THE EFFECT OF USING THE PIRATES OF
THE CARIBBEAN GAME
ON GRADE 5 STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY

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Abstract

In English classes, teachers believe that vocabulary plays an important role in building students' English skills. Unfortunately, they do not give much attention to how to teach vocabulary in an attractive and fun way by using games. Teachers seem to use the old fashioned way of teaching, by giving a word list and asking students to memorize it. This research explored the usage of game, The Pirates of Caribbean Game, in teaching vocabulary to students. Did students taught by using game get better score than those who were taught by word list? In answering this question, the researcher used quasi experimental research, pre-test and post-test given to the control and experimental groups. After giving the treatment for five times, the research finally showed there was no significant difference in using the word list and The Pirates of Caribbean game.

Key words: *vocabulary, word list, The Pirates of Caribbean game, quasi experimental research.*

Introduction

Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary third Edition (2008, p 1624) "Vocabulary is all the words which exist in a particular language or subject."It means that vocabulary has taken an important role in building a language, as Campillo (1995, p 36) stated that vocabulary is a chief component in a language as the enormous mass of meaning carried contextually, and Zhao (2009, p 123) added that vocabulary is the important part in language acquisition. In the English class, teachers considered that vocabulary played the important role in students' English skills development. Alemi (2010) stated that vocabulary has an important role in English language learner's success. Based on McCarthy in Campillo (1995) "No matter how well a student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in a meaningful way" and

Thornbury in Shejbalová (2006, p 2) stated "If you spend most of your time studying grammar, your English will not improve very much. You will see most improvement if you learn more words and expressions.

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You can say very little with grammar, but you can say almost anything with words!"Most English teachers did not put much attention to the importance of teaching vocabulary in attractive way, in order to keep the students attention in acquiring the new language. They tended to teach speaking, reading, writing, and grammar as their main objects in improving students' English skills. They also taught vocabulary, but not in an attractive way, they tended to teach the vocabulary by using a words list, by asking the students to memorize the meaning and executing their understanding by giving vocabulary exercises. In order to improve students' vocabulary skills, most of the English teachers asked their students to learn vocabulary by memory. Teachers believed that learning vocabulary by memory would be so helpful in developing vocabulary skills. Neyadi (2007) cited that memorizing is important in learning the language, and it helped when words are recycled regularly. But Oxford and Scarcella in Nemati (2009, p 14) stated that learning the word list by using "de-contextualized learning" could help students to memorize the vocabulary but students easily tend to forget the memorized words. However, teachers need to consider that students also needed motivation in learning the new words, vocabulary, as Argondizzo in Cakir (2004) cited that students who learn foreign language lessons have not got self-motivation in learning foreign language. Teachers should consider the other strategy that could motivate their students to learn vocabulary through activity, such as games. Nicolson and Williams in Alemi (2010) cited "The games are a form of teaching which may be used in circumstances where ordinary approaches are not well tolerated; when attention is hard to get and harder to keep" and Phillips in Cakir (2004, p 108) mentioned "Games in the language classroom help children to see learning English as enjoyable and rewarding. Playing games in the classroom develops the ability to co-operate, to compete without being aggressive, and to be a good loser." However, teachers needed to select the appropriate games that they wanted to use as their teaching strategy so that the students were able to achieve more. Lightbown and Spada quoted in Neyadi (2007) cited that teachers need to select the game that is suitable for students' age, cultural background and interests, and teacher should understand what kinds of activity that students can experience success. This research was conducted by the researcher who wanted to explore more about the effects of gameson X school students' vocabulary mastery.

Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to answer the following question "Does teaching vocabulary by using games help students to master the vocabulary better than those who use the word list to master the vocabulary?"

The Objective of the Study

The study was intended to explore whether the use of the Pirates of Caribbean game can help students to get higher vocabulary score than those who got the word list.

Theoretical Framework

For students, games used for mastery the vocabulary could make them feel motivated, confident, and less anxious in acquiring vocabulary. The theory used to support this research was based on Krashen's The Affective Filter Hypothesis theory. Krashen (1982, p 30) stated "The Affective Filter hypothesis states how affective factors relate to the second language acquisition process." Moreover, Allen and Friedman(2010, p 2) added "Affective learning involves changes in feelings, attitudes, and values that shape thinking and behavior."

The Significance of the Study

This research was expected, theoretically, to give the deeper information about the effect of using games in students' vocabulary mastery to English teachers and the next researchers who will conduct the same research. Practically, English teachers will be able to use the appropriate and attractive games in teaching vocabulary for their students, and for the next researchers, hopefully, they will be able to use the findings of this research as a mutual reference in conducting the next studies.

Research Design

This research used quasi experimental research non-randomized pre and post control groups, which examined the usage of the vocabulary, "The Pirates of the Caribbean game" and "Words List", in grade five students' vocabulary achievement. The quasi experimental research applied pre-test and post-test for randomized intact classes.

Population and sample

The population of this research was the students of an elementary school located in central Surabaya. As the sample, the researcher chose grade 5 students who were very active in every teaching and learning activity. Grade 5 was divided into three parallel classes, where the researcher chose randomly which class was the try out group, control group, and experimental group.

Vocabulary Teaching Material

The vocabulary material was taken from the Longman Cornerstone reading passages, published by Longman-Pearson, with the title "Writing

a Great Speech" by Dan Ahearn, "One Hot Summer in Philadelphia," by Ann Ponti, "One Out of Many" by Bob McCall, "Springer Goes Home" by Mark Kachur, and "Biomes All Around the World" by Tiayana Markson.

