

## Enhancing The Seventh Grade Students' Vocabulary Mastery by Using Scrabble Game

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### Abstract

Vocabulary as one of the English components cannot be separated from English skills. For EFL students, it is imperative to learn vocabulary first because vocabulary is related to all four skills. This research aimed to enhance the seventh-grade students' vocabulary mastery by using scrabble game at MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi. It was conducted by using Classroom Action Research (CAR) design with the four stages in a cycle model. The result showed that the percentage of students' active participation improved from 76.47% in Meeting 1 to 85.29% in Meeting 2. It means that the students' active participation in Cycle 1 achieved the criteria of success of this research. Meanwhile, the percentage of vocabulary test scores showed that the students who got score  $\geq 75$  increased from 73.5% in the previous score to 88.23% in the vocabulary score in Cycle 1. These results showed that the target of this research was achieved in Cycle 1, so it was not continued to Cycle 2. Based on the results of this research, it could be concluded that the use of scrabble game improved the students of the VII-A Class vocabulary mastery and active participation in the teaching and learning process of vocabulary at MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi.

**Keywords:** *Classroom Action Research; Scrabble Game; Vocabulary Mastery*

### Introduction

Vocabulary is the basic element of a language. It is commonly defined as all the word used by the speakers when using their language. Bakhsh (2016) defined vocabulary as a basic part and key element for learning any language. It means without knowing and having enough vocabulary, someone or language learner will be difficult to understand the other language skill such as speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Vocabulary is one of the items that have to be mastered first by the students in learning English, because no one can speak English if they have limited vocabulary and without a proportional amount of vocabulary any one will get trouble in the process of learning English.

English is necessary for Indonesian students because they will need it to

communicate and compete with other people from other parts of the world in the future. In Indonesia, English is considered as foreign language, and the students only learn English at school in limited session. To make students master English, students need to learn and master language skills. Vocabulary learning and teaching are very important as part of foreign language knowledge. However, vocabulary learning was still rarely taught at MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi. Based on a preliminary study conducted by interviewing one of the English teachers at MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi, the minimum requirement score at this school is 75. In addition, the class that has the lowest English scores is VII-A Class. Besides, the researcher has obtained data that during the COVID-19 pandemic, MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi has implemented online and face-to-face learning with a cluster system. During face-to-face learning, students had difficulty understanding English material because class hours are limited, and learning is only from books. It can be seen from the students' previous English score belongs to the data from the English teacher is 73,5%. The students had difficulties in understanding vocabulary in each material explained by the English teacher.

In learning the English, it is a must for learners to get information and to understand the language (Nurani & Widiati, 2021). Therefore, learning to listen is essential to the English students and needs to be conducted in a focused class. There are many ways that can be used to solve problems related to learning English vocabulary. The appropriate technique can be used in order to make the students more enthusiastic and more active in the classroom, also to avoid them from getting bored and sleepy in learning process. One of them is using a game. Teachers are responsible for finding out interesting and attractive ways to teach and motivate their students (Bakhsh, 2016). According to Derakhshan & Khatir (2015), games help and encourage students learn language more easily. Apart from that, games also bring fun to students, helping them learn new words quickly. Playing vocabulary games is one of the activities which required students to actively communicate with their classmates using their language. Teaching vocabulary through games can make the students feel enjoy the class, and they creatively encourage the language.

In this research, the researcher used scrabble game to support teaching vocabulary in the learning process. As stated by Kobzeva (2015), the board game Scrabble is one of the most popular board games widely used by English Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. Scrabble is a simple game that can help the teacher in teaching vocabulary especially in memorizing, spelling and understanding the meaning of the words. Moreover, Protzner et al. (2016) defined that scrabble is a popular board game in which two players strategically take turns forming words from seven randomly drawn lettered tiles. The purpose of this game was to build up the spirit of the students in learning English vocabulary. By using games in

learning English, the students could understand and catch the materials easily.

