**INCREASING VOCABULARY MASTERY OF THE SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS THROUGH WORD CHAIN GAME**

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this research is to find out whether students’ vocabulary can be increased by word chain game or not. The research was pre experimental design.The population was the seventh grade student and selected by using purposive sampling technique. The instrument of data collection was pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was used to find out students’ prior knowledge in vocabulary before the treatment while post-test was used to measure whether the method could increase students’ vocabulary mastery or not.The result of the data shows that the mean score of pre-test is 30.6 and post-test is 63.6. The researcher found the t-counted (9.56) was higher than t-table (1.725). It proves that the research hypothesis was accepted. In conclusion, word chain gamecan increase vocabulary mastery of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Tinombo.

**Keywords**: Increasing Vocabulary Mastery, Word Chain Game.

**ABSTRAK**

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah penguasaan kosakata siswa dapat meningkat menggunakan permainan kata berantai atau tidak. Metode penelitian menggunakan pre-experimental desain.Populasinyasiswakelastujuhdanmemilihsampelmenggunakanpurposive sampling teknik.Alat yang digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data yaitu pre-test dan post-test. Pre-test digunakan untuk mengetahui kosakata awal siswa sebelum mendapat perlakuan sedangkan post-test digunakan untuk mengukur apakah metode ini dapat meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa atau tidak. Hasilnya menunjukkan nilai rata rata dari kelas eksperimen adalah 30.6 dan nilai rata rata post-test adalah 60.6. Penelitimenemukanbahwa t-counted(9.56) lebihtinggi disbanding t-table(1.725). Ini membuktikan bahwa dugaan awal penelitian diterima. Kesimpulannya, permainan kata berantai dapat meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa kelas tujuh SMP Negeri 1 Tinombo.*

***Kata Kunci****: Meningkatkan Kosakata, Permainan Kata Berantai.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Generally, in Indonesian school still pays attention to grammar than other components. The language teachers think that students do not need help to increase their own vocabulary in the classroom, students will be able to learn the words by themselves. Sometimes teachers assume that they do not have to teach vocabulary dominantly before their students master grammar. The reason is they feel feared that students will make mistakes how a word is used in the right context. It means that student should know the function of the words in English sentences. Obviously, grammar is emphasized than vocabulary itself.

Vocabulary is all about words in a language. A language can not exist without words. When we use a language, automatically we use words every time. If we know a language well, we know how to use the word in oral and written forms. It means that vocabulary is acore component that develops human communication. Sometimes English teachers only focuson how to make students can speak fluently. In fact, students will be able to speak fluently if they have stock of vocabularies.

Vocabulary becomes a crucial tool for foreign language learners since lack of vocabulary will be an obstacle in communication. Having vocabulary is not only important but also a key to mastering a language. It plays a big role because it develops their language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As Wilkins (1972 : 111) concludes, “Without grammar little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.” It is more difficult to students to communicate each other without having vocabularies than grammar.

Most of students know very well how important vocabulary is. They know that they can master English if they have rich of vocabulary. It means that vocabulary is a key to students to understand what they read, listen, and to communicate successfully with other. Similar to Nation (2001:114), he states that in learning English, vocabulary is an essential thing in all language skills. These statement indicates that the richer vocabulary they have, they will be good in expressing their ideas or thought to other. It means that vocabulary can be influenced their language skills.

Some students face some problems in studying English. One of them is lack of vocabulary. Having limited vocabulary makes them feel unconfident in expressing their ideas and influences students’ language skill development.As Zhinghong (2000:18) defines,

”Vocabulary is the basic unit of language form. without a sufficient vocabulary, one cannot communicate effectively or ideas. Having a limited vocabulary is also a barrier that preview form learning in foreign language. If learners does not know how to extend their vocabulary, their gradually lose what in learning.”

In conclusion, vocabulary is such an important aspect in learning language. It will facilitate someone uses a language in written and spoken forms. Furthermore, Palmberg (1986:18) states that mastering vocabulary would be useful because students:1) are able to recognise it in spoken and written forms; 2) they are able to recall it at will; 3) are able to related it to approriate objects and concepts; 4) can use it in the appropriate grammatical forms; 5) can spell it correctly; 6) know in what way it can be combined with other words.

There are eight part of speech which are classified based on their function in a sentence.They are noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, and determiner. According to Thornbury (2002:3), words are divided into eight part of speech, those are as follows:

a. Noun : reference to an object, such as: bits, pieces, record, player.

b. Pronoun : personal, possessive, reflexive, reciprocal, such as: I,you, they

c. Verb : predication of an action. Such as: like, looking, doing, to look

d. Adjective : modification by a property, such as: old, second, new.

e. Adverb : a word which modifies the meaning of a verb, an adjective oranother verb, such as: up, cheerfully, loudly.

f. Preposition : a word placed before a noun or a pronoun to show in whatrelation the person or thing denoted by it stands in regard tosomething else, such as: on, as, in.

g. Conjunction :a word which merely joins together sentences, and sometimes words, such as: and, or, but.

h. Determiner : a word that comes before a noun and points it out without describing it the way that an adjective does, such as: the, a, and an.

