

THE EFFECT OF CHAIN SPELLING GAME ON THE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY OF THE EIGHTH GRADE AT SMPN 2 BUKIK BARISAN

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ABSTRACT

This research investigated the challenges faced by eighth grade students at SMPN 2 Kec. Bukik Barisan in the English learning process, especially concerning vocabulary mastery. Identified problems include students' score were below the minimum completion criteria (KKM). Secondly, some students had difficulty in remembering vocabulary. Next, some students had difficulty in understanding the meaning of the vocabulary. Furthermore, students had difficulty pronouncing English words appropriately. Finally, teacher still used conventional method when teaching English. So, the purpose of this research is to see the effect of using chain spelling games on students' vocabulary mastery of eighth grade students at SMPN 2 Kec. Bukik Barisan. This research used true experimental with pretest-posttest research design in experimental and control classes. Researcher used simple random sampling to determined the research sample. The samples of this research were class VIII.A as the experimental class and class VIII.B as the control class. To collect data, researcher used multiple choice tests and pronunciation tests in pre-test and post-test. The data in this research were analyzed using T-test formula with the SPSS 26 program. The results showed that the mean post-test score for the experimental class (73.880) was significantly higher than the pre-test score (59.042), indicating that the chain spelling game positively affected vocabulary mastery. In conclusion, the use of chain spelling game had an effect to improve students' vocabulary.

Keywords : Chain Spelling Game, Vocabulary Mastery, Descriptive Text

INTRODUCTION

In the Merdeka Curriculum, English is one of the subjects that must be taught at school, from elementary school to university. Although it is a foreign language, students must master the language to achieve their final goals. It is mostly used in fields like information, technology, economy, science, art, education, politics, and so on. Therefore, students need to master this language to have an ease future.

There are six important skills for students to learn English based on the Merdeka Curriculum, which are listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, and presenting. Vocabulary is the key to develop these six skills. According to Mardianti & Eliza (2022), by expanding the vocabulary, students may improve their skill. Similarly, Meri et al. (2022) stated that vocabulary is one of the most important language components in studying English. Thus, if students master the vocabulary, they will be able to understand the reading material, write some notes, present the information and ideas, pay attention to and understand visual media, and speak the language. In addition, learning strategy is

one of the factors that can make it easier for students to master vocabulary. However, many students have not used yet strategy in mastering vocabulary, so they are lazy to learn. According to Richards & Renandya (2002), students who do not have vocabulary and strategies to acquire new words often cannot reach their potential and may be discouraged from taking advantage of language learning opportunities, such as listening to the radio, speaking with native speakers, using the language in various contexts, reading, or watching TV. For this reason, every student needs the right learning strategy so that students can easily master vocabulary and develop other language potentials.

Vocabulary is not a simple thing to teach to students. With limited human memory, students will find it difficult to remember that large vocabulary. Sofyan (2021) stated that the English language has a very large vocabulary, between 450,000 and 750,000 words. Not only that, vocabulary has also variations in denotation and connotation, as well as different rules and meanings according to the various words associated with it. This fact will make it more difficult for students to master the vocabulary. In short, students face many challenges in the process of mastering the vocabulary.

Based on the interview conducted an English teacher at SMPN 2 Bukik Barisan on August 19, 2024, it was found that the teacher stated that students' competency is low because their vocabulary scores were still below the minimum completion criteria (KKM). It can be seen from the list of students' vocabulary scores. In a vocabulary test, students who get scores above KKM are only 8-10 students in one class. Therefore, the teacher stated that eighth grade students have difficulty in mastering English vocabulary.

Another finding when the researcher conducted an interview with several students on August 20, 2024, it also proved that students had low learning competency. When the researcher asked students to pronounce some English vocabulary, many students did not pronounce it correctly. Moreover, they could not say the English from some of the pictures shown by the researcher. They argued that they forgot and did not know the English from the picture. This was because students did not repeat the lesson at home.

Furthermore, problems were also found through observations on August 19-22 and August 26-29, 2024. During the observation, students seemed less active during English learning. When teaching in class, teachers still use conventional methods and quiz. Conventional methods are learning methods that focus on teachers. A teacher was more active in explaining the material in front of the class. Teacher usually presented material using videos, power points, and projector. Then she continued with a question and answer session. However, students tended to be silent when the teacher asked questions using English. For this reason, students needed interesting method and fun learning methods so that they were more enthusiastic and active during learning, and it was easier to improve vocabulary.

One of ways to improve students' vocabulary and make all students active in learning is through games. Huyen & Nga (2020) stated games help vocabulary

development because they encourage students to participate, improve their ability to speak, improve their ability to remember words and increase their motivation. While Octaviani et al. (2024) stated that game is a great way to help students' learn new words and has several benefits for both the students and the teacher. The use of games would greatly help teachers attract students' attention to learning. It makes students becoming relax while learning and can master vocabulary well. According to Uberman (1983), students can speak the language in a relaxed way after learning and practicing unfamiliar words through games. It can be concluded that using games in English learning, especially in vocabulary mastering, can make students interested, enjoy, fun, and active.