Generally, most of the students learn English vocabulary by memorizing methods. Even Huyen & Nga (2003) noted that in a short time, many students realize that learning English vocabulary does not satisfy themselves, and they think that the cause is simply their bad memorization. This caused students to quickly forget English vocabulary. Therefore, the learning method using games could help students learn English vocabulary without having to memorize it. In this research, the researcher used the Scrabble Game as the main medium in learning English Vocabulary. This was to make students improved their English vocabulary not only by using memorization methods but in a more fun way with games.

The use of scrabble games as a medium for learning vocabulary had become the topic of research conducted by several experts. They were Kobzeva (2015), Rosidi & Falianti (2014), and King (2020) who applied an experimental research design and Sitompul (2019) which applied a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design. Kobzeva (2015) concluded that the learning process using scrabble games can help teachers to create an atmosphere where students can think critically and be active in the learning process in the classroom. Rosidi & Falianti (2014) and King (2020) stated that vocabulary learning by using game media was effective. Meanwhile, Sitompul (2019) reported that the use of scrabble games increased senior high school students' vocabulary. It could be seen from the post-test mean scores which increased from 70.2 in Cycle 1 to 81.4 in Cycle 2.

Four previous relevant studies showed that the use of scrabble games as a medium in learning English vocabulary was effective and improved students' vocabulary. The three studies from Kobzeva (2015), Rosidi & Falianti (2014), and King (2020) used experimental research designs and only one study from Sitompul (2019) used CAR design. However, research on the use of scrabble games to improve junior high school students' English vocabulary in Indonesia with the CAR design was still rare. Therefore, to fill in the gaps, the researcher conducted a CAR design to improve the English vocabulary of junior high school students by using scrabble games.

## **Method**

There are many methods that can be used by the researcher in doing research, but the researcher should be selective in choosing appropriate method with the research. According to the problems, the appropriate method to be used in this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). CAR was conducted when

there are problems appear in teaching and learning process. Since there are problems found regard to the students' interest in seventh grade students SMPN 1 Jawai, Classroom Action Research is an appropriate design to help the teacher finds the right technique for teaching in order to pull students' interest in learning English. CAR is used to facilitate the researcher to implement a technique as an alternative solution to resolve the problem in teaching and learning process. In conducting this research, the researcher acted as the collaborator to observe the class and the teacher taught using Scrabble Game in teaching and learning process in the classroom.

According to Ferrance in Lidiasari et al. (2017), classroom action research is a type of research conducted to improve the teaching and learning process in the classroom by looking at various indicators of the success of the process and learning outcomes that occur to students. In other words, through CAR teachers could improve learning practices to be more effective and fun. This research focused on enhancing the teaching and learning process to achieve students' English vocabulary mastery. The implementation was in collaboration with an English teacher at MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi. The researcher used Kemmis & McTaggart (2000) model which is a cyclical process that involves four major phases in one research cycle. Classroom action research is performed in from of processes that consist of four phases, which is: (1) Planning, (2) Action, (3) Observation, and (4) Reflection.

### ***Research Participants***

Participants in this research were 34 students of VII-A Class in MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi. The researcher chose this class because the students had problems with learning English. The previous students' English scores indicated that only 25 students (73.5%) got scores  $\geq 75$  and achieve the minimum requirement score and 9 students (26.5%) did not achieve the minimum requirement score in the students' daily assignments. Therefore, the process of learning English regarding vocabulary mastery needs to be improved in this class.

### ***Research Context***

This research was conducted at MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi. There were several reasons for the researcher in choosing MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi to conduct a CAR design. First, there was vocabulary problems there. Second, the principal and the English teacher gave permission to the researcher to conduct CAR collaboratively with the English teacher. Third, this school has implemented 2013 Curriculum and reading "descriptive text" becomes one of the basic competencies in the curriculum and English subject is taught twice a week. Fourth, the school has implemented face-to-face learning in class using a system of class division into two sessions. The allotted time in each session is 2 x 30 minutes. Then, the English teacher never used game as a medium in teaching vocabulary.

### *Data Collection Method*

This research was gathered in quantitative data. The quantitative data was in the form of students' scores of vocabulary tests. There were three techniques of data collection methods applied in this study, namely observation, vocabulary tests, and interviews.

