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Summary

Vocabulary Mastery on Novice Learners: Exploring the Use of Word Search Puzzle

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Abstract

Vocabulary is a stock of words or a collection of words owned by speakers or writers. According to Rahmah (2016), one of a language's most crucial components is vocabulary. It means that vocabulary is one of the language aspects which should be learnt. This research use Classroom Action Research. Classroom Action Research is the type of research used (CAR). According to Aqib, Z., and Chotibuddin (2018), the primary goal of CAR is to enhance the caliber of instruction in the classroom by resolving issues and developing pertinent and efficient corrective measures to enhance student learning outcomes and the caliber of the instructional process. The result is students' vocabulary increased from 46,9% in the first cycle to 84,4% in the second cycle. In addition, student activity during learning also increased from 62.5% to 93.8%. Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that novice learners' vocabulary mastery has increased in the second cycle. The second cycle involves employing interactive learning in groups and three repetitions of the vocabulary pronunciation in the Word Search Puzzle. Test scores and student conduct during vocabulary learning both indicate changes in the rise. Thus, it can be said that Word Search Puzzle can enhance vocabulary mastery on novice learners through interactive learning and repetition of the material's pronunciation.

Keywords: Vocabulary, Word Search Puzzle, Novice Learner

INTRODUCTION

Having a rich vocabulary is essential for speaking English well (Asyiah, 2017). Vocabulary also plays a critical role in mastering the four main language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It means that vocabulary is one of the important factors in language learning that is able to have an impact not only in terms of communication. It is clear that vocabulary is crucial since it is the fundamental skill that must be acquired before the language skills can be achieved. Therefore, it is necessary to choose effective learning methods and media to improve students' vocabulary mastery.

Vocabulary is a stock of words or a collection of words owned by speakers or writers. According to Rahmah (2016), one of a language's most crucial components is vocabulary. It means that vocabulary is one of the language aspects which should be learnt. Acquiring new words is essential if we want to be able to communicate effectively in speech, writing, and listening. The fundamental component of English that students must master is vocabulary. It should be noted that without sufficient vocabulary knowledge, students will experience difficulties and obstacles in their academic activities. This is in line with Al-Furqon (2017), vocabulary is essential to the learning of the English language because without it, students cannot communicate their own thoughts or those of others.

According to (Lelawati et al., 2018), vocabulary mastery is the vocabulary or word wealth that is mastered by someone. Mastery of adequate vocabulary is needed to carry out activities to communicate with language. Mastery of more vocabulary allows us to receive and convey broader and more complex information. Additionally, it is mentioned that there are two types of vocabulary mastery: receptive and productive. Receptive vocabulary mastery is demonstrated in reading and listening activities, whereas productive vocabulary mastery is demonstrated in writing and speaking activities.

According to (ALQAHTANI, 2015) the importance of vocabulary is shown every day inside and outside of school. In the classroom, outstanding students have the most adequate vocabulary. Researchers like Lauper and Nation (1999), Maximo (2000), Read (2000), Gu (2003), Marion (2008), and Nation (2011), among others, have realized that the acquisition of vocabulary is crucial for success in using it and is crucial for the creation of comprehensive spoken and written texts.

Realizing the importance of developing vocabulary or developing mastery in learning a foreign language, students must devote some of their time to learning vocabulary items. Learning vocabulary requires extra effort because English differs from students' native language, their national language and students' knowledge of specific linguistic terminology and students' conceptions of science and technology are thought to be the main obstacles for Indonesian students in developing a specific level of their English vocabulary as Rahmah (2016) stated.

According to (Megawati, n.d.) researchers have looked into the distinctions between experts and novices in a variety of fields. Expertise is more than a collection of information or experience (Persky and Robinson, 2017). It means that novice learner is somebody with little to no prior knowledge or expertise in a particular field. The subjects in this study were students at the age level of 13 years, namely first graders of junior high schools. They are said to be novice learner because this year is the first year of them officially learning English, so their English are considered low especially vocabulary.

There are some characteristics of novice learners. According to Persky and Robinson (2017), the knowledge of novices is not better integrated and ordered than that of experts, they are not better at obtaining and using knowledge, they are not more self-organized or have different motivations. It implies that a novice learner has very little experience. However, exhibit a very high level of curiosity about something they find interesting. Therefore to keep novice students' attention, monotonous material must be taught in an interesting way with enjoyable techniques. The characteristics of the first grade students at SMP N 1 Kalisat in academic year 2022/2023 is like to play, they are quite active in something they find fun, have high curiosity.