Treatment

The treatment for the experiment and control group was conducted into seven steps. There were Pre-Test, five times teaching vocabulary for both groups, and to finalize the treatment, Post Test for both groups. The pre-test was given for fifteen (15) minutes for twenty (20) items of filling in the blanks task. The treatment was conducted for sixty (60) minutes of teaching for five weeks. And, the post test was given for fifteen (15) minutes for twenty (20) items of filling in the blank task.

Instrument

The instrument for this research was a vocabulary test. In the form of filling in the blanks test containing 20 new words which most students were unfamiliar with and were taken from the passages. The result of the pre-test was not distributed to the students in order to avoid the invalid result for the post test. The post test was the same test as the pre-test. The pre-test had been given before the subjects were given the treatment. To get the result of the research, how effective the treatment was given, the researcher gave the post-test to the control group and experimental group.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the researcher compared the gain score of thepre and post-test, which was the result of Post-test – Pre-test, in order to examine how the treatment work in developing students' vocabulary mastery. As Mueller (1992, p 37) stated "Use of both a pre-test and a post-test allows the researcher to measure change associated with the treatment."

Mueller also added that the usage of T Test is for testing the null hypotheses, it means if there was no difference in the experimental group and control group after receiving the treatment, so the null hypotheses would be accepted. On the other hand, if there was a significant difference for both groups after receiving the treatment, so alternative hypothesis would be accepted.

Results and Discussion
Results

On the contrary, the t-test result for the post control and post experimental showed that there was no significant difference between these two groups. The result is as follows:

Table

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	Game	*Word List*
Mean	12.5	7.173913043
Variance	194.6428571	263.2411067
Observations	22	23
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	43	
t Stat	1.182329911	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.121785822	
t Critical one-tail	1.681070704	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.243571644	
t Critical two-tail	2.016692173	

Discussion

The slight difference between experimental group and control group showed by the data above indicated that game could also be another teaching strategy for English teachers in delivering vocabulary or new words to students. Even though, there was no significant difference between experimental group and control group, the usage of game could be another way out for teachers to make the class livelier. As in games, students were required to acquire the language in a different way. The games were also able to make students enjoy the lessons and give fun in learning that make students achieve the goal easier. As Yolageldili & Arikan (2011, p 220) stated "Learners are excited by competition because the question of who will win or lose remains unanswered until the game is over. Similarly, games' making learning easier in an enjoyable way suggests that games are full of fun which leads to successful learning."

On the other hand, teacher also needed to pay attention to the aim of the game given, such as what kinds of game, which game is suitable with the material given, or what does the teacher want from the students after playing the game.As in Pirates of the Caribbean game students learnt new words from their new language in fun and attractive way. They learnt how to motivate themselves, be confident, and lower their anxiety level. Pirates of Caribbean game used in learning new words proves the Affective Filter Hypotheses theory by Krashen in 1982 that motivation, self-confidence, and low anxiety were able to make students acquired new language, where students in experimental group were also able to learn new words from their new language by using game. However, the comparison used in this study was to test the hypothesis that students who

learnt vocabulary by using game, had a better score than those who learnt vocabulary by using word list. From the data shown above, it accepted the null hypothesis for this study that there was no significant difference between those groups. There were some reasons: First, the students' vocabulary level that was shown by the pre-test score data was high, as there were some students, in both groups, who were able to achieve the perfect score of 100, in doing the vocabulary pre-test. Second, after the pre-test was over students tended to cross-check their answers with their friends or tried to find the real meaning in the dictionary. Third, since the vocabulary post-test contained the same items, the students who had done the cross checking were able to answer the vocabulary items easily. Fourth, in playing Pirates of the Caribbean game some students helped their friends by whispering the answer to their teammates. It made some students couldn't learn by themselves since their friends helped them.Fifth, by using word list, students in control group, were able to learn the second language easily, as they learnt the words by memory. They just needed to read and memorize the words and its meanings without paying more attention to the game instructions. Sixth, students in the experimental group seemed difficult to follow the game instructions that made students couldn't play and learn well. Comparing to the control group which successfully memorized the meanings of the words in the first meeting, this experimental group were busy with the rules and instructions, as some students couldn't follow the game well.

Conclusion

The analysis and discussion show that there was no significant difference between the experimental group and control group. The result of the t-test shows that there was no significant difference for those who were using the game and the word list in learning new vocabulary.
However, the use of games or word list in teaching new vocabulary depends on the teacher's teaching style, what students' need in the class, and the culture of the class itself. Moreover, game is not a method, but it is only an activity that may help or reinforce students to learn thing in fun and attractive way.

Suggestion

Based on what have been discussed in this study, there are some suggestions that might help the teachers in using this game and other researchers to do the future study.

For teachers who want or plan to use this game, The Pirates of the Caribbean, there are some things that must be put on the list. First, this game is very competitive which needs the teachers' extra attention, as students will probably yell, shout, and even mock their friends. To overcome this situation, teachers may give additional policy or rules in doing this game, such as giving warning cards for students who cannot

control themselves in class during the game. Second, teachers should pay attention to the time given to the students to answer the meaning of a word. Students may be given around 10 seconds to give a meaning of the word given. Third, teachers may suggest the group for not only attacking a certain group, but try to attack the other groups in order to give a chance to the others to play.

For the next researcher who is interested in conducting a similar research, there are some suggestions to do. First, the game, Pirates of Caribbean has not been tested for teaching vocabulary in other levels, such as grade 4 or even 3. Second, the next researcher may use this game to be tested in teaching reading or even a speaking class. Third, the researcher may conduct further study for this Pirates of Caribbean, in what kind of vocabulary this game is suitable for. Besides, some further studies are needed to give deeper understanding to the teachers and educators, to open their horizon to use other vocabulary games in their classroom activities, since games are able to create motivation, self-confidence, and lower anxiety for students in learning a new language.

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