The Effect of Alphabet Game
on Students' Vocabulary Mastery of Descriptive Text

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Abstract

Mastery of vocabulary is very important because it can improve of many subjects in English learning, and game is one of the media that can be used to teach vocabulary to students. This research was intended to find out the effect of using alphabet game on students' vocabulary mastery of descriptive text of the seventh grade students of MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya. This research used experimental method in form of one-group pre-test post-test design. The population of this research was the seventh grade students of MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya and 37 students were taken as the sample. The tests used as the instrument to collect the data were in the form of multiple-choice tests which consisted of 20 items. The result indicated that teaching vocabulary using alphabet game as media had significant effect on the students' vocabulary mastery. It was proved by T-test score (0.979) which was smaller than T-table (1.690). Since T-test < T-table, the null hypothesis (H$_0$) was rejected and alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted. It can be concluded that there was a significant effect of using alphabet game on students' vocabulary mastery of descriptive text of the seventh grade of MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya.

Keywords: alphabet game; mastery of vocabulary; vocabulary of descriptive text

INTRODUCTION

English is one of the global languages in the world that is really important for communication. It makes people easy to communicate with each other even though they come from different countries. Nowadays, skill in using English is a need. It makes everyone should learn and practice to master the English language.

Since English is used as a means of communication among the world's nations, we have to master it well. Although English is not the largest number of native or first language speakers, it is widely used by many people all over the world as their second language (Harmer, 2001:1).

Without knowing proper English, students will not be able to communicate effectively with the English-speaking nations. A person who does not possess proper English limits his or her ability to achieve their highest potential. Knowledge of the English language is important to learn to be able to communicate with others.

The advantage of learning English is that people will know the development of knowledge, science, and technology since most books, articles, and journals of science are written in English. Realizing the importance of English, the Indonesian government treats English as the first foreign language and sets it as a compulsory subject at elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and university.

One important thing to learn in English is vocabulary. Vocabulary is central to language and of critical importance to the typical language learner. Without a sufficient vocabulary, people cannot communicate effectively or express ideas in both oral and written form. Having a limited vocabulary is also a barrier that precludes learners from learning a foreign language. (Fauziati, 2002:155). It can be argued that vocabulary is a tool of communication that needs to be taught in context and people should always be given many opportunities to use the language. Vocabulary itself consists of several parts of speech; they are noun, verb, adjective, and adverb. From those kinds of vocabulary, the first that students need to know is noun.

"Vocabulary is the collection of words that an individual knows" (Linse, 2005:121). Furthermore, in Webster Dictionary (2018), "vocabulary is a list or collection of words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or defined."

Mastery of vocabulary is very important because it can improve many subjects in English learning. The more words students know well and can use, the more meaning they can communicate in a wide variety of circumstances. If they do not know the meaning of words, they will not be able to speak, write, and translate anything in English (Coxhead, 2006: 1). Sometimes, it's difficult to determine the words that students write related to vocabularies: meaning, spoken/written forms, collocations, connotations, grammatical behavior, etc. (Linse,2005:121). Vocabulary appears in every skill of language, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Many people realize that their vocabulary is limited, so that they have difficulties in expressing their idea.

Teaching for junior high school students is not the same as teaching university students because they have different characteristics and motivations. They are different from adults, so the way of teaching must be different too. They love to play and like to think that what they are doing in real work. If teachers cannot teach the students properly, they may not enjoy their learning.

Based on the explanations above, one of the problems is the students feel bored because teachers still use the same technique and the same strategy to teach vocabulary. The researcher believes that the game can be a way to minimize the students' boredom in learning vocabulary. One of them is the alphabet game.

The advantages and effectiveness of using alphabet game to learn vocabulary are games can make the students relax and fun; thus, students can memorize the new words more easily. It also usually involves a social situation and they keep learners interested. These create motivation for English learners to get involved and participate actively in learning activities.

The research was conducted at MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya. Based on the researcher's experience when the researcher did practice teaching, the students had difficulty memorizing the English vocabulary. It was shown by students when the researcher asked them several new vocabulary during practice teaching, most of them could not answer correctly. The researcher felt very necessary to use a proper teaching technique to improve the student's ability to learn English vocabulary.

Game is one of the media that can be used to teach vocabulary to students. O'Dell and Head (2003:4) state that "games play a very important role in vocabulary learning because they provide an enjoyable way of reentering words and they also give the students opportunity to use the words in a memorable content." Huyen and Nga (2003) also say that game contribute to vocabulary learning and a chance to learn, practice, and to review the English language in a pleasant atmosphere. In addition, game is useful to build the children's characteristics.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher would like to do research using alphabet game. The researcher would like to know the effect of using "alphabet" game as a media in teaching vocabulary for the seventh-grade students on MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya.

METHOD

1. Research Design

In this research, pre-experimental method was used with one-group pretest-posttest design, as shown in the following diagram.