Chain spelling game is one of the games to help students in mastering vocabulary. Abbas (2014) said a chain spelling game is a game where players have to say a word that begins with the ending of the previous word. Shinohara (2009) stated each player gets a turn, and the loser is the player who ends the word or says the same word twice. Another opinion was presented by Muhammad et al. (2021) who said that chain spelling game is an interesting teaching for vocabulary building skills and strategies, word memorization, word list recall or vocabulary recognition, and group work. This suggests that chain spelling games were an effective teaching tool to improve English vocabulary.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher aimed to carry out research to solve that problem. Therefore, the researcher decided to do a research which titled "The Effect of Chain Spelling Game on The Students' Vocabulary Mastery of The Eight Grade of SMPN 2 Bukik Barisan."

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vocabulary is crucial to be mastered by the learners. Vocabulary mastery is needed to express our ideas and to be able to understand what other people saying. Febriyansyah et al. (2016) stated vocabulary mastery can be defined as a number of vocabulary in a language that contains information about its meaning, form, and usage in the context of communication. It means, vocabulary is the basic knowledge that students should master vocabulary first before mastering English.

Hence, Students who are learning English as a second or foreign language need to have a large vocabulary to make the language easier to learn. If not, they will have a lot of trouble and might not even be able to speak the language. As stated by Ananda et al., (2024), English is based on vocabulary, without understanding vocabulary, it is impossible for students to master English well. In short, learning English without knowing the vocabulary will be useless.

The benefits and importance of vocabulary are explained by several experts, one of them is David Wilkins in Thornbury (2002), vocabulary is more important than grammar. Vocabulary is the basis for learning a language. Similarly, Fitri et al. (2023) stated students will struggle to communicate in English if they do not have a large vocabulary even if students' grammar is great. Eventhough someone has worked hard on grammar but does not have vocabulary, communication cannot happen in a

meaningful way. Therefore, vocabulary has a big role in language, including in communication, such as conveying ideas or information.

Descriptive text is one of genre text. This text is one of the texts that have to be taught to Junior High school students. Descriptive text is a kind of text with a purpose to give information. Gerot & Wignell, (1995) stated the context of this kind of text is the description of particular thing, animal, person, or others, for instance: our pets or a person we know well. It can be concluded that descriptive text is used to describe everything, which is seen by writer in detail.

Chain Spelling Game is one of the games used in teaching language learning for English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Carroll, (2016) stated chain spelling game is a kind of game purposing to improve the players' ability in vocabulary of words . Ramadani et al. (2020) stated the use of chain spelling game for teaching English was surely beneficial to increase students' vocabulary. Based on those opinions, it can be said that chain spelling game is one of the games can be used by the teacher in language teaching process.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research utilized quantitative method and true experimental design, with a population of 99 in class VIII at SMPN 2 Kec. Bukik Barisan. The sample was selected by simple random sampling, resulting in two groups: class VIII.A as the experimental group that used the chain spelling game, and class VIII.B as the control group that applied the conventional method.

Data were collected through multiple choice tests and pronunciation tests before and after treatment. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 26, with an independent t-test to compare posttest results between the two groups, as well as a paired t-test to analyze changes within the experimental group.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Description of the data

The data for this study were collected based on research conducted by the researcher in the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Kec. Bukik Barisan. The students' vocabulary mastery scores were collected after the pre-test at the beginning of the study and the post-test at the end of the study after being given treatment. The data for this study were taken from the experimental group and the control group and it can be seen in the appendix. The pre-test and post-test were given in the form of a written test consisting of 25 multiple-choice questions and 10 oral test questions. There were 99 students in the population, with 49 students as samples. The sample in the experimental class VIII.A was 25 students and the sample in the control class VIII B was 24 students. The description of the data in both of the experimental and control classes explained below:

a. The Data of Pre-Test and Post Test of Control Class

Class	Mean	Std.D	Lowest score	Highest score	Sum
Pre-test	42.29	10.461	21	66	1015
Post-test	59.094	8.013	44	74	1417

From calculation data in the pre-test, it was found that the mean score was 42.29, the standard deviation was 10.461, the lowest score was 21, the highest score was 66, and total score was 1015. While the result of calculation data in the post-test, it was found that the mean score was 59.04, the standard deviation was 8.013, the lowest score was 44, the highest score was 74, and the total score was 1417. From the data it can be concluded that the pre-test score is lower than the post-test in control class.

b. The Data of Pre-test and Post-test of Experimental Class

Class	Mean	Std.D	Lowest score	Highest score	Sum
Pre-test	60.86	10.519	31	78	1521
Post-test	73.88	10.145	49	91	1847

In this research, the experimental class was taught using chain spelling game. There were 25 students in experimental class. Furthermore, the result of data calculation in pre-test are the highest score of 78, the lowest score was 31, the mean score was 60.86, the standard deviation was 10.519, and the sum was 1521. Then, the post-test showed that the mean score was 73.88, the standard deviation was 10.145, the highest score was 91, the lowest score was 49, and total score was 1847. It signifies that the mean score of the post-test is higher than the pre-test.