In line with the statements above, the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Tinombo had several problems, those are:first, they were weak in speaking because they are lack of vocabulary to express their opinions. It makes them feel not confident to say their idea. Second, their problem was that they forgot the meaning of new words soon after they have looked a dictionary. Third, they were bored in using same expressions to state their thoughts. Fourth, they were confused in how a word is pronounced. Last, they were uninterested in learning process that the teacher uses monotonous technique.

To solve students problem, the researcher applied a game. Through game, it is expected that students would be more interested and more active in learning vocabulary.Game is an entertaining activity or contest that has rules. “Game is form of play or sport with rules (Oxford Dictionary, 2008:181)*.”* Another definition is given by Wright, Betteridge, Buckby (2006:1), they state, “Game is an activity which is entertaining and engaging, often challenging and an activity in which the learners play and usually interact with others.”

Using game as a technique is not a new thing. Many researchers had done their researches by using classroom games in teaching English for young learners. According to Kuzu and Ural (2010), "when games and education are combined, it can be educative and education environments can be entertaining.” The learners who learned with the use of games, gain positive attitudes and can be more motivated while learning

A good teacher has to make the students enjoy and be interested in learning process by preparing various and up-to-date techniques. Many ways can be used to teach vocabulary in the classroom. They may use a game to make students interested. One of them is word chain game. This game facilitated them to enchance their vocabulary and recall what they have already learnt in the classroom. In group, they are given chance to write down a word that they know and already taught. Therefore, this game is expected to solve students’ problem especially for lack of vocabulary.

One of popular classroom activities is chain game. It has various game such as sentence chain, word chain, story chain, etc. It is kind of game which has simple rule. First student should mention one word and the last word becomes first letter to next student. The word game designed for kids to build and enchance their vocabulary in which a first students begins the game by mentioning any word he or she knows.A category of word is usually chosen. There is time limited such as two until five minutes and a word cannot be repeated in one round.Example: bir**d** – **d**o**g**−**g**iraff**e**−**e**lephant, etc.According to Holden (1999:6):

“This is a variation on the Japanese game ‘shiritori’. Students try to connect the words by the way they are spelled, matching the last letter of a word with the first letter of the following word. For example: career, relocate, executive, entertain, neighbour, where each new word has as its first letter the last letter of the previous word. They can use any words that they know, but try to include in the chain all the new words that they are learning.”

According toSperling (2009),the ways to increase vocabulary byusing word chain game are: 1) dividing the classroom into some groups; 2) dividing the whiteboard into the members of groups; 3) one of the students from each group comes up to the whiteboard and give them time to write a word; 4) the next student from each team comes up and writes another word that begins with the last letter of the previous word; 5) giving a time limit about 5 until 10 minutes; 6) the group which has the most words written on the board correctly wins.

Word chain is a kind of game purposing to improve the player’s ability in mastering vocabulary of words. There are some advantages of using word chain game,they are :

1. the teacher will get picture of the students mastery of English vocabulary so that s/he can arrange the next planning to get better. Teacher can find how far the students’ ability in mastering English vocabulary that they already learnt.
2. it will increase the students sportiveness and responsibility. They are taught to accept their loses without arguing. They will examine mistake that they made and understand how to make correct one.
3. the game will train the students to be more discipline, because they are not allowed to interrupt when the game is in process. They will know the game become a bad if there are students argue or interrupt in playing.
4. it makes the students more interested to learn vocabulary.
5. all students have to participate in playing game.
6. it can be easy to remind their vocabulary.
7. their new words will stand longer in their mind.

However, word chain game has disadvantages such as students have to focus on the last letter that their friends mention previously. It will make them to think spontaneously about a new word and they might be nervous.

Using game as a technique makes the students can be more motivated and interested. Applying game is useful in learning process since it is educative and entertaining. Word chain game designed for kids to build and enchance their vocabulary in which a first student begins the game by mentioning any word he or she knows. The last letter of previous word become a first letter to the next student. This game makes students’ vocabulary stand longer in their mind because they have to recall what they already learnt. It also provides students to interact and communicate because all the students participate in playing game.

**METHOD**

This research was a pre- experimental research design. It used one group pre-test and post-test. It aimed at finding out whether using word chain game is effective in increasing vocabulary mastery or not. This group was given pre-test before treatment and post-test after treatment as proposed by Arikunto (2006:85).

