

The Effectiveness of Using “New Big City Adventure Game” in Enhancing Students’ Vocabulary Mastery in Vocational High School Level

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to investigate whether “New Big City Adventure Game” can increase the students’ vocabulary mastery or not. The data were gathered using two kinds of instruments; those are (1) vocabulary tests, (2) questionnaires. The vocabulary tests were pre and post-tests, while the questionnaires were distributed to the students’ of the experimental group and the teacher. The study’s findings revealed that “New Big City Adventure Game” successfully enhanced the students’ vocabulary mastery. Besides, it could trigger the students’ motivation to learn English. The result was proven by the gain of the experimental group’s performance after being given treatment by the researcher. In addition, the results of the students and teacher’s questionnaires showed positive responses towards the treatment given.

Keywords: “New Big City Adventure Game”; vocabulary mastery; vocational high school

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan apakah “New Big City Adventure Game” dapat meningkatkan penguasaan kosa kata siswa atau tidak. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menggunakan dua macam instrumen; yaitu (1) tes kosa kata, (2) kuesioner. Tes kosa kata adalah pre dan post-test, sedangkan kuesioner dibagikan kepada siswa kelompok eksperimen dan guru. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa “New Big City Adventure Game” berhasil meningkatkan penguasaan kosa kata siswa. Selain itu, dapat memicu motivasi siswa untuk belajar bahasa Inggris. Hasil tersebut dibuktikan dengan peningkatan kinerja kelompok eksperimen setelah diberikan perlakuan oleh peneliti. Selain itu, hasil angket siswa dan guru menunjukkan respon positif terhadap perlakuan yang diberikan.

Kata-Kata Kunci: “New Big City Adventure Game”; ; penguasaan kosa kata; sekolah menengah kejuruan

INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of teaching English is for communicative. Basically, there are four skills that have to be mastered by people in order to be able to communicate in English. Those four skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening and reading are receptive skills in which language users must be able to receive spoken and written language, whereas speaking and writing are productive skills in which language users must be able to generate both spoken and written language (Harmer, 1983: 44). Apart from those four skills that need to be mastered by people, there are other English language components which are equally important as those four skills. Furthermore, gaining those four abilities

cannot be established if the learners do not also grasp the English language components. Vocabulary is one of the linguistic components. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), vocabulary is a critical component of language competency because it offers a foundation for learners to effectively talk, write, read, and listen. So, without mastering vocabulary, students will find it difficult to communicate with others and convey their ideas both in written and spoken way. Regarding the teaching vocabulary in Indonesia, the teaching of vocabulary should be integrated in the teaching and learning process and be based on the curriculum-based competence. The teachers should also teach vocabulary integrating with other language skills and combining with other materials.

However, many Indonesian students have a tough time learning new words. since many teachers teach vocabulary traditionally. Traditionally means that the students either have to look up to their dictionary if They are oblivious to the meaning of particular words or the teacher just give direct translation of the words in Indonesian (Vianawati, 2014:2). As a result, they cannot maximally acquire those new difficult vocabularies. In addition to that, the Indonesian students tend to have no self-confidence to speak up using English so that it can make it difficult for them to convey their opinions or ideas.

Therefore, teaching vocabulary can be done by involving the students in the teaching and learning process. In the other words, the teaching and learning process should be students-centered, not the teacher-centered. The easiest way to teach vocabulary to the students is using games. Language games are classified into two types: linguistic games and communicative games (Hadfield, 2001:4). Grammar games, for example, are linguistic games that emphasize on language precision. While communicative games focus on the non-linguistic accuracy such as finding two matching card or filling in a picture or chart rather than correcting the production of language. By using games, it can make the students feeling not to be forced to learn English and also the students are directly involved in the teaching process. Moreover, games can reduce anxiety, making the acquisition of input more likely. (Richard-Amato, 1988).

Not only for fun, games can also be used at any level of the session to avoid the students from getting restless and bored. In addition to that, by inserting varied games in the teaching and learning process, it will keep the students alert and enjoying themselves (Cahyono & Mukminatien, 2011:41). That means that the students will pay more attention and focus more on the teacher if there are games in the teaching and learning process. Essentially, There are three primary goals for employing games in the teaching and learning process, namely: (a) as the main topic, (b) as reinforcement, and (c) as an extra activity (Fachrurrazy, 2014:112). So, apart from choosing the appropriate games for teaching English, the teacher should clearly define how the games will be implemented in the class so that the aim of games will be successfully achieved.