There are several challenges faced by novice learners when learning vocabulary. (Vossoughi & Zargar, 2009) claimed that despite students' awareness of the value of vocabulary in language learning, most students confront many challenges and learn vocabulary passively as a result of a variety of causes they find it uninteresting when the teacher explains grammar rules, pronunciation, meaning, or definition. In this instance, language learners in a vocabulary study segment have no choice but to listen to their teacher. The second, they only consider acquiring new terms' definitions to be vocabulary, they disregard all other meanings and applications of the terms as a result.

In general, students only learn new language from their textbooks or from teachers while in class. For instance, students may come across numerous unfamiliar words in a text and ask the teacher to clarify their usage. The last is many students are afraid to put what they have learned into practice. Students may assume they already know a term because they can recognize it in written or spoken form, but they may not be able to pronounce it correctly or use it appropriately in various settings.

Teaching vocabulary must be done in a fun way to attract students' attention and make learning more enjoyable. There are many lively ways to increase student vocabulary and one of them is through games. This is in line with (Song et al., n.d.) stated that games are an engaging and enjoyable medium that can be used to teach English. Therefore learning English through game is expected to be an effective way in mastering vocabulary. Some examples of games that can be used to increase vocabulary include Scrabble, Hangman, Pictionary, and others.

Word Search Puzzle is a game of searching for meaningful words in a grid of random letters that can be found vertically, horizontally and diagonally. One of the instructional games that reinforce word level onto a grid and encourages the class to offer ideas for the puzzle clue is the word-search-puzzle game. This is in line with Al-Furqon (2017), One of the puzzles that teachers can give to stimulate students' interest in learning English especially vocabulary is a word search puzzle. In this study there is a picture of the word they are looking for so they know the object of the word they are looking for. At the bottom there is a table for writing words and their meanings.

The goal of this puzzle is to locate and label every word concealed inside the box. The secret words are frequently listed, however more difficult riddles might allow the player to find them out. There is frequently a theme in word search games to which all the concealed words are connected. The puzzle itself is an enjoyable game that may be used to practice specific language characteristics at specific learning stages in order to improve communication skills. Puzzle games are not only entertaining to play, but they also help us think more quickly and develop our minds (Rahmah, 2016).

Students will learn vocabulary through Word Search Puzzles not only through written and enjoyable activities that will make them passive learners, but also through the process of applying this vocabulary in active activities in the form of communication (Altiok & Başer, n.d.). They will also learn how to memorize words for word searches and spelling the words. Students are able to acquire information or the meanings of foreign terms by using Word Search Puzzles when learning vocabulary. The students might be content and eager to learn, and they frequently browse Word Search Puzzles for new words. Game Word Search Puzzle is a technique that can be used to make the learning process more fun for students. Teaching vocabulary involves helping students master new terms so they can use them on their own.

According to (Qori Fatima et al, 2019), incorporating a fun game in lessons improves learning outcomes and boosts student enthusiasm. Therefore, the use of Word Search Puzzle can enhance students' vocabulary mastery, besides that students are very enthusiastic playing it. The first thing that caught their attention the most was the picture in the Word Search Puzzle, this was shown by their immediate attention to the picture when the teacher gave the Word Search Puzzle to students. In addition, students can respond to the teacher with the pictures pointed by the teacher.

In this research, Word Search Puzzle is examined more deeply about what factors can increase students' vocabulary. The objective of this game is to uncover all the words concealed within the square-shaped collection of letters. According to (Garwan & Jusnita, 2020) Word Search Puzzle is a game word search in a collection of letters arranged randomly on a grid which is usually square, the player has to find all the words hidden in the square and the

words that hidden can be found horizontally, vertically and diagonally. This game makes it easier for students to train their memory as well as master vocabulary, especially English. The purpose of this research is to find out how Word Search Puzzle can enhance students' vocabulary mastery.

