Improving Secondary School Students' Vocabulary Mastery through Scattergories Game

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Abstract

This study aims to determine whether the scattergories game significantly enhances Makassar junior high school students' vocabulary mastery. The researcher employed a pre-experimental design with a pre- and post-test for a single group. The experimental design included a group that was given a pretest, then exposed to a treatment, and then given a posttest. This study's participants were eighth-grade students at SMPN 27 Makassar. The class that comprised the study's sample was determined using cluster random sampling. The results indicated that the average score on the post-test was higher than the average score on the pretest; the average score on the post-test was (84.27), while the average score on the pretest was (32.20). The test score for the hypothesis is less than 0.05, specifically 0.00 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) is refuted, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted. Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that implementing the scattergories game to the eighth-grade students at SMPN 27 Makassar substantially improved their English vocabulary knowledge.

Keywords : English, vocabulary, scattergories game

A. Introduction

English is not the primary language in Indonesia. It is a foreign language taught to elementary and secondary school students. To comprehend it, students must acquire language abilities. These are the abilities of hearing, speaking, reading, and writing. In addition, they have to understand the elements of language, including grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Vocabulary is one of the language elements required to master English (Durrant 2014; Injeeli 2013).

Vocabulary is a crucial aspect of the language that must be mastered before introducing its grammar and pronunciation. Without grammar, it is possible to communicate very little; without vocabulary, nothing (Thornbury 2002). Consequently, acquiring English vocabulary has become the most essential aspect for students of English. There is more to teaching vocabulary than simply presenting new terms. There are numerous varieties of vocabulary that students must master. It is difficult for pupils to master words solely through memorization. To make the teaching process more dynamic and to encourage students to memorize and use words in ordinary conversation, the teacher's creativity is required (Shafa 2022).

The EFL teachers must devise an effective method for teaching English vocabulary. One technique is the use of activities to educate. The game is an enjoyable activity with multiple rules and objectives (Hadfield 2003). Clairambault and Harmer (2010) note that games are an essential part of a teacher's arsenal, not only for the language practice they facilitate but also for their therapeutic effects. A guessing game involving a scattergories game can be an ideal method for teaching vocabulary because it captures students' attention and enhances their comprehension of new words. Mastery of vocabulary is essential, particularly for eighth-grade students who lack new words. It is necessary to investigate the effectiveness of the scattergories game in helping eighth-grade students at SMPN 27 Makassar develop their vocabulary skills.

B. Literature Review

According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), vocabulary is a fundamental aspect of language proficiency and provides numerous foundations for how well learners converse, listen, read, and write. Vocabulary is a fundamental requirement that influences the English proficiency of students. Without vocabulary, neither written nor oral communication is possible.

Passive vocabulary refers to the words people will recognize when they meet them but will probably not be able to produce. Active vocabulary is the vocabulary that people have learned and are expected to be able to produce. In addition, Webb and Nation (2017) also divides vocabulary into two types. They are receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary uses distinguishing the form of a word while listening or reading and retrieving meaning. Then productive vocabulary is used to express meaning through speaking or writing and producing the appropriate spoken or written word form.

Vocabulary mastery is the competence or complete knowledge of a list or a set of words that make up a language that a particular person, class, or profession might use. Vocabulary is one basic component to be mastered in learning four

language skills. It is reasonable to remember that the four language skills need knowledge of words because they will get nothing without vocabulary. There are three indicators of vocabulary mastery. They are word form, word meaning, and word use.

Word form refers to how a word sounds, how it is spelled, and the grammatical changes that can be made. When learning vocabulary, not only word meaning learners need to know but also word pronunciation and spelling. Word meaning is a word's conceptual content or meaning and how it relates to other concepts and words (Cameron, 2001). Conceptual meaning refers to dictionary meaning. In English, one word usually has more than one meaning. It depends on the context. Word use means patterns of occurrence of a word with other words and in particular types of language use (Cameron et al. 2018).

