

Improving Students' Vocabulary through Word Tail Game

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Abstract

This classroom action research aim at finding out whether word tail can improve students' vocabulary mastery or not. This research was conducted at SMAN 6 Kota Bengkulu to fix the learning problems in the classroom; the students lack in vocabulary. The research was carried out in tenth grade of senior high school by using word tail game with a qualitative approach. The population of this research were sixty six tenth grade students and the sample of this research were thirty two students. The data was collected using observation sheets. Those were observation of students and teacher activities. This research was analyzed by qualitative and quantitative analysis. The research design of this study was Classroom Action Research (CAR) which used three cycles, and each part consisted of four steps; planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The result showed that the cycle one had got the average (69,62), student was able to express more than 5 sentence or close to 6 sentences so it was necessary to increase the number of vocabulary / sentences. The cycle two had got the average (80,44) meant that they could express 7 to 10 sentences. Then it shown that learning English by using the word tail game could improve students' vocabulary as well as students' writing and develop their knowledge by applying, reflecting and expanding their learning experience. It could form students' self-confidence because students were directly involved in applying their knowledge.

Keywords: teaching strategy; vocabulary mastery; word tail

Introduction

Vocabulary is one of the important skills that need to be taught by teacher at schools. There are important reason for students to master vocabulary. Firstly, it is an important equipment to understand form, phrase, and sentences in a paragraph or more, most of people would not be able to express their opinion, ideas, and thoughts in English without knowing vocabulary. Secondly, it has function to represent words meaning in a reading text, in line with Huyen and Nga (2003: 2) statement that in other to communicate well in a foreign language, students should acquire an adequate number of words and should know how to use them accurately. Moreover, vocabulary is one of the basic things in doing speaking, reading, listening and writing (Syafryadin, 2020; Syafryadin, et al. 2020; Martina, er al. 2020; Dhillon, et al. 2020; Rahmawati, et al. 2019)

Clouston (2012: 3) states that vocabulary is a key of the language being learned, teachers must be sure to get to know their students, their learning goals, vocabulary knowledge, then, teachers should have guidelines for how to teach vocabulary- in class, tutor, etc. Then Richards (2001: 4) states that vocabulary is one of the most obvious components of language and one of the first things applied linguistic turned their intention to.

Students would have some difficulties to know the meaning of what they listen, read as well as to express their thoughts in communicating if they lack in vocabulary. There were some problems related to vocabulary found by the researchers. First, the teachers were mostly confused what teaching methods or techniques should be used. Second, the students did not understand the lesson also found it difficult to comprehend the lesson, due to their lack of vocabulary that came along with the disinterest of learning vocabulary itself.

Based on the condition above, the researchers have found an interesting strategy to solve the problems known as word tail game teaching strategy; word tail is a vocabulary game where students need to make a new word from the last letter of the previous word. This was a simplification game made by the researchers of the scrabble, it does not use scrabble's board and tile, only boardmaker and whiteboard or a piece of paper and a pen.

The researchers chose game as media because it consists of activities which have goals and rules in fun way. There are many advantages using games in learning process; games are always fun for the learners. Games have many advantages for both language teachers and its learners. They support learning the target language when learners are involved in the games and have fun without noticing that they are learning the target language, and furthermore it is a pleasure for the teacher that he presents the language in an enjoyable atmosphere which makes the job powerful. (Gozcu, 2016: 127)

Research Methodology

This research was a classroom action research. It used model of Stephen Kemmis and Mc. Taggart (2014: 113). He states that the critical participatory action research initiatives don't always follow the pattern of a spiral of self-reflection a spiral of cycles of planning, acting and observing, reflecting, re-planning, new action and observation, further reflection, and so on. It used qualitative approach. This classroom action research was carried out at SMAN 6 in Bengkulu City with tenth grade majoring social Sciences students as the subjects due to the number of students were 32 (thirty two) considered quite ideal. It was conducted for two months from September 2018 to October 2018.