While there are several games that may be used to improve students' vocabulary mastery, English teachers should choose the most appropriate games based on the students' situation and educational background in order to get the best results for the students' vocabulary mastering. Teachers may use games to teach vocabulary by creating diverse scenarios in which students can communicate, exchange information, and express their own thoughts using acceptable dictions. (Wright, Betteridge, & Buckby, 1984).

In this study, the researcher investigated whether the game proposed could significantly enhance the students' vocabulary or not. The game was a communicative game which was "New Big City Adventure". "New Big City Adventure" game is a challenging

hidden object game that takes the player to the exciting locations all around the world (www.pogo.com, 2015). This game provides many aspects that can indeed enhance students’ vocabulary mastery. The first aspect is that this game uses the big cities as a theme. Moreover, every theme has many famous places with the description provided. So, this game can give knowledge to students about many big cities in the world followed by each description. The second aspect is that it contains lots of picture of things and places. So, apart from element of fun, this game has pictures that can make it easier to students to memorize every word they got. In addition to that, colored pictures can attract the students’ interest and motivation to learn the vocabulary. According to Kriedler (1965:1), Pictures may be a recognized means of expressing a genuine situation, allowing pupils to connect what they hear to real-life experiences. Moreover, images are thought to have an important function in the development of pupils’ talents (Wright & Halem, 2011). The last beneficial aspect of this game is that it can trigger the students to look at the dictionary to figure out the meaning of words contained in the game. Hence, without teacher’s instruction, the students will directly open their dictionary if they find many difficult words since they want to accomplish the game.

To further this issue, the present study intends to investigate whether “New Big City Adventure Game” can enhance the students’ vocabulary mastery or not. To this end, it seeks answer to the following research question: Do the tenth grade vocational high school students taught using “New Big City Adventure Game” have better vocabulary mastery than the tenth grade vocational high school students taught without the game?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Game

Most teachers know that the students are active learners who like to learn by doing. Therefore, teaching vocabulary can be done by involving the students in the teaching process. In the other words, the teaching and learning process should be students-centered, not the teacher-centered. The easiest way to teach vocabulary to the students is using games. Language games are classified into two types: linguistic games and communicative games (Hadfield, 2001:4). Linguistic games focus on the linguistic accuracy such as grammar games. While communicative games focus on the non-linguistic accuracy such as finding two matching card or filling in a picture or chart rather than correcting the production of language. By using games, it can make the students feeling not to be forced to learn English and also the students are directly involved in the teaching process. Language games are classified into two types: linguistic games and communicative games. (Richard-Amato, 1988).

Games may be employed at any level of the session to keep the kids from becoming restless and bored. Furthermore, by including a variety of activities into the teaching and learning process, kids will be kept awake and entertained (Cahyono, 2011:41). That is, if games are included in the teaching and learning process, pupils will pay more attention and focus more on the teacher. Using games in the teaching and learning process serves three key functions namely: (a) as the main topic, (b) as reinforcement, and (c) as an extra activity (Fachrurrazy, 2014:112). So, apart from choosing the appropriate games for teaching English, the teacher should clearly define how the games will be implemented in the class so that the aim of games will be successfully achieved.

While there are several games that may be used to improve students' vocabulary mastery, English teachers should choose the most appropriate games based on the students' situation and educational background in order to get the best results for the students' vocabulary mastering. Teachers may use games to teach vocabulary by creating diverse scenarios in which students can communicate, exchange information, and express their own thoughts using acceptable dictions (Wright, Betteridge, & Buckby, 1984).

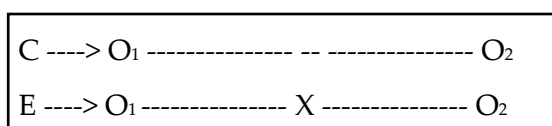
Vocabulary Mastery

Teachers have a crucial role in developing students' vocabulary proficiency, and students must be ready to learn. Vocabulary mastery refers to pupils' capacity to grasp and know the meaning of every word, both spoken and written. Unfortunately, many Indonesian students struggle to learn new terms since many professors teach vocabulary in a conventional manner.. Traditionally means that the students either have to look up to their dictionary if they do not know the meaning of particular words or the teacher just give direct translation of the words in Indonesian (Vianawati, 2014:2). As a result, they cannot maximally acquire those new difficult vocabularies. In addition to that, the Indonesian students tend to have no self-confidence to speak up using English so that it can make it difficult for them to convey their opinions or ideas. Thus, the teachers indeed have to find good teaching techniques so that the students can find ease to learn new vocabulary.