Hadfield defines the game as an activity with rules, a goal, and a fun element (Hadfield 2003). Setianingsih and Nafisah (2021) adds that games involve many factors: rules, competition, relaxation, and learning, in particular. Games have some functions in teaching language. Castillo-Cuesta (2020) provide that games will help students to develop other of specifically linguistics skills, such as spelling, defining, using a dictionary, pronouncing words correctly, expressing ideas, using figures of speech and verbal imagery to adding new words, punctuating, and to recognize verbal meaning. One of the games that can help students improve their vocabulary mastery is the scattergories game. Scattergories is a variant of a traditional board game that enables the player to classify words one by one rapidly.

According to Yuliansyah and Syafei (2018), there are several reasons why the game Scattergories should be utilized in vocabulary instruction, including: The first is that scattergories require active movement and competition from learners. It engages students actively due to the nature of the game task and the spirit of competition among them (Sabeg and Azerwal 2018). These perfectly reflect the characteristics of the students. The second is that scattergories have basic principles so students can easily follow their instructors' instructions. Although some modifications to the game's laws are possible, they will not alter the essence of the game (Habibie, Saleh, and Friyanto 2022). The group with the highest tally is the winner of the competition. The final benefit is that the game scattergories make learning and teaching more enjoyable and less demanding. As the game is performed in a group, the learners can receive assistance from their peers in predicting the correct answer, reducing their fear and anxiety. This can foster a favorable attitude toward vocabulary acquisition (Daulay 2021; Yuliansyah and Syafei 2018).

The eighth-grade students at SMPN 27 Makassar are expected to have good words that they should master. They are expected to be able to use words, whether in formal or informal conditions, actively. One of the ways to achieve the goal is using the scattergories game in teaching vocabulary to the eighth-grade students at SMPN 27 Makassar. The scattergories game helps them improve their comprehension of the given material and gives good feedback after learning.

C. Method

This study employed a quantitative pre-experimental methodology. The data was obtained through a vocabulary test using a pre-test and post-test group design (Mills and Gay 2019). This study included a pre-test (O1), treatment, and post-test (O2). It sought to observe a statistically significant difference between the average pre- and post-test scores. The treatment was administered in four sessions. At each meeting, students were taught 15 new words from the noun, verb, and adjective classes. The subjects of the study were eighth-grade students from SMPN 27 Makassar. Researchers used a cohort of 72 students as a research sample. A straightforward random sampling method was used to determine the samples (Etikan and Bala 2017).

This study employed a vocabulary test with a pre-test and a post-test as its instrument. Part A consisted of 35 multiple-choice questions, and Part B consisted of five sentence completion questions for 40 items. Aspects of word form, word meaning, classification of an element of speech, and word use were covered by multiple-choice questions. It was based on eighth-grade material from junior high school. The researcher used SPSS 25 application to calculate and analyze students' scores and then put them into criteria of vocabulary mastery (very good, good, average, and poor). It sought to determine whether a significant difference between students' pre- and post-test scores indicated increased vocabulary mastery (Barua 2013).

D. Findings and Discussion

No.	Classifications	Range	Pretest		Posttest	
			Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Very Good	93-100	0	0	13	43.33
2.	Good	84-92	0	0	7	23.33
3.	Average	75-83	0	0	5	16.67
4.	Poor	<75	30	100	5	16.67
	Total		30	100	30	100

Table 1 Classification of the Students' Scores

The majority of students improved more after receiving the vocabulary learning treatment involving the scattergories board exercise, as shown in the table above. On the pretest, all students get into the 'poor' category, as indicated by the data. It has been demonstrated that eighth-grade students at SMPN 27 Makassar have a relatively low or "poor" level of vocabulary mastery. This is due to the fact that students are still unfamiliar with the new vocabulary in the problem. When instructed, students were also unable to construct sentences using words. The majority of pupils were able to overcome these obstacles after

receiving treatment. The treatment's effects can be deduced from the data, which indicates that students' vocabulary comprehension has improved.