METHOD

Classroom Action Research is the type of research used (CAR). According to Aqib, Z., and Chotibuddin (2018), the primary goal of CAR is to enhance the caliber of instruction in the classroom by resolving issues and developing pertinent and efficient corrective measures to enhance student learning outcomes and the caliber of the instructional process. In general, According to Mahmud and Priatna (2008), classroom action research is often defined as research that results in the resolution of a problem or an improvement, such as the teacher resolving issues in the classroom or the school carrying out management improvement initiatives. According to Mahmud and Priatna (2008), there were 4 stages in carrying out CAR, namely planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The 4 stages were very important to be carried out in this type of Classroom Action Research:
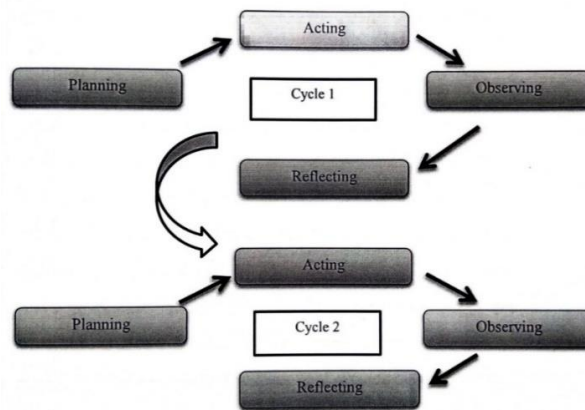

Figure 2. Design of CAR (Classroom Action Research)

The test is a methodical procedure in the form of an assignment that is provided to people or groups for them to complete, work on, or react to (Matondang, 2009). As a result, data from the administered test can be used as a foundation for developing a more functional question. Every student will receive the same questions on the multiple-choice test that was used and total 25 questions. This test is used by researchers to determine the results of students' vocabulary abilities. The research was declared successful if the score obtained after the treatment of the first grade students reached a score minimum passing grade, namely 70 with the percentage of all students achieving 68,8%-100%. If students get a score of 70 and reach percentage of at least 68,8% of all students, then this research can be said to be successful. The test can be seen in appendix 4. The division of each question in functional thinking skill will be explained in the table 1:

Table 3.1 Classification of test question

KD	Learning Materials	Theme		
		Object	Animal	Public Buildings
3.5 Understand the social function, text structure, and linguistic elements in the text to state and ask for the names and numbers of animals, objects, and public buildings that are close to students' daily lives. 4.6 Compose spoken and written texts to state and ask for the names of animals, objects, and public buildings that are close to students' daily lives, taking into account social functions, text structures, and linguistic elements that are correct and in context.	Introducing, identifying objects, animals, public buildings.	Number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.	Number 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 22.	Number 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25.

To determine whether a particular instrument is considered legitimate, a validity test is conducted. In that case, it will indicate that the instrument is genuine if the data that have been collected are true, that is, if they corresponded with reality and actuality. According to Suherman (2003, p. 41), the product-moment correlation equation can be used to calculate a question's validity coefficient as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n \sum xy - \sum x . \sum y}{\sqrt{(n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2).(n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2)}}$$

Equation 1. Correlation Coefficient

Figures:

r_{xy} : correlation coefficient between x and y

n   : number of testimony

x   : students' each question point

y   : combined points of each student

As on appendix 7, the validity result of this thesis shown that from 66 questions that have been tested to 32 students, validity result status that calculated using Microsoft Excel display that 45 questions are valid while questions with invalidity status are 21 questions. Or to be put to percentage are 68,19% questions valid and 31.81%. Here are the diagram to shown the difference between questions that are valid compare to questions that are invalid.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Result of Cycle 1

In this study the observation sheet used were observations of student activities during learning and has 6 aspects with indicators namely response, activeness, interaction, student enthusiasm, and learning activities. In the first cycle the average learning process rated aspect was 2-3 which means bad-good. The percentage of students' activity during learning process is 62,5%.

- There were 56,3% or 18 students responded to the teacher, some of them responded by answering, curiosity, high enthusiasm, and asking question to the teacher.
- 40.6% or 13 students actively interact with the teacher during learning.
- 62,5% or 20 students actively interact with the other students during learning process.
- 43,7% or 14 students actively response to the teacher's question.