In observation, the researcher used an observation checklist to collect the data. The most effective way of observation is by using an observation checklist (Arikunto, 2010). In this research, the English teacher acted as an observer. The researcher collaborated with the English teacher to observe the students' participation. The indicators used in the observations in this research are as follows: (1) Students understand the rules of the Scrabble game, (2) Enthusiastic when playing scrabble games, (3) Competitive between friends while playing scrabble games, (4) Playing scrabble games independently without the help of friends.

Table 1. The Observation Checklist of Students' Participation

No	Name	Indicators				Active	Passive
		1	2	3	4		

The researcher used a post-test which aimed to collect data after the action is carried out to find out how successful the students are in mastering vocabulary. Vocabulary tests were given to students in the third meeting. In this study, the researcher used multiple choice questions and fill in the blanks questions to measure students' vocabulary mastery. The test covered nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. The researcher conducted a vocabulary test which is 20 items in the form of multiple choice questions with four choices and fill in the blanks with words in the box, each consisting of 10 items. Each correct answer for multiple choice questions got 4 points and each correct answer for filling in the blank questions got 6 points since filling in the blank questions is more difficult than multiple choice questions. Therefore, the total score of the vocabulary test was 100.

The researcher interviewed one of the English teachers at MTs Sunan Ampel on August 25th, 2021. The interview aimed to find out information about the teaching and learning English especially vocabulary. In this research, the researcher used structured interviews with 8 questions consisted of question related to the curriculum used in the school (1 question), the minimum requirement score of English (1 question), and vocabulary learning activities in the classroom (6 questions). The interviews were conducted in Indonesian to make it

easier for the researcher to communicate with the teacher and were conducted before the teaching and learning process.

### *Data Analysis Method*

The scores of vocabulary test were analyzed using descriptive statistics by calculating the number of students who achieve minimal score  $\geq 75$ . The following formula used to calculate students achieving the standard score.

a. The students' participation

The data analysis method used to know the percentage of students' participation is as the following:

$$P = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

Description:

P: The percentage of the students who are active in the classroom.

n: The number of the students who are active in the classroom.

N: The total number of students.

b. The students' vocabulary mastery

The data analysis method used to know the percentage of students' vocabulary mastery is as the following:

$$P = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

Description:

P: The percentage of the total number of the students whose score is  $\geq 75$ .

n: The total number of the students whose score  $\geq 75$

N: The total number of students

### **Findings**

In this chapter, the researcher explains the results and discussions that had been carried out in Cycle 1 with a classroom action research design. In the first cycle, the researcher carried out several stages, namely the implementation of the action, the results of the vocabulary test, the results of reflection, and discussion.

The implementation of the action in Cycle 1 was carried out in two meetings using the Scrabble Game in the teaching and learning process of vocabulary which was integrated in reading comprehension. This research was intended to solve students' problem in vocabulary mastery by implement Scrabble Game on the VII A students of MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi. The

allotted time of each meeting was 2x30 minutes and was divided into 2 class sessions. In this research, the researcher focused on the students' vocabulary mastery by integrating learning with students' reading skills based on the lesson plans that had been prepared previously. In the implementation of the learning process in the classroom, the researcher taught reading skills about descriptive texts. Based on the information previously collected by the researcher from the English teacher, students in VII-A Class at MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi had low scores. They had difficulty in learning English especially in mastering vocabulary. Therefore, the researcher used the Scrabble game as a medium in learning English in the classroom so that students were interested in the process of learning English in the classroom.

In the previous lesson with the English teacher, the teacher had some problems when teaching students in class. The problem is that teachers had difficulty in dealing with passive students and students who always make noise when learning in class. To solve these problems, the researcher used the Scrabble game as a medium by studying in groups so that students were more active and easier to understand vocabulary learning materials. In the implementation of this research, the researcher carried out research from March 7, 2022 to March 21, 2022 which was carried out in one cycle. Each meeting consisted of 2 sessions per class. Meeting 1 was held on March 7, 2022. The implementation of the action consisted of three stages, namely introductory activities, core activities, and closing. The introductory activity begins with the researcher greeting students, asking students to pray before learning begins, and checking the students' attendance list. After that, the researcher explained the learning materials and learning objectives about the descriptive text. Before starting the lesson, the researcher gave leading questions to the students with the aim of arousing students' curiosity about the learning topic regarding the descriptive text with the topic "My house".