The average score on the post-test demonstrated an increase in vocabulary mastery among students. The data indicates that five out of thirty students (16.67%) scored in the "poor" category, indicating much work to do to enhance their vocabulary mastery. They must follow behind other students. The data also indicates that five students received an "average" grade and met the minimum passing grade requirements. They are marginally better than those in the "poor" category, so they must exert greater effort to enhance their vocabulary skills. There were seven students (23.3% of the total) who received the "good" category, demonstrating greater improvement than the "poor" and "average" categories. They have made significant progress but still need to improve their abilities. The remaining 13 students (43.3%) scored "very good" on the post-test, indicating that they considerably improved after acquiring vocabulary using the scattergories game. All of them scored above ninety-three to demonstrate their vocabulary mastery. The researcher anticipates that learners in the "very good" category will maintain and possibly increase their vocabulary comprehension.

Level	Word Form		Word Meaning		Identification of words		Word Use	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Very Good	0	10	0	11	1	14	3	17
Good	0	0	0	11	0	0	1	2
Average	0	14	0	3	1	10	3	3
Poor	30	6	30	5	28	6	23	8
	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Table 2 Classification of students' score based on vocabulary mastery aspect

The table above displays the distribution of students' pre-test and post-test scores. The students had eighty minutes to complete the exam. The pre-test and post-tests were identical. The vocabulary examination is based on the eighth-grade curriculum. The examination consisted of two sections.

Part "A" consisted of 35 multiple-choice questions about word form, meaning, and aspect identification. Part "B" comprised five sentence-making queries designed to identify the word class aspect. The tables demonstrated that most students could not correctly identify the word class. They had trouble recognizing word classes and distinguishing one word from another within a sentence. Some students continue to be perplexed by the term courses.

The word form-related queries consist of five separate questions. According to the data, all students have difficulty understanding grammatical alterations in words. According to the tenses used in a sentence, grammatical modifications occur. They do not know when to use the correct tense. In addition, students are unable to enunciate the words listed below correctly.

Word	Transcription	Error in pronouncing
find	(/faɪnd/)	(/find /)
watch	(/wɒtʃ/)	(/'wath)

The cause of this issue is that students are accustomed to articulating incorrect words but are unaware that they are doing so. In addition, they have difficulty with phrase pronunciation. Consequently, the teacher needs to put in additional effort to instruct students in grammar and pronunciation.

Twenty-five questions focus on aspects of word meaning. In this particular case, the significance refers to the conceptual significance. The word's meaning is derived from the definition in the dictionary. All students scored in the "poor" category on the pre-test, indicating they lacked knowledge of the meanings of words. They feel uncomfortable when encountering new words they do not understand. These words also have antonyms and synonyms available to students. In addition, they do not comprehend the meaning of a word when translating it from English to Indonesian. Based on these findings, the researcher concluded that instructors should focus on developing students' ability to recognize and understand the meaning of words.

Part "B" consists of five questions referring to word usage. Students are instructed to create five simple sentences using the five given words. There are five words: sleep, cut, forecast, house, and easy. These terms belong to the verb, noun, and adjective classes. During the pre-test, students encountered many challenges. The students encounter unfamiliar vocabulary. Their answers contain some grammatical errors. They are unable to construct sentences grammatically. They cannot differentiate between a sentence's subject and predicate. Some students did not use the provided vocabulary in sentences. They construct sentences with words they already know, leaving out the words provided. Students must therefore attend to the researcher explaining the instructions for section "B."

After administering the pre-test, the researcher manages treatment throughout four meetings. The researcher initially introduced students to terminology and pronouns during the initial meeting. The researcher also instructed students on how to play the board of scattergories game. The researcher divided the students into groups of seven to eight to facilitate interaction between them. According to Charsky (2010), the game elements are objectives, norms, challenges, and interactions.