Field notes were employed in this study to aid in the learning process. First, at the beginning the teacher conveyed apperception about the importance of learning English and the students responded enthusiastically. Second, the teacher provides a broad explanation of Word Search Puzzle and the learning material to be studied, which consists of nouns concerning nearby items like those found in the living room, kitchen, bathroom, places, and animals. 18 students or 56,3% responded to the teacher by answering, curiosity, high enthusiasm, and asking question to the teacher. Third, the teacher gave a Word Search Puzzle game with the theme "Bathroom" and "Places" to students. Some of the students were quite enthusiastic about playing the Word Search Puzzle game with this paper media because based on the English teacher's interview and also student statements, they had never used the game as a medium for learning English in class. The first thing that catches their attention in word search is a picture. They asked the teacher several times for the pictures available in the Word Search Puzzle. Fourth, students mention the vocabulary found in the Word Search Puzzle they play. There were 19 students or 59.4% who were active in mentioning the vocabulary they found, while 40.6% only took part in learning. Fifth, students follow the teacher mentioning vocabulary. This is done by the teacher aims to make students' vocabulary pronunciation correct. All students participated in following the teacher recite the vocabulary. Sixth, the teacher only instructs students to reread the material they have studied as a kind of reinforcement at the closing activities of each meeting, which provide conclusions on the students' learning outcomes. Seventh, the percentage of students who can complete the learning process is 46.9% or 15 students.

In this study, the use of a test to determine the improvement in terms of student scores. Figure 4.1 displays the test results from the first cycle.
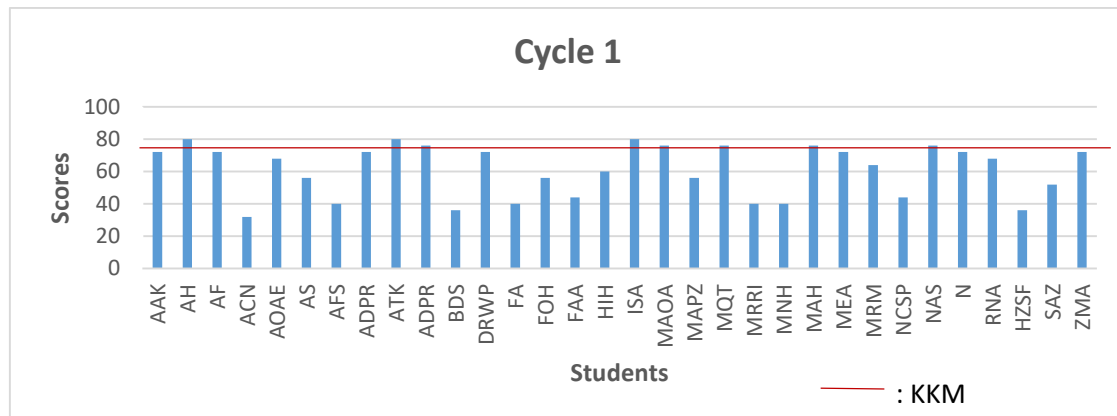
Figure 3. Students score results in Cycle 1

Based on the results of the test, it showed that in the first cycle only reached 46,9% or as many as 15 students with an average of 61,1. The percentage of success criteria is 68,8%-100% based on the success criteria provided in the preceding chapter. Due to the low percentage collected only 46,9% which is very far from success criteria, it means that students did not meet the goal.

2. Cycle 2

In the second cycle, there was an increase in learning activities. In cycle 1, the average learning process rated aspect was 2-3 which means bad-good, meanwhile in the second cycle the average learning process rated aspect was 3-4 which means good-very good. The percentage of students' activity during learning process in cycle 2 increased to 93,8% or 30 students actively participated in learning, while in cycle 1 it was only 62,5%.

- 93,8% or 30 students actively interact with the teacher during learning.
- 93,8% or 30 students actively interact with the other students during learning process.
- 90,6% or 29 students actively response to the teacher's question.

In cycle 2 there was a change in learning, namely the teacher asked students to write down the vocabulary they found in front of the class, repeated the vocabulary 3 times, and formed groups. First, students mentioned material that has been studied before, this is done by teacher. Second, the teacher gave a Word Search Puzzle game with the theme "Wild Animals" and "Kitchen" to students. Third, students write down the vocabulary they find in front of the class. All participating students took turns writing what they found in front of the class. All students recited the vocabulary 3 times, led by the teacher. The teacher forms students into 4 meticulous groups. Students are very enthusiastic in this lesson. They enjoy this interactive learning and interact compactly with fellow students in group.

