

APPLYING TABOO GAME IN IMPROVING VOCABULARY MASTERY OF GRADE VII STUDENTS OF SMPN 4 LUWUK

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to prove that applying taboo games can improve the vocabulary mastery of grade seven students of SMP Negeri 4 Luwuk. The research applied pre-experimental design. The population was 88 students in the academic year 2022/2023. The samples were 28 students selected employing purposive sampling technique. A vocabulary test was used when collecting the data for this research. The test was administered twice, namely pre-test and post-test. The data were analyzed statistically using a .05 level of significance and 28 degrees of freedom. The data analysis found that the students' mean score on the pre-test was 56.27, lower than the post-test's mean score, 79.17. A comparison of the two tests of scale describes that $t_{\text{counted value}} = 12.241 > t_{\text{table value}} = 1.701$. Therefore, H_a was accepted, and H_o was rejected. It can be concluded that applying taboo games improve the students' vocabulary mastery.

Key Terms: Taboo Game; Improving Vocabulary Mastery

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is one of the most important aspects of learning a foreign language. It cannot be separated from the language because it is a part of language. Vocabulary is important for learning a language because several reasons. First, the ability to understand the target language greatly depends on one's knowledge of it. Second, vocabulary mastery is important to master all language skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Teaching vocabulary is important in learning English, especially for EFL students, to help them understand and express the language. The most important thing that should be focused on improving students' vocabulary is increasing their motivation to learn. The game can be an effective alternative to improve students. Some institutions consider that using a game can be very helpful in improving students' interpersonal skills and vocabulary if they play with their friends (Akdagon,2017). The students would know the meaning of words and can use the words and functions at once.

Vocabulary plays an important role in communication. By mastering many words, the students will be easier to express their ideas and feeling. In other words, communication can run well if someone understands what others say. Mastery of vocabulary is necessary for anyone who wants to understand a reading, conversation or writing English language. Without adequate vocabulary, we cannot be able to achieve that goal.

Vocabulary means a list of words with their meanings. It helps us to organize our ideas and experiences. According to Nordquist (2015), "Vocabulary is all the words of a language or the words used by a particular person or group". Learning a language without vocabulary is impossible for us, especially for elementary school pupils. Since language consists of words, we cannot express something without words.

The Guidelines of the Curriculum of English graduation of Junior High School is expected to master vocabulary to communicate, whether in spoken or written form. Students of Junior High School are expected to master English words in their studies. However, students often lost interest when they found that foreign language study was the same as other subjects, learning from the book only without any practice. Particularly in SMPN 4 Luwuk, the students had faced difficulties in comprehending the meaning of words and word spelling.

Based on preliminary observation which had been done in SMPN 4 Luwuk, the researchers found that the students lacked vocabulary. When the researchers interviewed them, they had many difficulties pronouncing the word, identifying the meaning, and de spelling. Due to several problems, they did not know how to use the word. The conventional method was usually used by looking for difficult words and finding the meaning in the dictionary, and students were supposed to memorize the words. The students were lazy to memorize unfamiliar words they heard or read in the text. Memorizing may be good and useful as a temporary technique for tests but not for learning a foreign language.

A good technique was required to solve those problems. Teachers should use different

techniques and activities in teaching English vocabulary to motivate the students, enrich their vocabulary and enable them to speak English properly. There were many techniques and activities that the teacher could use in teaching vocabulary, such as Semantic Mapping, Gap-Fill, Crossword Puzzles, Word Chain Games and Taboo Games. However, Taboo Game was used in this Research.

Taboo Game is a word guessing and party game published by Parker in 1989. The game's objective is for a player to have their partners or teammate guess the word on the black player board, whiteboard or paper without using the word itself or five additional words listed on the card. Koprowski (2006) states that this game can recycle Junior High School Vocabulary students.

The only rule of Taboo Game is that they must not say the item written on the board in full or part. The first student in Taboo Game responds physically and utters the word score a point for their team. When the round ends, two new teams rotate into the Taboo Game and a new item is written up. This game can be played in turns, but only one team member plays at a time. The first team to get a high score of points wins.

Taboo Game was chosen to be implemented to improve student's vocabulary because this game could be used at any level of class. It is relevant because it could be adapted based on the context. Using this game, the teachers could make the card by themselves and adjust the words based on the material. The Taboogame helped students increase their competition, cooperation, enthusiasm, and motivation in learning vocabulary.

The problems of this research were about the students' weaknesses in vocabulary. It was hard for them to understand the teacher's explanation because they did not know the words' meanings and were too lazy to open their dictionary to find them. So, taboo game was used to solve the problem faced by the students. In this research, the taboo game as an independent variable was predicted to improve the student's vocabulary mastery as the dependent variable. It was supposed that the student's vocabulary mastery improved by using the taboo game. In using this game, there were some ways done by the students, namely: 1) they were divided into small groups. 2) every group had a student as a giver, and the rest students guessed the word. 3) the giver could not mention five related words from the card. 4) the team that could guest the word fast could move to other cards, or they might change the giver.