This research used three cycles where each cycle used four stages; (1) compiling an action plan, (2) carrying out actions, (3) making observations, (4) making analysis followed by reflection where each cycle used 2 x 45 minutes. Each cycle could be explained

There four activities had been done in cycle one. Preparation of action plans was done for the first step. The researchers compiled an English learning plan based on the syllabus in the oral cycle with the discussion of expressing a simple descriptive monologue using a game system. Then, the researched carried out a plan that has been compiled with the following learning steps: First, at the Introduce stage the teacher the learning objectives, delivering then the students listen to the teacher's information. After that the researchers connected learning with brainstorming about new word formation words from the last letter of the previous word. Next, the researchers observed the activities

to see how far the effectiveness of learning planning was when used the game. And finally, the analysis and reflection data obtained from observations were collected, based on these results the researcher conducted an analysis of the learning that had been carried out then reflected it.

Meanwhile, in cycle two the action plan was prepared based on the results of the analysis of findings and reflections during the activities in cycle one, to get improvements in accordance with the research objectives, namely to improve students' skills in forming new words.

At last the cycle three was carried out based on those previous two cycles, where the teachers as a researcher and an observer as a member jointly analyzed the results of observations in the form of notes on findings during the learning process and then reflected in the form of suggestions and conclusions as well.

There were several data collection tools were used, namely: (a) Student activity observation tools; to monitor how far the students' skills in making words in English are improved. (b) Teacher activity observation tools; to observe how the teacher taught students to improve the skills of making acceptable English words using wordtail games which were also equipped with a note field (field findings). (c) The value document of students' writing skills in the learning process; to determine or measure student skills during the learning process and student readiness before conducting individual assessments. (d) Individual student writing skills value document; This value document was used to determine or measure student skills as a result of individual learning.

The data analysis techniques used were qualitative and quantitative analysis. Qualitative was used to manage data from observations during the learning process, while quantitative analysis is used to process learning outcome data to determine the improvement in students' skills in writing new words in English.

Findings and Discussions

Findings

At first, there were still 40% tenth grade students in SMAN 6 Bengkulu who were not skilled in written English while the other 60% were able to express with an average frequency of two to three sentences only and by copying from a dictionary or textbook (the data was taken from empirical data on students' English assessment documents in the odd semester of this year). To solve this problem, a classroom action research was conducted and a learning plan was compiled using the word tail game which was designed in three learning cycles. Consecutively the results of the research can be explained as follows:

The result was gotten in cycle one shown he students were able to write 5 (five) targeted words in acceptable oral learning, to get the validity of the data, the assessment process needed improvement on assessment criteria in the linguistic aspect to minimize the gap in the results of

students and teachers assessments, so did a deeper explanation for students in understanding the assessment criteria.

Table 1: Assessment of the Learning Process Cycle I
Writing down new words from the given words

No	Nama	Number of Words
1	Albetr Marvo Syafriansah	70
2	Alfrialdi Dwi Aryansyah	68
3	Andreas Valen Sitohang	40
4	Aprilia Dwi Putri	79
5	Aryo Ihsan Prayudha	79
6	Avrinicha Dea Fhamella	79
7	Azri Okta Firnanda	79
8	Bima Kurniawan	78
9	Bimo Afriansyah	68
10	Deka Ramadhan	40
11	Dimas Satriadi Putra	79
12	Dwi Nurul Mulyani	62
13	Efran Suganda	84
14	Fego Liza Juhendro	74
15	Feny Triyani	84
16	Fiki Pratama	79
17	Fredi Ardyansyah	79
18	Ghaimbibie	40
19	Kiko Zurli	100
20	Lutfia Agrinda	70
21	Muhammad Belo	80
22	Muhammad Regan Putra Dirgantara	40
23	Muhammad Rifki	64
24	Nasrul Muhammad Taufik Hidayat	80
25	Nurjestica	80
26	Poni Mailani	70
27	Putri Anggun	68

28	Reyna Fadilla Putri	80
29	Salman Al Farisi	80
30	Sella Salsabila Melly Kweesar	40
31	Sherina	40
32	Stefi Dwi Safitri	75
	Total	2228

The number of students in class X were 32 students. The quantitatively the results of student learning using the word tail game as follows: Average student scores: $2228 : 32 = 69,62$. The average student was able to express more than 5 sentence or close to 6 sentences so it was necessary to increase the number of vocabulary / sentences.

