

THE SCRABBLE EFFECT: INVESTIGATING VOCABULARY MASTERY IN STUDENT LEARNING

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using Scrabble media in enhancing vocabulary mastery among seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Lebaksiu during the academic year 2023/2024. Employing a quantitative approach with a true experimental design, the researcher conducted a randomized sampling technique to divide the students into two groups: experimental (using Scrabble media) and control (not using Scrabble media), each consisting of 32 students. A vocabulary test, comprising multiple-choice questions with four options, served as the research instrument. The analysis, conducted through t-tests, revealed a significant difference between the experimental group's posttest score (76.84) and the control group's score (67.63), with a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). These findings support the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating that the use of Scrabble media positively impacts students' vocabulary mastery. The study recommends that educators explore diverse ways of integrating Scrabble media into vocabulary instruction to cater to students' varying needs, encourages students to actively engage in vocabulary practice both inside and outside the classroom, and suggests further research to assess the effects of Scrabble media on vocabulary mastery across different educational levels or contexts.

Keywords: Vocabulary Mastery, Scrabble Media.

1. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is the entire words that make up a language. According to Richards & Renandya (2002), vocabulary is an essential component of language ability and provides the foundation for how well learners listen, talk, read, and write. In learning English, vocabulary is included in the linguistic component and one of the important components in learning English. Before students learn about English skills, they must learn about vocabulary as a first step because when a new language is being learned, learners must have sufficient vocabulary. Especially in mastering English, the development of words is very important because by mastering vocabulary well, one can link the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Skill of expressing ideas or thoughts in English, both orally and in writing is greatly influenced by the number of known and understood vocabulary (Widodo et al., 2022).

In Indonesia, learning English has long been an integral part of the education system in Indonesia. In the current education curriculum in Indonesia, English is a compulsory subject for students who are in secondary school, both junior and senior high schools (Aulia et al., 2022). However, in learning English, especially in learning vocabulary at the junior high school level, students still have difficulties in mastering vocabulary, especially in seventh grade. This is influenced by the gap between the English learning curriculum in elementary and junior high schools. The position of the English subject before Curriculum Merdeka was implemented in elementary schools based on Hartin (2017) as cited in Aulia et al., (2022).

According to Tuti (2022), teaching vocabulary is not an easy thing. Teaching vocabulary to first-grade junior high school students can be challenging due to their limited attention span and difficulty in retaining information. Teenagers also have certain characteristics and require certain treatment. In Indonesia, some English teachers still use traditional strategies to teach vocabulary to teenagers (Gultom et al., 2022). Thus, as a language teacher we must be able to create learning that is creative, interesting and fun, so that students' interest in learning is realized. If there is motivation and learning that favors students, the learning process will run optimally and learning objectives can be achieved properly (Meiristiani & Sulastri, 2023). According to Herawati et al. (2022) scrabble is a game that is commonly played across diverse

cultures by individuals of all backgrounds. Similarly, Khaira et al. (2021) expressed that scramble game is one of the learning approaches that can help students improve their concentration and quickness of thought. This method demands students to use both their right and left brains. Based on an interview with an English teacher at SMP Negeri 1 Lebaksiu, there are several factors that affect the low level of students in mastering vocabulary. First, students only get vocabulary from their English teacher, therefore students only have a few vocabularies. In this case, the mastery and addition of English vocabulary is required every day.

Secondly, students have difficulty remembering the vocabulary taught in the language and students have trouble pronouncing the vocabulary. Third, a lack of student learning motivation because sometimes the teachers give more text-based reading tasks without allowing students to understand challenging vocabulary in the text. Thus, students are not encouraged to learn more deeply to understand vocabulary. Then, the presence of factors from teachers that influence students experience difficulties in the mastery of vocabulary, such as teaching techniques that only use conventional methods without applying attractive learning media, this causes students to get bored while learning. Basically, in the learning process students are more interested in learning more enjoyable, then with the presence of the use of Scrabble media itself is expected to make it easier for students to understand, learn, and use the target word when determining the appropriate context based on the context they already know. It's also fun because media scrabble is one of the gamifications that students can use to learn and play as well as can be used with friends. Therefore, students will feel that learning the vocabulary is fun.

From the explanation above, it has also been presented by several researchers who discuss the use of Scrabble as a media for enhancing students' vocabulary skills. The first previous study was entitled "Effect of Scrabble Game on Secondary School Students" Academic Achievements in Selected English Language Concepts in Ilorin Metropolis " by Onasanya et al. (2021), aimed to investigate the impact of Scrabble on the academic performance of high school students in specific English language concepts in Ilorin metropolis. The sample comprised seven students from a co-educational junior secondary school in the area.

The research employed a quantitative approach with experimental and survey methods. Descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized to address research questions and test hypotheses. The findings suggest that engagement-based strategies like the Scrabble game can serve as effective alternatives to enhance learning outcomes for English language learners, potentially improving academic achievement and retention. Consequently, the study recommends the promotion of Scrabble game adoption among both teachers and students.

