

The Use of Tic-Tac-Toe Game To Enhance The Eighth-Grade Students' Vocabulary Achievement

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Abstract: Vocabulary is the main foundation in communicating or interacting with other people in oral or written form. This classroom action research aimed to improve the eighth-grade students' vocabulary achievement and their active participation at SMPN 1 Asembagus by using Tic-Tac-Toe game. The data were collected by using observation, a vocabulary achievement test, interview, and documentation. The collected data were analyzed quantitatively by using percentage formula. The result of observation showed that there was an improvement on the students' active participation from 42% in the pre-cycle to 70% in Cycle 1. The vocabulary achievement test showed that there was an improvement on the students' vocabulary achievement that was 35% in the pre-cycle to 67% of 31 students in Cycle 1 who got score ≥ 70 in vocabulary test. In conclusion, the use of Tic-Tac-Toe game in vocabulary learning can improve the students' vocabulary achievement and their active participation.

Keywords : Tic-Tac-Toe game, vocabulary achievement, active participation.

Introduction

Vocabulary is the main foundation in communicating or interacting with other people in oral or written form. It is also important for the acquisition process (Krashen, 1981). According to Gower et. al (2005), vocabulary is more important than grammar because learners learn the basic English words they need to communicate especially in the early stages. It means that although learners mastered all the grammar points in the language, communication can stop when they do not know the word needed. Therefore, vocabulary becomes a very important thing that should be mastered to achieve other language skills.

In the preliminary study, the students had difficulties in understanding the meaning of the words and remembering the words since they should translate English vocabularies into Indonesian. They easily got bored and did not enjoy studying vocabulary. The standard score of English course for the eighth-grade in this school was 70, but the students of VIII-D class

had the lowest mean score of vocabulary that was 61.5. This class also had the lowest percentage of students who got score ≥ 70 that was 35%. Thus, this classroom action research was conducted to overcome the students' problem in vocabulary learning. To achieve vocabulary well, a good teaching technique was needed to be applied. One of the suitable teaching techniques to be used to increase the students' vocabulary achievement was Tic-Tac-Toe game.

Literature review

1.1. Tic Tac –Toe game in ELT

According to Wenshink (2016), as cited in Mulyadi (2018), Tic-Tac-Toe game was introduced at Ancient Egypt. There was no evidence who invented this game for the first time. Roman Empire called this game as 'Terni Lapili', then this game was played again by using chalk and board at 1864 that called 'Nought and Crosses'. This game continues to be played until today and it is called as Tic-Tac-Toe game. Alexander developed this game as a video game by using computer for the first time in 1952 so that the players against the computer as opponent. Crowley and Siegler developed the flexible strategy for the children to play against the computer as the opponent in 1993. Susanti and Zainuddin used this game in language learning especially to improve the students' vocabulary achievement in 2013.

There are some steps in playing Tic-Tac-Toe games to teach vocabulary according to Susanti and Zainuddin (2013). First, dividing the students into two equal teams and call "A" and "B". Then give the team of A a mark X and a mark O to the team of B. Second, drawing a Tic-Tac-Toe grid on the whiteboard. Third, writing nine words on the board that will be the Tic-Tac-Toe grid's answers. Fourth, preparing the questions concerning the synonym, the antonym or the homonym of the nine words on the grid. Fifth, telling the student that the answer is one about the words on the board that has already been erased. The team has to put its mark in that space if the answer is correct. Sixth, the first team to win the game in a straight line, vertically, horizontally or diagonally.

1.2. Previous research findings

Many studies have examined the use of Tic-Tac-Toe game in the teaching and learning process of vocabulary by using experimental study. Firstly, Mountain (2007) found that during these activities the students enriched their oral vocabulary by discussing and using thesaurus synonyms in context. Secondly, Masruroh (2013) found that the Tic-Tac-Toe game

had a significant effect on the English vocabulary of SDLBN Bendo Blitar students with mild mental retardation.

Thirdly, Mehregan (2014) found that Tic-Tac-Toe game had a statistically significant effect on the students' vocabulary achievement between the experimental and control group. Fourthly, Hamidah (2014) found the significant difference in vocabulary mastery between the seventh graders taught using a combination of modified Tic-Tac-Toe game and Jumble Word game and those who were not taught by using Tic-Tac-Toe game. Fifthly, Honarmand, Rostampour, & Abdorahimzadeh (2015) also found that the two traditional and innovative methods of teaching differed significantly. Thus, applying Tic-Tac-Toe games and flashcards has an important and determining role to play in teaching vocabulary to zero beginners as they have a more positive influence than traditional.