After being given the guiding questions, the researcher started to the core activity. The learning process begins with the teacher giving a picture of a house and asking students to observe the picture. Then, the researcher explained the vocabulary related to the house and integrated it with the descriptive text material. After that, the students in the class were divided into several groups. The researcher distributed a set of scrabble games to each group and gave 15 minutes to play wording. In this game, the researcher observed the activeness of students in the learning process using the scrabble game. The researcher found that most of the students helped each other in a group if there were friends who had difficulty in arranging words on the scrabble board.

After the game ended, the researcher distributed a descriptive text related to the learning topic to students in each group. Students are asked to read the text and then classify some words based on the verb, noun, adjective, or adverb

provided in the column. The next student activity was to complete student worksheets. On the student worksheets, they are asked to arrange random letters into perfect words and make sentences based on the words they had arranged on the scrabble board. The time allocated for students to do the task was 13 minutes. During the teaching and learning process in playing scrabble, students were not allowed to use a dictionary or cellphone, so they cannot access the answers to assignments on the internet. After the student worksheets were completed, the researcher asked the students to discuss the student worksheets together, if students had difficulties, they could ask the researcher.

The last activity was closing. The researcher provided reflection and feedback to students regarding learning materials if students experience difficulties in the learning process that has been studied using the scrabble game. After that, the researcher asked the students to make conclusions about the descriptive text learning material. Then, the researcher ended the lesson by saying closing greetings to the students. Meeting 2 was held on March 14, 2022 for both sessions. The teaching and learning process in Meeting 2 was the same as in Meeting 1. The difference was only in the material used in Meeting 2, namely the descriptive text about "My Classroom". When playing scrabble, some students still help each other between friends in one group. The teaching and learning activities at this meeting were carried out well for both sessions because the students had a background from Meeting 1, and they enjoyed playing scrabble. In Meeting 2, student worksheets were given to students to work on in class. Students are asked to arrange letters into perfect words and make sentences based on the words they had made on the scrabble board.

The observation in cycle 1 was done in two meetings by using observation checklist to know the students' active participation during the implementing of action. Based on the results of the observation checklist, in Meeting 1 there were 34 students who attended the class. All of them understood the rules of the Scrabble game. Dealing with indicator 2, there were only 2 students who were not serious and enthusiastic while playing the scrabble game because they are noisy and busy with their own activities. Meanwhile, 32 students were serious and enthusiastic while playing the scrabble game. Dealing with indicator 3, there were 25 students who competed between friends in each group while playing scrabble game. Dealing with indicator 4, there were only 14 students playing scrabble games independently without the help of friends. Meanwhile, there were 22 students who did not play the game of scrabble independently without the help of their friends. They asked each other for help if they had difficulty in arranging letter tiles on the scrabble board. The result of observation in Meeting 1 showed that there were 26 students (76.47%) who fulfilled at least three or four indicators and it was categorized as active students. Meanwhile, there were 9 students (23.53%) who fulfilled only one or