Figure 1. Diagram showing one-group pretest-posttest design

O_1 = Pretest
X = Treatment using Alphabet Game
O^2 = Posttest   (Sugiyono, 2010:107)

2. Population and Sample

The population and sample of the research were taken from all of the seventh-grade students of MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya. The population of the study was eight classes of the seventh-grade students of MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya. Cluster random sampling technique was used in this research. First, the classes were written on eight pieces of paper, and then the papers were rolled and put them into a bottle. The bottle was

shaken, and one of the papers which came out from the bottle was taken as the sample of this research.

3. Data and Data Collection Procedure

The objective of the research was to find out the effect of using alphabet game on students' vocabulary mastery of descriptive text on the seventh grade of MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya. The data needed were the students' mean scores of pre-test and post-test performed by the students in the experimental group of VII-D class. The pre-test was given to the students to know their prior knowledge, and then the result was evaluated. After evaluating the result of pre-test, a treatment using alphabet game was given to them in two meetings. After that the researcher gave post-test to the students, and then the result of post-test was evaluated. The last, the result of pre-test and post-test were compared by using t-test.

There were 20 questions of multiple-choice test for each pre-test and post-test. Each correct answer was scored 1 point, and each incorrect answer was scored 0. Here is the formula to calculate the students' score:

$$Student's\ Score = \frac{Total\ correct\ answer}{Total\ test\ items} x\ 100$$

4. Hypothesis

The hypothesis of the research is as follows:
H_0: $\mu 1 = \mu 2$, which means that there is no significant effect of alphabet game on vocabulary mastery of descriptive text of the seventh grade of MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya

Ha: $\mu l < \mu 2$, which means that there is a significant effect of alphabet game on vocabulary mastery of descriptive text of the seventh grade of MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya

FINDINGS

The data obtained were in form of the scores of pre-test and post-test. They are given as follows.

1. The Result of Pre-Test

The result of pre-test obtained from the multiple-choice questions is presented in scores in the following table.

Table 1. The students' score of pre-tests

No	Students' code	Correct answers (R)	Students' score
1	DI	16	80
2	D2	10	50
3	D3	13	65
4	D4	16	80
5	D5	16	90
6	D6	10	50
7	D7	15	60
8	D8	13 ·	65
9	D9	14	70
10	D10	14	70
11	Dll	16	90
12	D12	15	75
13	D13	13	65
14	D14	12	60
15	D15	15	60
16	D16	16	75
17	D17	13	65
18	D18	65	70
	018	14	
19	D19	16	80
20	D20	15	75
21	D21	16	75
22	D22	13	65
23	D23	11	SS
24	D24	15	15
25	D25	14	70
26	D26	10	50
27	D27	11	55
28	D28	16	80
			80
29	D29	13	65
			65
30	D30	10	50
31	D31	12	60
			60
32	D32	16	80
33	D33	16	80
34	D34	14	70
35	D35	16	80
36	D36	14	70
37	D37	16	80
	Total		2555
	Mean		69.05405405

From the table above, the total mean of students' pretest score is 69.05405405. The result was used to explore the evidences on students' vocabulary mastery before the treatment was given.

2. The Result of Post-Test

The result of post-test obtained from the multiple-choice questions is presented in scores in the following table.

Table 2. The students' score of post-test

No	Students' code	Correct answers (R)	Students' Score
1	D1	19	95
2	D2	10	50
3	D3	18	90
4	D4	18	90
5	D5	20	100
6	D6	16	80
7	D7	18	90
8	D8	17	85
9	D9	19	95
10	D10	19	95
11	Dll	20	100
12	D12	20	100
13	D13	20	100
14	D14	17	85
15	D15	18	90
16	D16	19	95
17	D17	20	100
18	D18	19	95
19	D19	20	100
20	D20	20	100
21	D21	19	95
22	D22	16	80
23	D23	17	85
24	D24	18	90
25	D25	19	95
26	D26	15	75
27	D27	20	100
28	D28	20	100
29	D29	18	90
30	D30	15	75
31	D31	19	95
32	D32	17	85
33	D33	20	100
34	D34	16	80
35	D35	18	90
36	D36	20	100

37	D37	20	100
	Total		3370
	Mean		91.08108108

From the table above, the total mean of students' post-test score is 91.08108108. Related to the results of pre-test in Table 1, the mean of post-test was higher than the mean of pre-test (69.05405405 > 91.08108108). So, it can be said that the means of the students' score in post-test increased after the treatment.

3. Test of Hypotheses

To calculate and analyze the data of pre-test and post-test, parametric statistics of dependent sample t-test was used and it was analyzed by following the steps:

Step 1: Stating null and alternative hypotheses.

H_0: $\mu1 = \mu2$
Ha: $\mu l < \mu2$

Step 2: Deciding Significance level.

The test was performed at 5% significance level, so a = 0.05.