The population was the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Tinombo. There were four parallel classes consisted of 88 students which can be seen below:

**Table 1.**Population of Sample

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Class | Number of Students |
| VII A | 21 |
| VII B (Experimental group) | 24 |
| VII C | 21 |
| VII D | 22 |
| Total | 88 students |

Sample is a small number of population that are selected by the researcher purposively .and they were students of VII B. The English teacher also recommended that VIIB should be experimental group because they have some problems especially lack of vocabulary. The researcher only took one class as the experimental group.

Related to the title, Increasing Vocabulary Mastery of The Seventh Grade Students at SMP Negeri 1 TinomboThrough Word Chain Game, the dependent variable is vocabulary mastery of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Tinombo, while the independent variable is word chain game.

The instrument of this research was test. It consisted of pre-test and post-test. Pre-test was given to assess students’ vocabulary prior knowledge before the students in the experimental group was taught by using word chain game. Meanwhile, post-test was used to measure whether the use of word chain game can increase students’ vocabulary mastery or not. Types of tests given were multiple choice, matching, and completing word. Each test has ten items. It has one score of each correct answer.

The treatment was conducted after giving the pre-test to the students. The researcher applied word chain game as a technique in the treatment to the students of experimental group.There were eight meetings to both groups which had same topics. After teaching vocabulary, at the end, the researcher asked students to make some group and play word chain game to recall what they had already learnt. This game is designed for English young learner to build and enchance their vocabulary in which a first student begins the game by mentioning any wordhe or she knows. The last letter of previous word becomes a first letter to the next student.

**FINDINGS**

In this current study, the researcher collected the data by using test. The result of pre-test and post-test is the instrument to prove the technique is effective or not. The researcher tested the students in experimental group before and after the treatment.

The researcher gave the pre-test to the students in order to assess students’ vocabulary prior knowledge before she did the treatment. The researcher also gave the pre-test to the control group to compare their knowledge.It consisted of multiple choice, matching, and completing word. Each test has ten items. It has one score of each correct answer. The content of test vocabulary for the seventh grade students that contains noun, verb, and adjective.After finding out the scores of groups, the researcher calculated the individual score.The result of pre-test was presented in the table 2:

**Table 2.**The Result of Pre-test

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Initials | Kind of Test | | | Total Score | Pre test |
| Multiple Choice | Matching | Completing |
| 1 | AA | 9 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 30 |
| 2 | AL | 4 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 20 |
| 3 | FER | 5 | 5 | 1 | 11 | 36 |
| 4 | FA | 3 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 26 |
| 5 | FID | 3 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 20 |
| 6 | HA | 2 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 23 |
| 7 | IM | 3 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 30 |
| 8 | LA | 5 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 33 |
| 9 | LI | 6 | 8 | 6 | 20 | 66 |
| 10 | MO | 4 | 0 | 5 | 9 | 30 |
| 11 | MR | 5 | 4 | 2 | 11 | 36 |
| 12 | NF | 4 | 5 | 3 | 12 | 40 |
| 13 | RI | 6 | 2 | 0 | 8 | 26 |
| 14 | RL | 3 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 20 |
| 15 | SA | 4 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 26 |
| 16 | SK | 2 | 8 | 3 | 13 | 43 |
| 17 | SI | 3 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 20 |
| 18 | SIS | 4 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 30 |
| 19 | SR | 5 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 33 |
| 20 | TIA | 4 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 26 |
| 21 | ZA | 5 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 30 |
|  | Total | 89 | 68 | 38 | 195 | 644 |

Based on the table above, the highest score is 66 and the lowest score is 20. It means that they had lack of vocabulary. The prove is many students were failed especially in matching and completing word. The researcher found that the students who had correct answer in completing word is only 21%. In matching word, there is only 33% who can answer. In multiple choice, the students who had correct answer is 43%.After getting the total score of the students, the researcher counted the students’ mean score of the pre-test from the experimental group. The result of pre-test is 30.6.