Another research was done by Gerovasiliou and Zafiri (2017) also found there was a significant difference between the vocabulary achievement of the experimental and control group. Referring to the findings above, the researcher concluded that Tic-Tac-Toe game was an effective teaching technique to teach vocabulary and had a significant effect on language learners' vocabulary achievement.

Research method

1.3. Research design

The objective of this research was to enhance the eighth-grade students' active participation and vocabulary achievement by using Tic-Tac-Toe game. The design of this research was Classroom Action Research (CAR). Kemmis and McTaggart model as cited in Burns (2010:7-9) was used in this research with the cycle model in which each cycle consists of four stages of activities covering: (1) the planning of the action, (2) the implementation of the action, (3) observation and evaluation, (4) reflection of the action.

The procedure of conducting this research was as the following. Firstly, the researcher collaborated with English teacher in the preliminary study and worked together to collect input about the weaknesses of the English teaching and learning process related to the students' vocabulary achievement. Secondly, the researcher planned the actions after finding the problems. The actions were planned to be done in one cycle. Third, the researcher carried out the actions. During the implementation of the actions, the researcher taught the class while the English teacher observed the students' participation in the teaching and learning process of vocabulary. Then, at the end of the cycle, an evaluation and reflection were done.

By doing the reflection, the researcher could see whether some aspects are needed to be improved.

1.4. Research context

This study was conducted in EFL (English Foreign Language) context. The purposive method was used to determine the research area and the research subject. SMPN 1 Asembagus was chosen as the research area. In this school, English was not used as daily communication. It was used as the school subject in the classroom. This school was chosen because most of the eighth-grade students in this school had problems with their vocabulary achievement including lack of vocabulary, and difficulties on memorizing the words. This research was conducted in the second semester of the academic year 2019/2020.

The actions were applied based on the schedule of the English class. The subjects of this research were the students of VIID class at SMPN 1 Asembagus in the academic year of 2019/2020. The thirty one students of class VIID was chosen because they had the lowest vocabulary achievement. It can be seen from their mean score of vocabulary in the pre-cycle that was 61.5. They had the lowest percentage of students who get score ≥ 70 that was 35%.

3.3. Research data and analysis

The data were collected in the form of quantitative data and also was supported by the description of students' active participation during the teaching and learning process. There were two kinds of data that have been collected covering the primary data and the secondary data. The primary data were collected by using an observation checklist and a vocabulary tests. In this research, the English teacher did the observation using a checklist to note the students' participation. The observation was done while the researcher implemented the actions to the participants. The observation was done using observation checklist which consists of five indicators.

After collecting the data from observation, vocabulary test was conducted to test students' vocabulary achievement. According to Brown (2003:43), five types of language tests are language aptitude test, proficiency test, achievement test, diagnostic test, and placement test. In the current study, achievement test was used to know and describe the students' improvement of their vocabulary achievement after they get the treatment.

The vocabulary test was conducted in the form of classification table covering 16 items (nouns 4, verbs 4, adjectives 4, adverbs 4), matching the meaning covering 16 items

(nouns 4, verbs 4, adjectives 4, adverbs 4), and multiple-choice covering 8 items of four word synonyms and four word antonyms (nouns 2, verbs 2, adjectives 2, adverbs 2).

Thus, the score of each item is 2.5 points and the total score was 100 points. The test was conducted in 60 minutes. The test was delivered to the students at the end of the cycle. The secondary data were collected by using interviews and documentation. The interview was used in the reconnaissance step to get the problems in the vocabulary teaching-learning process. In the reconnaissance step, the interview was done to find the existing problems.

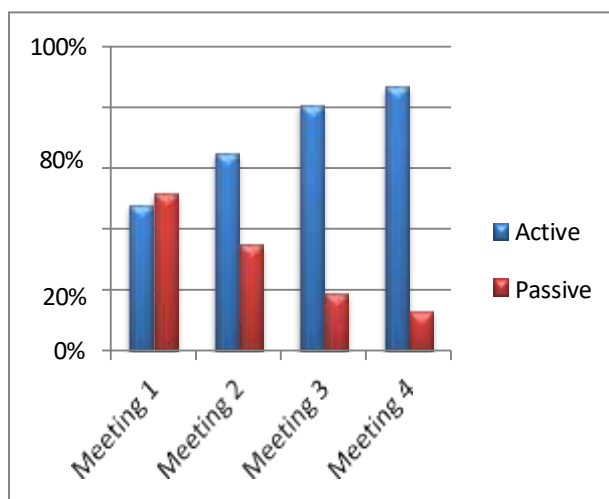
The documentations of this research were the list of the name of participants and the list of participants' vocabulary test score from the eighth-grade English teacher. The data collected from observation were analyzed descriptively and quantitatively to support the result of the actions given in this research. The following formula was used to analyze the collected data. (Cohen, Manion, and Marrison 2000:362).