Step 3: Computing test statistic.

The computation was done using the following formula:

$$t^{\cdot} = \frac{\sum D}{\sqrt{\frac{n\sum D2 - (D)^2}{n-1}}}$$

In which:
t•   = the obtained t value
D   = the difference between a pair of scores
n   = number of pairs

The result is presented in the following table:

Table 3. Calculation of the Data Using Dependent sample t-test

Students' code	Pre-test Score (X_2)	Post-test Score $(X_1 - X_2)$	Difference $(X_1 - X_2)D$	(Difference) $(X_1 - X_2)^2 D^2$
D1	80	95	-15	225
D2	50	50	0	0
D3	65	90	-25	625
D4	80	90	-10	100
D5	90	100	-10	100
D6	50	80	-30	900
D7	60	90	-30	900

D8	65	85	-20	400
D9	70	95	-25	625
D10	70	95	-25	625
D11	90	100	-10	100
D12	75	100	-25	625
D13	65	100	-35	1225
D14	60	85	-25	625
D15	60	90	-30	900
D16	75	95	-20	400
D17	65	100	-35	1225
D18	70	95	-25	625
D19	80	100	-20	400
D20	75	100	-25	625
D21	75	95	-20	400
D22	65	80	-15	225
D23	55	85	-30	900
D24	75	90	-15	225
D25	70	95	-25	625
D26	50	75	-25	625
D27	55	100	-45	2025
D28	80	100	-20	400
D29	65	90	-25	625
D30	50	75	-25	625
D31	60	95	-35	1225
D32	80	85	-5	25
D33	80	100	-20	400
D34	70	80	-10	100
D35	80	90	-10	100
D36	70	100	-30	900
D37	80	100	-20	400
			$\sum D$ = -815	$\sum D^2$ = 664225

Based on computation, it could be seen the $\sum D$ = -815 and $\sum D^2$ = 664225. Those values were plugged into the formula of the T-test for two dependent samples to find out the obtain t value.

$$t^* = \frac{-815}{\sqrt{\frac{37(664225) - (-815)^2}{37 - 1}}}$$

$$t^* = \frac{-815}{\sqrt{\frac{25576325 - 664225}{36}}}$$

$$t^* = \frac{-815}{\sqrt{\frac{24912100}{36}}}$$

$$t^* = \frac{-815}{\sqrt{692002.788}}$$

$$t^* = \frac{-815}{831.867043}$$

$$t^* = 0.979$$

Step 4. Value for determining critical value

The critical value for one-tailed test tα with df = n-1 = 37-1 = 36. The table critical value for students' distribution showed that for df = 36. t 0.005 {36} = 1.690. Because t* < tα {36} = 0.979 < 1.690. the test results were statistically significant at the 5% level.

Step 5. Making decision as to reject or not reject II.

The value of the test statistic, found in the step 4 was   0.05 {36} = 1.690. Because t• < to {36} = 0.979 < 1.690, the test results were statistically significant at the *5%* level.

Step 6. Interpreting the result of the hypothesis testing

At the *5%* significance level, the data provided significant evidence. To conclude, on average, the students' scores of post-test improved from the pre-test scores. It means that H_0 was rejected and Ha was supported. In other words, there was an effect of using alphabet game on students' vocabulary mastery of descriptive text on the seventh grade of MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya.

DISCUSSION

From the introduction of this research, the researcher points out that one important thing to learn English is vocabulary. Without a sufficient vocabulary, people cannot communicate effectively or express his ideas in both oral and written form. It can be argued that vocabulary is a communication tool that needs to be taught in context and the people should always be given many opportunities to use the language. Vocabulary consists of several parts of speech; they are noun, verb, adjective, and adverb. Vocabulary

appears in every skill of language, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing skill. Many people realize that their vocabulary is limited so that they have difficulties in expressing their idea. Meanwhile, O'DeJl and Head (2003:4) state that "games play a very important role in vocabulary learning because they provide an enjoyable way of reentering words and they also give the students opportunity to use the words in a memorable content."

Related to the result of this research, the students got better result after taught by descriptive text used alphabet game as media, it could be seen from the result of students' score on pre-test which was lower than the result of students' score on post-test. And then the results of pre-test and post-test were compared using t-test formula and then the result of-test was compared with t-table. It was shown that the result of-test was smaller than the t-table, it means the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This is seen from the calculation of-test score of 0.979 which was smaller than the calculation of t-table (1.690). It means there was a significant effect after the researcher gave the treatment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research and its discussion above, there are some points to be concluded:
1. The calculation of t-test score is 0.979 which is smaller than t-table of 1.690 since t* < tα {36} = 0.979 < 1.690. It means the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis was supported.
2. There was significant difference between the students' score in pre-test and post-test. It means there was an effect of using alphabet game on students' vocabulary mastery of descriptive text of the seventh grade students of MTsN 2 Kota Palangka Raya.

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