METHOD

This research was conducted in SMK Negeri 7 kota Malang. There were two groups employed using different strategies, that is, the control group was taught conventionally, whereas the experimental group was taught by using "New Big City Adventure Game". Basically, both strategies comprised the same procedures in the class. The classes of the study were X A (as the control group) and X B (as the experimental group) classes in the academic year of 2022/2023. X A class consisted of 32 students, while X B consisted of 31 students.

The research model used in this study is quasi experimental which consists of Preparation, Implementation, and Observation. The diagram of the experimental study can be seen below.



The codes used in the diagram above illustrate the following:

C represents the control group, viz., VIII A;

E represents the experimental group, viz., VIII B;

O₁ and O₁ represent the pre-test of the both groups;

O₂ and O₂ represent the post-test of the both groups;

-- represents the traditional practice addressed to the control group

X represents "New Big City Adventure Game" as the treatment for the experimental group

The researcher arranged the study tools that would be used to gather data prior to the therapy. These tools include pre- and post-test vocabulary exams, questionnaires for students and teachers, and lesson plans for both groups. Before administering the therapy to the pupils, the instructor required a lesson plan as a guideline so that the researcher's approach could be applied systematically. The lesson plans were created using the curriculum and syllabus from SMK Negeri 7 kota Malang in 2013. After arranging all of the instruments required for the study, the researcher and teacher began the therapy for both the experimental and control groups based on the schedule. During the teaching and learning process, both the experimental and control groups used the identical instructional approaches. The teaching and learning process began with pre-teaching and concluded with post-teaching. The researcher watched the experimental and control groups at the end of the experiment. The observation was carried out by providing a post-test. The purpose of the observation stage was to evaluate the pupils' vocabulary knowledge after receiving treatment from the teacher.

The researcher employed multiple ways to collect data, including administering a pre-test to both groups before administering the therapy, sending questionnaires to students and teachers, and administering the post-test. The analysis was carried out by examining and calculating the points based on the accurate replies of the pupils. The data was analyzed on a computer using the SPSS (Statistical Software for Social Sciences) application and ANCOVA (Analysis of Covariance). The use of ANCOVA in this study is intended to detect a significant difference between the experimental and control groups following treatment by the instructor. Furthermore, by subtracting the variance associated with the covariate(s) from the dependent scores, ANCOVA may be used to regulate the external variable that may impact the study variables.

ANCOVA then calculates the covariation (correlation) between the covariate(s) and the dependent variable (Rutherford, 2001:5). Nevertheless, before using ANCOVA, various research assumptions that must be met prior to the statistical computation must be met. The assumptions are that the variable being measured comes from (1) a normally distributed population, (2) the population variances are equal or homogenous, (3) the covariates are trustworthy, and (4) there is linearity between covariates and between covariates and the post-test. In order to answer the research topic, the null hypothesis is formed. To compare the experimental and control groups, the researcher utilized an independent t-test. The null hypothesis states that "New Big City Adventure Game" will not improve pupils' vocabulary proficiency. The researcher then uses 95% confidence or 5% significance to determine if the changes are significant or not. The criteria for accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis is then a degree of significance .05 or below. Moreover, the researcher employs the independent t-test to compute the difference mean of the pre-test between the experimental and control groups.

RESULT

After gathering the data using two different kinds of instruments, the data obtained will be analyzed using independent t-test and ANCOVA on SPSS program. The data analyzed using independent t-test was pre-test and post-test of both experimental and control groups. While the data analyzed using ANCOVA is the gain of each group. Prior to

that, the statistical analysis concerning about the homogeneity, the normality, the reliability of the covariates, and the linearity of the covariates presented.

The Finding from the Pre and Post-tests of the Two Groups

The pre-test was followed by 32 students of the control group and 31 students for the experimental group. In the matter of time, the pre-test was done in assorted times since the both groups has different schedule for English subject.

Table 1 A Comparison of Pre-test Scores of the Experimental and Control groups

Group	Number of Students	Mean	SD	T
Experimental	31	67.03	5.13474	
Control	32	77.97	7.91684	6.482

In order to know whether the difference of the pre-test is significant or not, the researcher determined it by checking on the table of t values at 0.05 level of significance for one-tailed test. The result obtained from the table of t values is 1.671 seen by using 63 degrees of freedom. Based on the result comparing with t obtained from the data, the t-value is higher than the t (≥ 1.671), so it can be said that the difference between means of pre-test for the experimental and control groups is significant. Hence, the performance of the two groups is basically not the same. By then, the calculation using ANCOVA was needed to calculate the gain of the both groups.