According to the second previous research was conducted by Sulaiman (2019) entitled “The Impact of Teaching Vocabulary for Junior High School Students Using Scrabble Game“ the study involved first-grade students from SMP Negeri 1 Sungai Raya Kepulauan. The research methodology employed pre-experimental research design, utilizing three groups with pre-tests and post-tests. The pre-test and post-test results were analyzed using the matched t-test formula to determine significant improvement. The findings indicated a significant increase in student performance, with an observation t value of 3.66, signifying the effectiveness of the treatment.

Thus, the study concluded that teaching vocabulary with the Scrabble game enhances students' vocabulary achievement, suggesting the Scrabble game as a recommended and suitable technique for vocabulary instruction.

In the context above of using Scrabble as a vocabulary learning media for seventh grade students, this research aims to make Scrabble game more beneficial. By implementing Scrabble, students can develop strategies to form desired words. Additionally, this game can also train problem-solving skills and students' creativity. Scrabble can be used to expand English vocabulary, improve concentration, and help students remember the vocabulary they have learned. The importance of Scrabble is not only limited to vocabulary enhancement but also in facilitating the English learning process.

Based on the aforementioned research, the researcher is interested in applying Scrabble media to investigate the implementation and determine the significant impact of utilizing Scrabble media in teaching and learning English vocabulary mastery.

2. METHODOLOGY

The researcher uses quantitative approach. According Sugiyono (2013) , the quantitative

method is a positivist-based research methodology used to study a specific population or sample. It involves the use of research instruments for data collection and quantitative or statistical data analysis with the aim of testing previously established hypotheses.

Experimental research is employed to assess the influence of Scrabble Media on seventh-grade students' vocabulary mastery. The study involves an experimental group (VII G) and a control group (VII H) from SMP N 1 Lebaksiu, with a total of 288 students divided into 9 classes. Vocabulary tests, consisting of multiple-choice questions, are administered as post-tests to both groups. Data analysis is conducted using SPSS version 22, with t-test analysis to compare the scores between the two groups. If the calculated t-score is greater than the critical t-value at 5% significance level, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected, and the research hypothesis (H₁) is accepted.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The researcher conducted multiple activities. Firstly, the researcher arranged lesson material for eight meeting in accordance with the syllabus given by the English teacher at SMP Negeri 1 Lebaksiu. On the second step, the researcher arranged the material in Chapter 0”Beginning” and Chapter 1”About Me” as the instrument of post-test. This instrument consisted of 30 multiple choice questions about vocabulary. The sample of 32 students was selected as the population for the research. The treatment of this study took place on 01 and 02 September 2024. The researcher conducted the treatment in seventh meetings. The meetings were held four meetings in two classes, on Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday. At the end of the phase, the researcher administered a post-test to the students in the eight meeting. The researcher distributed post-test instruments to students in multiple choice form. The result of data post-test as follows:

Post-Test

a. Experimental Group Post-Test

The results showed that after the application of Scrabble media treatment, the experimental group showed a post-test score with the lowest score of 63 and the highest score of 90.

b. Control Group Post-Test

The average post-test score for this group was 76.84. In comparison, the control group showed a post-test score with the lowest value of 50 and the highest value of 87 with an average score of 67.63.

After the result post-test both of group are collected, the data calculated by using SPSS. The data result as follows:

Tabel 1. Descriptive Data

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Posttest experimental	32	63	90	76.84	7.247
Posttest control	32	50	87	67.63	9.455
Valid N (listwise)	32				

As shown in the table above, the number of experimental and control group samples (N) is 32. In the descriptive statistics of research data, student data are presented descriptively by emphasizing the results of the final ability (post-test) after the implementation of the treatment on vocabulary learning. The post-test data was then compared to determine whether there was an increase in scores between the two groups. The results showed that after the application of Scrabble media treatment, the experimental group showed a post-test score with the lowest score of 63 and the highest score of 90. The average post-test score for this group was 76.84. In comparison, the control group showed a post-test score with the lowest value of 50 and the highest value of 87 with an average score of 67.63.

Based on this explanation, the average post-test score of the experimental group is higher than the average score of the control group.

Tabel 2. Normality Data

kelas	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
nilai_siswa posttest_experiment	.134	32	.156	.955	32	.201
posttest_control	.131	55	.020	.973	55	.247

a.Lilliefors Significance Correction

In the normality test, the researcher used Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk to determine the significant results of the post-test between the two samples, namely the experimental and the control group. Based on table 4.5, it shows that the significance level of

the post-test in the experimental group in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov table is $p = 0.055$, so it can be stated that $p > \alpha$ and in the control group the significance level in the table is $p = 0.024$, so it can be stated that $p > \alpha$.