4. Research results and discussion

The results of observation in the first meeting found that there were 15 students or 48% of 31 students who were categorized as active participants and 16 students or 52% of 31 students who were categorized as passive participants in the learning process.

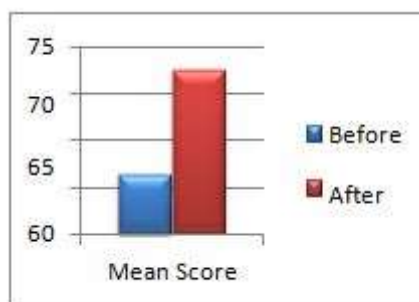
The result of observation in the second meeting found that there were 20 students or 64% of 31 students categorized as active participants and 11 students or 36% of 31 students who categorized as passive participants in the vocabulary learning process. The result of observation in the third meeting found that there were 25 students or 80% of 31 students who were categorized as active participants and 7 students or 20% of 31 students who were categorized as passive participants in the learning process.

The result of observation in the fourth meeting found that there were 27 students or 87% of 31 students who were categorized as active participants. There were 4 students or 13% of 31 students who were categorized as passive participants in the teaching learning process. In general the students' active participation was 70 %. It can be seen in the following diagram.



The students were actively participated in the teaching-learning process and enjoyed the class because they were interested to the topic. The text presented someone's experience that they might have so that they got excited while reading the text. While reading the text, the students also searched the meaning of the unfamiliar words in the dictionary so that they can answer easily when the researcher asked them the questions related to the words. They were involved in the teaching learning-process actively by answering the questions and asking some questions related to the topic. While playing the Tic-Tac-Toe game, they competed each others according to the rules and sportively. They got enthusiastic whenever they chose the number in the grid and answered the questions. Thus, the students had fun and joyful atmosphere while learning vocabulary by using Tic- Tac-Toe game. This statement is in line with the theory used in the previous study that using Tic-Tac-Toe game in teaching vocabulary could create joyful and fun condition in the classroom (Susanti, 2013).

The result of students' vocabulary achievement test showed that there were 22 students or 67% of 31 students who got score ≥ 70 and 32% of 31 students who got score ≤ 70 in the vocabulary test. It can be found that the mean score of students' vocabulary achievement was 72.5 as can be seen in the following graph.



The graph shows that the mean score of the students' vocabulary achievement improved from 61.5 in the first vocabulary test done by the English teacher before the action implemented to 72.5 in the second vocabulary test done by the researcher after the action implemented. The graph also shows that the percentage of the students' who got score ≥ 70 improved from 35% in the vocabulary test done by the English teacher before the action implemented to 67% in the vocabulary test done by the researcher after the action implemented.

In the preliminary study, it was found that the students easily got bored and did not enjoy studying vocabulary. The teacher dominated the class and presented the materials in one-way communication. This condition made the students tend to get busy with their own business so that they did not participate well in the teaching learning process. However, after the action was given, the students were excited and enjoyed the class because the teaching-learning were focused on the students or students-centered learning. They found the meaning of the unfamiliar words in the dictionary and involved in the group discussion. They also played the game joyfully and competitively. The students got new vocabularies while playing the games. They could remember its spelling, and the meaning. It could be said that Tic-Tac-Toe game also gave a positive impact to the students' vocabulary achievement. This statement was in line with the previous study's findings that the use of Tic-Tac-Toe game also had a significant effect to the students' vocabulary achievement (Hamidah, 2014).

Conclusion

Based on the results of the observation and the students' vocabulary achievement test, it can be concluded that the use of Tic-Tac-Toe game could improve the VIIID students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement in the teaching-learning process of vocabulary at SMPN 1 Asembagus by involving the students in the group discussion while playing the game and engaging the students in two-way communication in the teaching-learning process of vocabulary.

Therefore it is suggested for the future researcher to develop further research about using Tic-Tac-Toe game in English language learning. For example, conducting an experimental research about the effect of Tic-Tac-Toe game on the students' reading skills. Secondly, it is suggested for the English teacher to apply Tic-Tac-Toe game as vocabulary teaching technique to improve students' vocabulary achievement and their active participation in the classroom.

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