Applying this game required a long time to get a turn as a giver of instruction. Therefore, the researchers changed the turn after a team guessed the word. In this game, the researchers must actively check and control the students to get a good result after applying the game. The researchers believed the taboo game could improve students' vocabulary mastery, particularly in nouns.

METHOD

In this research, the researchers used a pre-experimental research design by using tests to collect data. The population of this research was the seventh-grade students of SMPN 4 Luwuk.

In choosing the sample, by using a purposive sampling technique, VII C was chosen as this study's sample. By giving the test, the researchers see whether students can answer the test correctly or not. There were two variables involved in this research. They were independent and dependent variables. The Independent variable of the research was the use of taboo games, and the dependent one was the students' vocabulary. The procedure of data collection that the researchers used was test. The test consisted of pre-test and post-test. The results of the answers from students were later used as indicators to see whether students find difficulties. In order to get the data, the researchers used tests based on indicators of student's reading difficulties. After doing all the treatment, the results of the test were evaluated. The student's scores in the pre-test and post-test were analyzed statistically. The researchers calculated the students' scores by applying a formula which is proposed by using formula by Arikunto (2006:240) as follows:

$$\sum = \frac{x}{N} \times 100$$

The researchers then applied a formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:313) to find the mean score of pre-test and post-test as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Next, the researchers computed the square deviation by using the formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:356) as follows:

$$\sum x^2 d = \sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N}$$

In order to find out whether the students' pre-test and post-test have significant differences, the researchers used the formula proposed by Gay (1981:331) as follows:

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2 d}{N(N-1)}}}$$

The researchers tested the hypothesis, whether accepted or rejected, to prove that taboo games can improve students' vocabulary mastery. If the t-counted is higher than the t-tables, the hypothesis is accepted, or the taboo game significantly improves students' vocabulary mastery. In contrast, if the t-counted is lower than the t-table, the hypothesis is rejected or there is no significant influence on the student's vocabulary mastery through taboo game.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researchers present the research result and data analysis in these findings. The data were collected from January 9th until 13th of February, 2023. The researchers used a test as the main instrument to collect the data. It means that the collected data of the research was in the

form of numeric data. The researchers analyzed the data through the pre-test and post-test tests in this research.

The pre-test was administered before applying the treatment to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The post-test was administered after applying the treatment. The result of each test was compared to measure whether the use of Taboo Games can improve students' vocabulary mastery or not. The results of the pre-test are presented in the following table:

Table 1 - Students' Score on Pre-test

No	Initial	Matching Test	Jumbled Letters	Raw Score	Max Score	Standard Score	Ket
1	AH	12	7	19	25	76	Very good
2	AJM	9	4	13	25	52	Good
3	BA	9	6	15	25	60	Good
4	DD	6	4	10	25	40	Poor
5	DL	12	7	19	25	76	VeryGood
6	FH	9	4	13	25	52	Good
7	GB	9	6	15	25	60	Good
8	HM	9	6	15	25	60	Good
9	HS	9	4	13	25	52	Good
10	IZ	9	6	15	25	60	Good
11	JR	3	6	9	25	36	Poor
12	KP	6	4	10	25	40	Poor
13	LM	12	4	16	25	64	Good
14	NF	9	6	15	25	60	Good
15	NT	9	4	13	25	52	Good
16	OP	9	6	15	25	60	Good
17	RA	9	6	15	25	60	Good
18	RG	3	6	9	25	36	Poor
19	SHM	9	6	15	25	60	Good
20	TR	9	4	13	25	52	Good
21	VA	9	4	13	25	52	Good
22	WH	12	7	19	25	76	Good
23	YB	9	6	15	25	60	Good
24	ZM	6	4	10	25	40	Poor
25	ZR	9	6	15	25	60	Good
26	ZS	12	7	19	25	76	Good

27	ZU	9	6	15	25	60	Good
28	ZW	6	4	10	25	40	Poor
29	ZY	9	6	15	25	60	Good
Total Score					1.632		

Regarding the table above, it can be seen from Table 1 that the highest score of the pre-test is 76, and the lowest score is 36. Based on the passing grade in English in that school, only four students passed the pre-test because the score was 76, which is higher than the passing grade score. The passing grade score of that school is 67. It means that 25 students failed in the test. After counting the students' score, the researchers calculated the mean score of the pre-test using a formula proposed by Arikunto (2006), as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{1,632}{29}$$

$$M = 56.27$$

After applying the treatment, order to find out the effect of the treatment toward the students' progress. The results of the post-test are presented in the following table:

Table 2 - Students' Score on Post-test

No	Initial	Matching Test	Jumble Letters	Raw Score	Max Score	Standard Score	Ket
1	AH	12	8	20	25	80	Very Good
2	AJM	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
3	BA	14	8	22	25	88	Very Good
4	DD	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
5	DL	12	8	20	25	80	Very Good
6	FH	12	8	20	25	80	Very Good
7	GB	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
8	HM	12	8	20	25	80	Very Good

9	HS	12	7	19	25	76	Very God
10	IZ	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
11	JR	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
12	KP	12	8	20	25	80	Very Good
13	LM	12	10	22	25	88	Excellent
14	NF	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
15	NT	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
16	OP	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
17	RA	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
18	RG	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
19	SHM	12	8	20	25	80	Very Good
20	TR	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
21	VA	12	10	22	25	88	Excellent
22	WH	14	9	23	25	92	Excellent
23	YB	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
24	ZM	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
25	ZR	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
26	ZS	14	9	23	25	92	Excellent
27	ZU	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
28	ZW	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
29	ZY	12	7	19	25	76	Very Good
Total Score						2,296	

After applying the treatment, all of the students passed the post-test and got 92 as the highest score. Next, the researchers calculated the mean score of the post-test by using Arikunto's formula. It can be seen as follows.