In this case, it can be stated that the sample coming from a population is normally distributed because the probability value (p) of the experimental class is greater than the control class of the predetermined significance degree of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Tabel 3. Independent 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
English Comprehension Ability	Equal variances assumed	2.950	.091	4.377	62	.000	9.219	2.106	5.009	13.429
	Equal variances not assumed			4.377	58.078	.000	9.219	2.106	5.003	13.434

Based on t-test decision making in the independent t-test table, it is known that the Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.000 which means < 0.05 , the data also shows that the average score of the post-test of the experimental group is higher than the control group, so the increase in the score of learning outcomes between the experimental group and the control group can be stated to show a significant difference.

Discussion

Based on the findings of the research carried out by the researcher on students from seventh grade at SMP Negeri 1 Lebaksiu, the researcher gives the following discussions regarding the outcomes of data analysis:

This chapter presents the research findings. The researcher found several problems based on the results obtained by the researcher before carrying out the research, namely by conducting initial observations, it aims to obtain and find out information on problems that occur in schools. The researcher found that at SMP N 1 Lebaksiu seventh grade students have difficulty memorizing vocabulary taught in English and students have difficulty pronouncing the vocabulary because students only get vocabulary from their English teachers. However, based on students' statements, they feel that they have not maximized vocabulary learning in English learning because seventh grade students did not

get English learning when they were at the elementary level. This is due to the absence of English learning in the Curriculum 2013 before the implementation of the independent curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka). This problem also has an impact on the lack of student motivation in learning English because teachers only use teaching techniques without using interesting learning media because teachers only use teaching techniques with ordinary conventional methods.

In responding to the above problems, the researcher applied learning strategies to two different classes, namely the experimental group and the control group. In the implementation of treatment in the experimental group the researcher used Scrabble media and in the control group the implementation of treatment researchers used conventional learning methods. At the end of the study, after the treatment the researcher carried out a post-test to determine the learning outcomes of students whether there was a difference and improvement or not between the two classes. This can be supported and proven in the results of the statement below.

The researcher analyzed the data obtained through the IBM SPSS version 22 program after the researcher had conducted the research. The researcher found that the experimental group scores outperformed the control group in the post-test. This is based on the examination of the acquisition scores of the control and experimental groups which can be seen from the results of descriptive statistical analysis. The data were collected from the experimental and control groups consisting of 32 students in each group. After being given treatment, the experimental group got an average post-test score of 76.84 while the control group got an average post-test score of 67.63. This shows that the treatment provides different post-test results because the average score in the experimental group is greater than the control group. This also proves that the results of this study are in line with previous research conducted by Sulaiman (2019) which states that vocabulary teaching using scrabble games improves student achievement in vocabulary. In the teaching process, scrabble game is basically recommended and considered good and appropriate as a technique in vocabulary teaching. It can be concluded by the researcher by looking at the post-test scores of the experimental group higher than the control group, proving that students who were taught

using Scrabble media mastered each vocabulary taught better than those who did not.

Furthermore, the researcher checked the t-test results showing that the significance level (two tailed) of the independent sample t-test of both the experimental group and the control group was $0.000 < 0.05$. The results of the study using SPSS 26 obtained a t-test result of 0.000 which is said to be significant because the value is smaller than 0.05, which means H_a is accepted. It is proven that teaching and learning activities using learning media have an effect on improving students' vocabulary skills. The learning media in the experimental group that uses Scrabble media is more attractive and preferred by students and can help students to acquire vocabulary compared to the control group that does not get the same treatment which is only using ordinary conventional learning. In this case, the use of Scrabble media also plays an important role in improving student scores. This is also as suggested by Puspitarini & Hanif (2019) that learning media are tools in the form of hardware and software that can be used by teachers to distribute learning materials to students during the learning process so that learning objectives can be achieved.

Based on the data analysis, it can be said that the t-ratio is higher than the t-table, indicating that there is a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the use of Scrabble media can be used in vocabulary learning for seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Lebaksiu in the 2023/2024 academic year.

4. CONCLUSION

The researcher concluded based on the results of the discussion and research findings, that this study aims to describe the effect of using Scrabble media on students' vocabulary mastery. The post-test results showed that the mean of the experimental group was greater than the mean of the control group ($76.84 > 67.63$). In this case, it can be interpreted that the vocabulary mastery of students taught by using Scrabble media has increased. The evidence of vocabulary teaching using Scrabble media is known to help students in vocabulary mastery. This is based on the results of the t-test which shows that there is a significant difference between learning with Scrabble media and ordinary conventional learning in terms of English vocabulary development in seventh grade students of SMP

Negeri 1 Lebaksiu. Thus H_a is accepted and H_0 is rejected. This shows the fact that vocabulary learning activities using educational game-based causes an increase in the effect on students' vocabulary mastery especially in seventh grade students and other facts they are more active and tend not to feel bored while learning.

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