Analysis Data

a. Normality Pre-test results for the experiment and control groups.

Based on the results, the significant values from the Shapiro-Wilk test indicate that the scores for both the control class and the experimental class are normally distributed, with values of 0.114 and 0.742, respectively. Both values are greater than the alpha level of 0.05.

Tests of Normality							
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Kelas		c			c		
Hasil Pre-test	Experiment Class	,159	25	,103	,935	25	,114

Vocabulary	Control Class	,101	24	,200*	,973	24	,742
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*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

b. Normality Test of post-test for both experiment and control class

Based on the results, the significant values from the Shapiro-Wilk test for both the experimental and control classes are 0.569 and 0.803, respectively. Since both values exceed the alpha level of 0.05, this indicates that the data for both classes are normally distributed.

		Tests of Normality						
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a				Shapiro-Wilk		
		Kelas	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Hasil test	Post-Experimenta	I Class	,113	25	,200*	,967	25	,569
Vocabulary	Control Class		,097	24	,200*	,976	24	,803

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

c. Homogeneity Test of pre-test for both experiment and control class

The result of the homogeneity test indicates that the pre-test scores of both classes are homogeneous, as the significance value (0.697) is greater than the alpha level (0.05). This means that the students' pretest scores are proven to be homogeneous.

		Test of Homogeneity of Variance			
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Hasil Pre-test Vocabulary	Based on Mean	,154	1	47	,697
	Based on Median	,325	1	47	,571
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	,325	1	42,764	,571
	Based on trimmed mean	,204	1	47	,653

significant difference between the class that using the chain spelling game and the class that did not using the chain spelling game in students' vocabulary mastery. From the data, it can be concluded that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted.

Independent Samples Test									
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Hasil Post-test Vocabulary	,845	,363	5,666	47	,000	14,8383	2,6189	9,5699	20,1068
			5,693	45,347	,000	14,8383	2,6063	9,5902	20,0865

c. The third hypothesis

According to the mean score of the students' vocabulary mastery test in the post-test, the mean score of the experimental class is higher than the mean of the control class, which was $73,880 > 59,042$. This means that the hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and (H_a) is accepted. It can be concluded that students who were taught by using the chain spelling game were better than students who were taught without using the chain spelling game.

Group Statistics					
	Kelas	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Hasil Post-test Vocabulary	Experimental Class	25	73,880	10,1451	2,0290

Control Class	24	59,042	8,0135	1,6357
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DISCUSSION

This research aimed to determine the effect of a chain spelling game on the vocabulary mastery of grade 8th students in SMPN 2 Kec. Bukik Barisan. The researcher used two samples, namely class VIII. A as an experimental class with a total of 25 students and class VIII.B as a control class with a total of 24 students. This treatment was carried out for 3 meetings in both experimental and control classes.

Based on the results of the hypothesis, the researcher found that the use of a chain spelling game had a significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery. It can be seen from the mean score of pre-test and post-test in the experimental class. The mean score of the post-test in the experimental class (73.88) was higher than the mean score of the pre-test in the experimental class (60.86).

In the experimental class that taught using the chain spelling game, students' vocabulary mastery increased. Thus, the chain spelling game influenced improving students' vocabulary mastery. Meanwhile, in the control class that used conventional activities, the increase in students' vocabulary mastery was not as significant as the improvement in the experimental class. In the control class, only a few students had an increase in vocabulary.

In conclusion, the findings of this research supported the existing theory that chain spelling game could improve students' vocabulary mastery. Chain spelling game significantly increased students' vocabulary mastery. It can be seen from the results of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental class, which showed that the mean score of the post-test was higher than the pre-test score. Moreover, the difference in post-test scores between the control class and the experimental class, showed that the mean score of the experimental class was higher than the mean score of the control class.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to investigate the improvement of students' vocabulary through the use of chain spelling game. During its implementation, the researcher divided students into several groups to conduct the game, based on the sequence of activities outlined in the theoretical framework. The research findings, along with experts' opinions, support the conclusion that chain spelling game can be an effective way to improve students' vocabulary.

The activity provides an engaging and fun environment for students, encouraging them to communicate more freely and confidently. This suggests that the chain spelling game is beneficial for teachers who are looking for alternative ways to address challenges in students' vocabulary acquisition, making vocabulary practice interactive and fun.

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