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{2.296}{29}$$

$$M = 79.17$$

From the calculation above, the researchers found that the mean score of post-test is 79.17. It showed a significant improvement in the students' vocabulary mastery. It rised from 56.27 to 79.17. It means that the treatment using taboo game that was implemented in the experimental class improves students' vocabulary mastery.

The researchers analyzed the deviation to determine the ratio of the students' scores in the pre-test to the post-test scores. The calculation of the students' score is presented in the following table:

Table 3 - Deviation of the Pre-test and Post-test

No	Initial	Pre-test	Post-test	Deviation (D1)(O2-O1)	Squared Deviation(D2)
1	AH	76	80	4	16
2	AJM	52	76	24	567
3	BA	60	88	28	784
4	DD	40	76	36	1.296
5	DL	76	80	4	16
6	FH	52	80	28	784
7	GB	60	76	16	256
8	HM	60	80	20	400
9	HS	52	76	24	576
10	IZ	60	76	16	256
11	JR	36	76	40	1.600
12	KP	40	80	40	1.600
13	LM	64	88	24	576
14	NF	60	76	16	256
15	NT	52	76	24	576
16	OP	60	76	16	256
17	RA	60	76	16	256

18	RG	36	76	40	1.600
19	SHM	60	80	20	400
20	TR	52	76	24	576
21	VA	52	88	36	1.296
22	WH	76	92	16	256
23	YB	60	76	16	256
24	ZM	40	76	36	1.296
25	ZR	60	76	16	256
26	ZS	76	92	16	256
27	ZY	60	76	16	256
28	ZW	40	76	36	1.296
29	ZY	60	76	16	256
Total					664 18.071

Based on table 3, it showed that the highest deviation of experimental group was 40 and the lowest one was 4. Then, the highest of square deviation was 1.600 while the lowest square deviation was 16. Furthermore, the researchers computed the mean score of the deviation of the pre-test and post-test by using the formula as follows:

$$Mx = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

$$Mx = \frac{664}{29}$$

$$Mx = 22.89$$

Based on table 3 it showed that the highest deviation of the experimental group was 40 and the lowest one was 4. Then, the highest square deviation was 1.600, while the lowest square deviation was 16

By looking at the calculation result above, the researchers found that the mean score deviation was 22.89. Further, the researchers calculated the sum square of deviation, which is as follows:

$$\sum X^2 = \sum x^2 - \frac{(\sum x)^2}{n}$$

$$\sum X^2 = 18,071 - \frac{(664)^2}{29}$$

$$\sum X^2 = 18,071 - \frac{440,896}{29}$$

$$\sum X^2 = 18,071 - 15,203.31$$

$$\sum X^2 = 2,867.69$$

Therefore, the sum of the square deviation was 2,867.69. Using the sum of square deviation, the researchers then analyzed data to find the significant differences in both pre-test and post-test by using t-counted formula.

Having taught using taboo game, students' vocabulary mastery significantly improved. The researchers measured students' vocabulary mastery by giving test. The first test was pre-test. The purpose was to find out students' prior ability in vocabulary. The pre-test's result showed that the mean score was 56.27. It could be seen that the students made mistakes in answering the test.

Then, he continued doing the post-test. It was to know whether the treatment was effective or not. The post-test result showed that the students improved their total score. The mean score of the post-test was 79.17. It could be seen that the use of taboo games improved the students' vocabulary mastery. For the results of both tests, it could be seen that the deviation of the group mean score was 22.9. It could be assumed that the treatment was effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery.

In line with the treatment processes above, it can be concluded that the students' vocabulary mastery significantly improved. By seeing the students' improvement from the result of the test, the researchers can state that using taboo game can improve students' vocabulary mastery of the grade seven of SMP Negeri 4 Luwuk.

Taboo Game is a word guessing game can help facilitate various components such as vocabulary, communication, teamwork, and creativity. The game involves players trying to get their teammates to guess a specific word without using certain taboo words that are listed on card, paper, or whiteboard. Overall, Taboo Game can be fun and engaging way to facilitate various components while also providing an enjoyable game experience.

CONCLUSION

Applying taboo game improves students' vocabulary mastery of grade seven students of SMP Negeri 4 Luwuk. It can be proved from their achievement from pre-test to post-test. After using the taboo game, the students can read the words correctly, know the meaning of the words, and spell the vocabulary. All the results indicate that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted, while the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. In another word, applying taboo games improves the vocabulary mastery of the seventh-grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Luwuk.

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