At the second meeting, the researcher explained the textual description of individuals and instructed the students to play the game. They feel at ease playing games and studying the material they offer. Learning a language requires considerable effort. Kim, Park, and Baek (2009) argues that games help students initiate and maintain learning efforts.

The third meeting focused on the material of the descriptive text of animals. The students were asked to play a scattergories game, and most of them could play it, so the researcher guided them during the treatment in the third meeting. After playing the game, the researcher gave them the exercise to measure their understanding of the material. The exercises were jumbled words and classified the word classes. The result showed they knew to classify the words and arrange the letters into correct words.

The fourth meeting was about the descriptive text of places material. The students were asked to play the scattergories game. Unlike the previous meeting,

the students could handle the scattergories game by themselves. All of them were motivated to learn about the material. Scattergories game can motivate students to participate in the lesson (Wiraldi 2020). After the treatment, the students were tasked with making simple sentences from the material. The data showed that they could make good sentences grammatically.

Finally, the researcher conducted a post-test after four meetings. The post-test was held for 60 minutes. The students were given a vocabulary test identical to the pre-test. This aimed to know the improvement of the students after getting the treatment of learning vocabulary through the scattergories game. The post-test result showed that the students improved on the word form, word meaning, identification of word class, and word use aspect. The posttest showed that 11 students got the "very good" category, 11 students got the "good" category, 3 students got the "average" category, and 5 students got the "poor" category on word meaning aspect. On the word form aspect, 10 students got the "very good" category, 14 students got the "average" category, and 6 students got the "poor" category.

On the other hand, 14 students got the "very good" category, 10 students got the "average" category, and 6 students got the "poor" category for identification of word class aspect. Lastly, 17 students got the "very good" category, 2 students got the "good" category, 3 students got the "average" category, and 8 students got the "poor" category for the word use aspect. From the data, it could be concluded that the word use aspect had the most significant improvement over another aspect of vocabulary mastery.

		Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	PRETEST POSTTEST	-52.067	17.392	3.175	-58.561	-45.572	-16.397	29	.000

Table 3 shows the paired samples test to measure the significant improvement of the students' mean scores. The result showed a significant improvement in students' mean scores. From that, the researcher implied that the treatment of learning vocabulary through the scattergories game successfully improved students' vocabulary mastery. The researcher concluded that the scattergories game effectively teaches vocabulary because it covers and mixes students' learning styles. Tight (2002) proved that mixed modality instruction, which combined visual, auditory, and tactile/kinaesthetic, could stimulate the greatest learning and vocabulary retention. Teaching vocabulary through visual aids helps students gain more retention in vocabulary learning (Sadeghi and

Farzizadeh 2013). The scattergories game made the students remember the words longer, improving their vocabulary mastery.

E. Conclusion

The majority of students' vocabulary skills improved as a result of the scattergories game, which helped them remember the words for longer. It promoted students' retention of vocabulary. On the post-test, 13 students received the "good very good" category, one student received the "good" category, five students received the "average" category, and five students received the "poor" category. On the pretest, no student exceeded the passing grade, so all students received the "poor" category. In addition, the findings suggested that the aspect of vocabulary mastery related to word usage had the most significant improvement compared to other criteria. It was revealed that 17 students received the very good category, 2 received the good category, 3 received the average category, and 8 received the low category. The outcome demonstrated that the scattergories game enhanced students' vocabulary knowledge. Based on the findings, it was concluded that the students' mean score on the pre-test was 32.20 and that it increased to 84.27 on the post-test. Therefore, it can be agreed that the scattergories game is one of the methods for enhancing students' vocabulary mastery.

It is projected that English teachers will implement these techniques when teaching pupils vocabulary, continue to encourage students to develop their vocabulary skills intensively and communicate in the target language. Future researchers who desire to investigate vocabulary acquisition in greater depth are encouraged to investigate the efficacy of scattergories board game activities on other language skills, such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing. It is predicted that the institution will motivate and encourage instructors to increase their creativity in teaching and using instructional media so that students will be more intrigued and motivated to learn English.

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