Yet, there are some assumptions that need to be fulfilled by the researcher before calculating the data using ANCOVA. Those are (1) normal distribution, (2) the analysis of the variance homogeneity, (3) the reliability of covariates, (4) the linearity between covariates and between covariates and the post-test.

Table 2 The Result of the Statistical Analysis of Normal Distribution of the Pre-test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Exper	.082	63	.200*	.985	63	.660

Table 3 The Result of the Statistical Analysis of Normal Distribution of the Post-test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Nilai	.198	63	.000	.863	63	.000

Based on the Table 2, it can be seen that the pre-test of the experimental and control groups are normally distributed. It is proven by the L-value obtained from the calculation is .082 which is smaller than the L-value obtained from the z-table ($< .4681$). Based on Table 3 above, the L-value obtained is .198 which is smaller than the L-value obtained from the z-table ($< .4681$). Hence, the first assumption of the ANCOVA is met.

Table 4 The Result of the Statistical Analysis of Homogeneity of the Pre-test

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Nilai	Based on Mean	.772	1	61	.383
	Based on Median	.773	1	61	.383
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.773	1	45.897	.384
	Based on trimmed mean	.990	1	61	.324

Table 5 The Result of the Statistical Analysis of Homogeneity of the Post-test

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Nilai	Based on Mean	2.811	1	61	.099
	Based on Median	1.102	1	61	.298
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	1.102	1	47.569	.299
	Based on trimmed mean	1.877	1	61	.176

Based on the Table 4, the p-value obtained from the calculation is .383 which is greater than the level of significance ($> .05$). Based on Table 5 above, the p-value obtained from the calculation is .099 which is higher than the level of significance ($> .05$). Hence, it indicates that the variances of the pre-test and post-test of the both the control and experimental groups are equal or homogeneous.

Table 6 The Result of the Statistical Analysis of the Reliability of Covariates

		Pretest	Post
Pretest	Pearson Correlation	1	.356**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	63	63
Post	Pearson Correlation	.356**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	63	63

Based on Table 6, the correlation coefficients ($= r$) obtained is .356, meaning that the r-ratio is greater than the r-table, figuring .330. By then, it implies that the pre-test and post-test are correlated in which pre-test is covariate. According to the result shown, it can be concluded that the relationship between the covariate and the post-test is linear, implying that the outcome of the pre and post-tests is parallel in measuring the students’ vocabulary mastery.

After all the required assumptions were fulfilled, the researcher calculated the gain of the both groups by using ANCOVA on SPSS program. The result showed that the experimental group gain better than the control group.

Table 7 The Result of Calculation Data Using ANCOVA

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Post

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	397.417 ^a	2	198.708	7.234	.002
Intercept	2080.413	1	2080.413	75.743	.000
Pretest	395.859	1	395.859	14.412	.000
Group	137.983	1	137.983	5.024	.029
Error	1648.012	60	27.467		
Total	524841.000	63			
Corrected Total	2045.429	62			

Based on the Table 7 above, it can be seen that the f-value is 5.024 at the level of significance .029. While for the f-value obtained from the f-table is 4.16. As the result of ANCOVA, the f-ratio is higher than the f-table, figuring 4.16, meaning that it is significant. It is then obvious that the null hypothesis, stating that compared to the traditional practice, "New Big City Adventure Game" cannot enhance the students' vocabulary mastery, is rejected. In other words, the research hypothesis saying that "New Big City Adventure Game" can effectively enhance the students' vocabulary mastery, is accepted.

DISCUSSION

While the teacher taught the students of the experimental and control groups, the researcher observed the students' responses and enthusiasm throughout the teaching and learning process. During the teaching process done by the teacher, there were some differences that occurred in the two groups. The first difference was about the students' enthusiasm towards the teaching process. Based on the researcher's observation, the students of the control group do not seem as enthusiastic as the students of the experimental group. They were less motivated to learn English. Furthermore, only few students showed participation in the class; the rest of them seemed busy with their own business. However, the students of the experimental group were very enthusiastic and motivated to follow the teaching process done by using "New Big City Adventure Game". The students of the experimental group actively participated in learning English by using "New Big City Adventure Game". It is in line with Huyen and Nga's (2003) statement that the use of game can create motivation for the students to get involved and actively participate in the teaching and learning process. Hence, the use of game in the teaching and learning process can positively change the atmosphere which makes the students feel comfortable to acquire new knowledge. Due to the fact that games bring fun and joy towards the students, it will not make them restless and bored throughout the teaching and learning process as Cahyono & Mukminatien (2011:41) stated. Besides, by using games, the students will keep alert and enjoying themselves so that they focus more on the lesson. Furthermore, the teacher can create various contexts by using games in order to help the students to use language to communicate, exchange information and also express their ideas using the appropriate dictions (Wright, Betteridge, & Buckby,1984).

