning process and less on the fear of failure.

The positive outcomes of this study suggest that educators should consider incorporating guessing games into their vocabulary teaching strategies. This approach is particularly effective for young learners, who benefit from learning activities that are both educational and entertaining. Teachers can adapt guessing games to various vocabulary topics and difficulty levels, making them a versatile tool in the language learning toolkit. Additionally, the collaborative nature of these games fosters a sense of community and teamwork among students, further enhancing the learning experience.

While the results of this study are promising, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The sample size was relatively small, with only 25 students participating, and the study was conducted in a single school. Future research could expand on these findings by including a larger and more diverse sample. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide insights into the long-term effects of guessing games on vocabulary retention and overall language proficiency. Further research could also explore the impact of different types of guessing games and their effectiveness across various age groups and educational contexts.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that guessing games are an effective and enjoyable method for improving vocabulary mastery among elementary school students. The significant gains in test scores, coupled with increased student engagement and reduced anxiety, highlight the potential of this interactive teaching approach. By integrating guessing games into their instructional practices, educators can create a more engaging and supportive learning environment that fosters language acquisition and enhances student motivation. As educational methods continue to evolve, it is essential to embrace innovative strategies that cater to the diverse needs of young learners, ensuring their success in mastering new vocabulary and achieving overall language proficiency.

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