The tests carried out in the second cycle had a total of 25 questions, the questions were distributed in the same way as in the first cycle. The test results from the second cycle are shown in Figure 4.2.
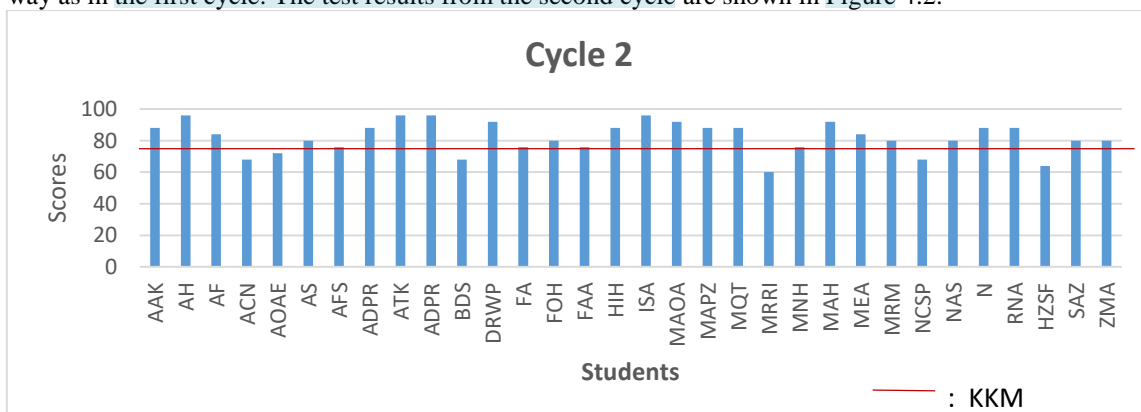

Figure 4. Students score results in Cycle 2

Based on the test results in the second cycle above, it can be seen that students' scores have increased greatly. The increase was experienced by 12 students or 37,5%, for a total of 27 students with an increase in grade with an overall percentage of 84,4% with the average is 82,1. While 15,6% or 5 students have not reached the minimum score. As a result, the researcher can be considered successful in the second cycle because the success criteria have been met. It can be concluded that novice learners' vocabulary increased in cycle 2. The vocabulary of novice learners increased through repeating the pronunciation of the material and interactive learning.

According to Yükseltürk et al (2018), incorporating a fun game in lessons improves learning outcomes and boosts student enthusiasm. Therefore, the use of Word Search Puzzle can enhance students' vocabulary mastery, besides that students are very enthusiastic playing it. The first thing that caught their attention the most was the picture in the Word Search Puzzle, this was shown by their immediate attention to the picture when the teacher gave the Word Search Puzzle to students. In addition, students can respond to the teacher with the pictures pointed by the teacher.

The learning process in cycle 1 and cycle 2 is different. The different learning process in cycle 2 was repeating the vocabulary pronunciation 3 times and forming students into a quiz group. Repetition vocabulary pronunciation in cycle 1 was only done once while in cycle 2 it was done 3 times, this was successfully done in cycle 2 because students could learn more about vocabulary. In addition, interactive learning makes students are very active in participating in the learning process in cycle 2. Almost all students participated in learning in cycle 2.

The results of this study were seen in the second cycle, when student behavior and test scores significantly enhanced. The percentage value increased from 46,9% in the first cycle to 84,4% in the second cycle. In addition, student activity during learning increased from 62.5% to 93.8%. Thus, the repetition of the vocabulary pronunciation, which was done three times and interactive learning done in groups both had an impact on the rise that happened in the second cycle. This research is said to be successful when viewed from the procedures that have been carried out by researchers in the second cycle. Novice learners' vocabulary was successfully enhanced with the Word Search Puzzle game through interactive learning and repeating the pronunciation of the material.

CONCLUSION

Students at SMP Negeri 1 Kalisat had difficulty learning English vocabulary, memorizing, rarely read, and still had difficulty naming objects around them. Thus, the problem found is "How can the use of Word Search Puzzle improve students' vocabulary mastery?". Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that novice learners' vocabulary mastery has increased in the second cycle. The second cycle involves employing interactive learning in groups and three times repetitions of the vocabulary pronunciation. Test scores and student conduct during vocabulary learning both indicate changes in the rise. Students' vocabulary increased from 46,9% in the first cycle to 84,4% in the second cycle. In addition, student activity during learning also increased from 62.5% to 93.8%. Thus, it can be said that Word Search Puzzle can enhance vocabulary mastery on novice learners through interactive learning and repetition of the material's pronunciation.

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