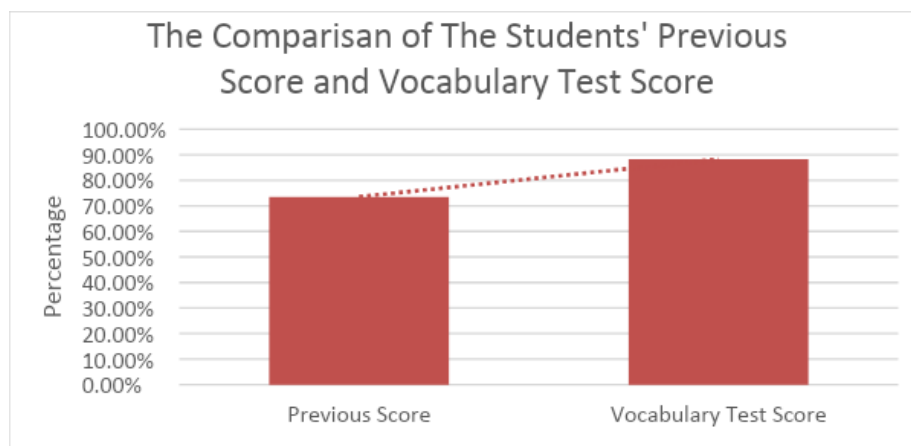
two indicators and it was categorized as active students.

In Meeting 2, all of the students attended the class. All students understood the rules of the scrabble game. In indicator 2, all students are also serious and enthusiastic in playing the game of scrabble. Furthermore, in indicator 3, there were 5 students who did not compete when playing the scrabble game between friends in one group. They had no ambition to win. In indicator 4, there were 11 students who played independently without the help of friends in one group. Meanwhile, 23 other students still asked each other for help if they had difficulties in arranging letter tiles on the scrabble board.

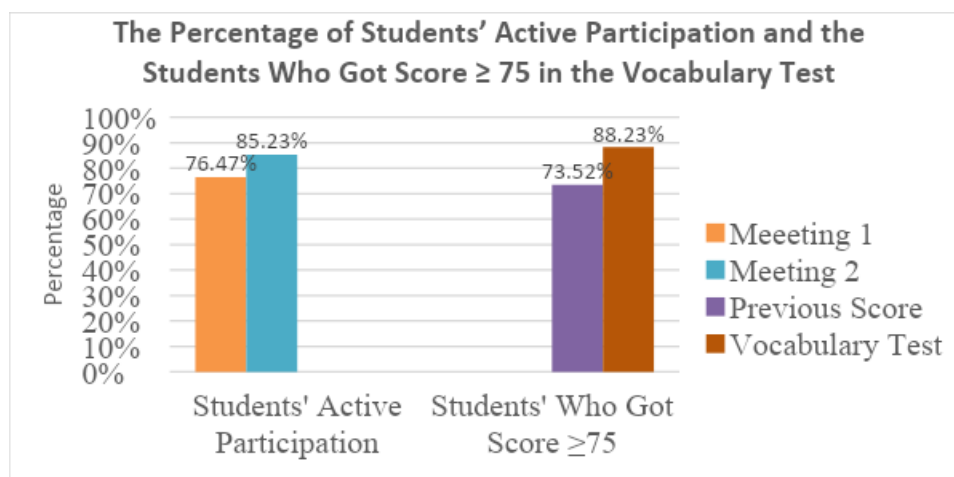
During the implementation of this research, the researcher encountered obstacles, namely the limited time for the teaching and learning process due to the pandemic situation. The time allocation is only 2x30 minutes per class. The researcher tried to allocate time as effectively as possible to ensure that each student met the vocabulary learning indicators. The researcher also tried to make every student able to improve their vocabulary mastery when learning with the Scrabble game. Even though the researcher encountered obstacles, the actions were carried out properly and effectively. The results of the vocabulary test and the students' active participation during vocabulary learning by using Scrabble game in cycle 1 reached the research success criteria, so the action was not continued to cycle 2.

The vocabulary test was administrated in the third meeting. It was in the form of multiple-choice format and Fill in The Blanks. The number of test items was 20 items (10 items of Multiple choice and 10 items of Fill in The Blanks). Each correct answer for Multiple choice questions got 4 points and each correct answer for Fill in The Blanks got 6 points, so the total score was 100. The time allocation of the vocabulary test was 30 minutes for both sessions. The result of students' vocabulary test in Cycle 1 could be seen in Appendix C. Compared to the students' previous scores as shown in Appendix D, there were only 25 students (73.52%) who got score  $\leq 75$  and 9 students (26.48%) who got score  $\leq 75$ . There was an improvement on the students' vocabulary score.