The result was achieved in cycle two was significant. Where the numbers of students in tenth grade social sciences who attended the implementation of cycle two were 27 students while the other five students did not. The average comprehension score: $2172 : 27 = 80,44$. It meant that they could express 7 to 10 sentences. This showed that nearly 27 students were skilled at expressing targeted descriptive monologues in learning.

Table 2: Assessment of the Learning Process Cycle II (Write new words in English)

No	Name	Number of Words
1	Albetr Marvo Syafriansah	80
2	Alfrialdi Dwi Aryansyah	84
3	Andreas Valen Sitohang	00
4	Aprilia Dwi Putri	84
5	Aryo Ihsan Prayudha	80
6	Avrinicha Dea Fhamella	84
7	Azri Okta Firnanda	84
8	Bima Kurniawan	00
9	Bimo Afriansyah	80
10	Deka Ramadhan	80
11	Dimas Satriadi Putra	84
12	Dwi Nurul Mulyani	76
13	Efran Suganda	80
14	Fego Liza Juhendro	70
15	Feny Triyany	76
16	Fiki Pratama	00
17	Fredi Ardyansyah	76
18	Ghaimbibie	84

19	Kiko Zurli	84
20	Lutfia Agrinda	84
21	Muhammad Belo	76
22	Muhammad Regan Putra Dirgantara	76
23	Muhammad Rifki	92
24	Nasrul Muhammad Taufik Hidayat	84
25	Nurjestica	92
26	Poni Mailani	00
27	Putri Anggun	80
28	Reyna Fadilla Putri	76
29	Salman Al Farisi	00
30	Sella Salsabila Melly Kweesar	70
31	Sherina	76
32	Stefi Dwi Safitri	80
	Total	2172

Based on the research results in cycle two, students generally have achieved Discourse Competence for oral English learning activities. The teacher also reviewed learning related to action activities in cycle one by playing a quiz game; some students were asked to demonstrate again what they have gotten.

The teacher then asked students to practice filling in new words on their own based on their thoughts. The activity was continued by assessing the learning process. Qualitatively, during the learning process in this cycle three, all students looked excited and very confident to write more often and the students felt their English vocabulary has improved.

Discussion

At the beginning of the first cycle of learning, all students were interested in the teacher's explanation at the Introducing stage because the teacher provided an explanation of the social functions (life skills) namely the ability to communicate to help students live their daily lives. This learning objective was in accordance with the concept of the 2013 Curriculum.

Learning outcomes obtained by students were not the result of the transfer of student teacher knowledge (Transfer of Learning) or rote memorization, but were the result of students' creativity in constructing their knowledge. Based on these explanations, it showed that activities in playing were able to improve students' skills in using English. It was proven by quantitative data analysis which showed that the value of student learning outcomes was generally above the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM) in English, namely 75. In addition, students' self-confidence, social attitudes, tolerance, and interest in learning for self-actualization were formed.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Learning using the word tail game helped students to learn writing and develop their knowledge and expand their learning experience, it formed students' self-confidence as the students were directly involved in applying their knowledge. With the English learning model using the wordtail game media, students felt happy, confident and students were capable to apply it with their own language that made students felt their spoken English expressing skills have improved.

To find out students' skills in learning, a process assessment and individual assessment were carried out. Learning linguistic competencies, such as sentence structure, could be linked or inserted during the learning process. While the assessment of the learning process or individual assessment referred to acceptable English, namely the achievement of Discourse Competence, with supporting competencies of Actional Competence, Linguistic Competence, Socio cultural Competence and Strategic Competence while additional competencies, namely Affective Competence, used during learning activities.

There are several suggestions for those who would like conducting the same type of research, namely:

1. Before learning, the researcher or teacher needs to motivate students to boost their self-confidence, this motivation can be in the form of simple games, quizzes, songs and so on.
2. Assessment of the learning process is carried out as effectively as possible in order to save time and the Assessment Criteria needs to be explained and trained to students, so that students have the attitude to achieve maximum scores and be able to assess others.
3. Concept maps of essential things will help students learn and practice to achieve competence.
4. The next researchers also can conduct the same research with different types of game to improve the students' vocabulary.

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