The statistical data of this study were obtained from the result of the pretest and post-test of the experimental and control groups. After being calculated by using independent t-test, the result showed that the t value obtained from the data is higher than the t value obtained from the table of t values (<6.482), so there is significant different between the performance of the two groups. By then, the researcher had to calculate the gain of the both groups by using ANCOVA on SPSS program. As a result, the f-ratio is higher than the f-table, figuring 4.16, meaning that it is significant. That can be said that the strategy proposed by the researcher is successfully gaining the students' vocabulary mastery.

The result of the data analysis above is in line with Azar's (2012) statement that the students will more easily acquire new knowledge, in this case vocabulary, in such relaxing situation as playing games. It is proven in each meeting of the treatment for the experimental group, the students felt so enjoyable and willingly memorize the vocabulary they got from playing "New Big City Adventure Game". As the result, they gain more vocabulary than the students of the control group.

Based on the result of the students' questionnaire, there are some important points that need to be underlined by the researcher. The first is that the students enjoyed learning English very much by using "New Big City Adventure Game". Moreover, they were interested in memorizing the vocabulary they got from playing the game. Thus, the students felt that they got much vocabulary by playing "New Big City Adventure Game". However, as the Richard-Amato (1998) stated that games can lower anxiety so that it makes the students feel not to be forced to acquire new knowledge. So, although the students were asked to memorize any vocabulary they got from playing the game, they were willingly doing it since they enjoyed the learning process using "New Big City Adventure Game". By then, the students' input can be easily memorized and understood by them. In addition to that, based on the students' opinions on how the English teaching process should be, most of them thought that learning English should be done by using game either. They thought that learning English will be fun and interesting if they learn it by playing game. As stated by Vossoughi and Zargar (2009), games can be a facilitator for the students to learn materials, in this case is English. Hence, games can be said as the most appropriate way to teach English to the students especially for the foreign learner students. So, that is why most students more enthusiasm to learn English by using game.

Since the questions of the teacher's questionnaire were related to the students' questionnaire, the result showed the relation between the students and the teacher's answers. From the teacher and the students' answers, it revealed that "New Big City Adventure Game" brought positive effects towards the students and the teacher. For the teacher, the use of this game made the students paid more attention to the teacher's explanation and they easily acquired the vocabulary she taught.

Apart from the teacher's opinion towards the students' responses during the treatment implemented, there were two important points obtained from the use of "New Big City Adventure Game" in the teaching of vocabulary. The first, not only for reinforcement, this game can be used for enjoyment outside of the class. Due to its practicality, the students will not find it difficult to operate and play this game. Thus, this game can be used not only for having fun, but also for obtaining knowledge and vocabulary simultaneously. Hence, the second important point is that "New Big City Adventure Game" is very beneficial to be used as a media to teach English to the students, especially EFL students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, “New Big City Adventure Game” is effective to enhance the students’ vocabulary mastery. The results showed that the students of the experimental group gained more vocabulary than the students of the control group. This was also showed by the increase scores of post-test of the experimental group. The use of “New Big City Adventure Game” also encourages and motivates the students to enjoy learning English. This was proven from the results of the students’ questionnaire and observation done by the researcher. Moreover, the students of the experimental groups were enthusiastic and actively involved in the teaching and learning process. This is due to the fact that the students of the experimental group were taught by using “New Big City Adventure Game” and the students of the control group were taught traditionally without using “New Big City Adventure Game”.

Teachers must be imaginative since they play a significant role in developing pupils' language proficiency and innovative to find media or strategies that can be used to teach students. As the result of the study, “New Big City Adventure Game” is very beneficial to be used to enhance the students’ vocabulary mastery without burdening them. The other future researcher are hoped to conduct further research can be done in other level of education as comparisons, so that stronger generalization can be made. Furthermore, considering the research findings and the limitation of the study, the tests used for collecting the data should be based on the materials covered in the lesson plan. By then, the results of the tests will reflect the students’ understanding towards the materials and the treatment given.

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