According to the implementation of action in Cycle 1, the findings showed that 26 students (76.47%) were categorized as active students in Meeting 1. Meanwhile, there were 29 students (85.29%) were categorized as active students in Meeting 2. The results of vocabulary test in Cycle 1 showed that the students fulfilled the target of  $\geq 75\%$ . The results of students' vocabulary score in previous reading test score and reading test in the first cycle could be seen in Appendix C and Appendix D. The percentage of students' vocabulary score in the previous score and the result of vocabulary score in the Cycle 1 can be seen in this graphic below:



From Graphic 4.2, it was known that in students' previous score, there were 25 students (73.52%) who got score  $\geq 75$  and achieved the minimal requirement score. Meanwhile, in vocabulary test score there were 30 students (88.23%) who got score  $\geq 75$  and achieved the minimal requirement score. Thus, it could be concluded that the percentage of the students who got score  $\geq 75$  in the vocabulary test in cycle 1 increased than the previous score.



In conclusion, the result of vocabulary test in Cycle 1 achieved the target of this research, so that the action was not continued to Cycle 2.

## Discussion

This research aimed to improve VII-A Class students' active participation in the teaching and learning process of vocabulary and to enhance the students' vocabulary mastery by using Scrabble Game. The use of Scrabble Game in the teaching and learning process of vocabulary showed that there was an improvement on the students' active participation and the students' vocabulary mastery.

The results of research that has been carried out to improve vocabulary

mastery of VII-A Class students using scrabble games are effective and successful. This can be seen from the increase in the percentage of students' vocabulary test scores from the previous value and the percentage of active student participation in classes that had been carried out according to the indicators that must be achieved. This is relevant to the research conducted by Sitompul (2019) which showed that scrabble games improved students' vocabulary mastery. In this research, it could be seen from the increase in students' scores from the previous score (73.52%) to vocabulary test score (88.23%).

In addition to improve vocabulary mastery, the Scrabble games can also increase students' active participation and students' critical thinking skills. This is relevant to research conducted by Kobzeva (2015) showed that scrabble games can increase students' active participation and develop students' critical thinking skills when arranging letter tiles on the Scrabble board. It was proved by the improvement of the students' active participation scores in Meeting 1 (76.47%) compared to Meeting 2 (85.23%). Each student in each group participated seriously and enthusiastically when playing scrabble because they competed to win by arranging as many letter tiles on the scrabble board as they could.

The findings of this research indicated that scrabble games improved students' vocabulary. The process of teaching and learning using Scrabble Game improved from Meeting 1 to Meeting 2 in Cycle 1. Scrabble Game improved the students' vocabulary score and the students' active participation. In addition, this game made students learn in a fun way and without feeling stressed. They enjoyed the process of learning as well as playing the game. Thus, it could be concluded Scrabble Game was effective game used in enhancing the students' vocabulary mastery because it made the students more active and creative during learning vocabulary.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the discussion of the previous chapter, it can be concluded that VII-A Class students of MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi improved after being taught through Scrabble Game in three meetings in one cycle. The use of scrabble game in teaching vocabulary could enhance the VII-A Class students' active participation at MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi. The result showed that the percentage of students' active participation improved from Meeting 1 (76.47%) to Meeting 2 (85.23%). Besides that, the use of scrabble game in teaching vocabulary could enhance the VII-A Class students' vocabulary mastery at MTs Sunan Ampel Banyuwangi. It was proved by the result of the students who got score  $\geq 75$  from the students' vocabulary test. The percentage

of students who got score  $\geq 75$  in the vocabulary test was from the previous score (73.52%) to vocabulary test score (88.23%) in Cycle 1.

From the conclusions stated above, this research is expected to be useful for students' vocabulary learning. Through scrabble games, it is expected to motivate students to master vocabulary in an interesting way. By using scrabble games, teachers can use learning media in a creative, interesting and fun learning process for students to improve their vocabulary mastery and make them more active during the learning process in class. Future researchers who will conduct research in similar topics by using scrabble game with different research design are suggested to use this research finding as the reference to be considered.

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