The treatment was conducted after giving the pre-test to the students. The researcher applied word chain game as a technique in the treatment for the students of experimental group. There were eight meetings to teach vocabulary mastery. Each meeting was focused on one part of speech such as noun and the next meeting was verb. Each meeting has different topic which is suitable for students’ textbook, for example; things, jobs, public places, and so on.The result of post-test was presented in the following table:

**Table 3.**The Result of Post-test

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Initials | Kind of Test | | | Total Score | Post test |
| Multiple Choice | Matching | Completing |
| 1 | AA | 10 | 8 | 0 | 18 | 60 |
| 2 | AL | 9 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 30 |
| 3 | FER | 9 | 10 | 6 | 25 | 83 |
| 4 | FA | 9 | 10 | 1 | 20 | 66 |
| 5 | FID | 10 | 6 | 2 | 18 | 60 |
| 6 | HA | 9 | 10 | 1 | 20 | 66 |
| 7 | IM | 10 | 8 | 0 | 18 | 60 |
| 8 | LA | 10 | 4 | 4 | 18 | 60 |
| 9 | LI | 10 | 8 | 0 | 18 | 60 |
| 10 | MO | 9 | 8 | 1 | 18 | 60 |
| 11 | MR | 10 | 8 | 0 | 18 | 60 |
| 12 | NF | 10 | 1 | 7 | 18 | 60 |
| 13 | RI | 8 | 10 | 0 | 18 | 60 |
| 14 | RL | 8 | 8 | 2 | 18 | 60 |
| 15 | SA | 10 | 10 | 4 | 24 | 80 |
| 16 | SK | 10 | 10 | 6 | 26 | 86 |
| 17 | SI | 10 | 10 | 6 | 26 | 86 |
| 18 | SIS | 9 | 7 | 2 | 18 | 60 |
| 19 | SR | 10 | 6 | 2 | 18 | 60 |
| 20 | TIA | 10 | 3 | 5 | 18 | 60 |
| 21 | ZA | 10 | 3 | 5 | 18 | 60 |
|  | Total | 200 | 148 | 54 | 402 | 1337 |

After doing the treatment, the researcher gave the post test to experimental group. It is needed to compare the experimental students’result in pre-test and post-test. It aimed to find out whether using word chain game is effective in increase students’ vocabulary mastery or not.

By looking at the result above, the highest score is 83 and the lowest score is 30. The student who had correct answer in completing word is 25 %,matching word is 70 %, and multiple choice is 95%.

The researcher then calculated the mean score of the post-test. It was found the mean score is 63.6. It shown that there were difference between both result of the tests. Students’ mean score in pre-test is 30.6 is lesser than mean score in post-test. These indicates that students’ achievement increases after treatment.

In order to know the significant difference of the students’ score between both tests, the researcher computed deviation and squared deviation which can be seen as follows:

**Table 4**. Deviation of Pre-test and Post-test

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Initials | Pre test | Post test | Deviation |  |
| 1 | AA | 30 | 60 | 30 | 900 |
| 2 | AL | 20 | 30 | 10 | 100 |
| 3 | FER | 36 | 83 | 47 | 2209 |
| 4 | FA | 26 | 66 | 40 | 1600 |
| 5 | FID | 20 | 60 | 40 | 1600 |
| 6 | HA | 23 | 66 | 43 | 1849 |
| 7 | IM | 30 | 60 | 30 | 900 |
| 8 | LA | 33 | 60 | 27 | 729 |
| 9 | LI | 66 | 60 | -6 | 36 |
| 10 | MO | 30 | 60 | 30 | 900 |
| 11 | MR | 36 | 60 | 24 | 576 |
| 12 | NF | 40 | 60 | 20 | 400 |
| 13 | RI | 26 | 60 | 34 | 1156 |
| 14 | RL | 20 | 60 | 40 | 1600 |
| 15 | SA | 26 | 80 | 54 | 2916 |
| 16 | SK | 43 | 86 | 43 | 1849 |
| 17 | SI | 20 | 86 | 66 | 4356 |
| 18 | SIS | 30 | 60 | 30 | 900 |
| 19 | SR | 33 | 60 | 27 | 729 |
| 20 | TIA | 26 | 60 | 34 | 1156 |
| 21 | ZA | 30 | 60 | 30 | 900 |
|  | Total | 644 | 1337 | 693 | 27361 |

Based on the calculation,the researcher computedthe mean deviation of the pre-test and posttest in experimental group in order to find out the significant difference between result of both tests. The researcher continued to calculate the sum-squared deviation. The sum-squareddeviation of the experimental group is 4492

To prove whether the hypothesis of this research is accepted or rejected, the researcher needs to test it based on the result of the data analysis. There are two standard criteria of acceptance and rejection that if the tcountedis higher than ttable, the hypothesis is accepted. In other word, the use of word chain game is effective to increase students’ vocabulary mastery. If the tcountedis lesser than ttable, it means that the hypothesis is rejected and the use of this method is not effective to increase students’ vocabulary mastery.

After obtaining the sum-squared the researcher needs to analyze the data in order to find out the significant difference between both groups by using tcounted formula. The researcher tested the tcountedwith the table by using the level of significance 0.05. Degree of freedom (df) of the table is N–1= 21-1=20. The researcher found that the value of ttableis 1.72. Meanwhile, the value of tcounted is 9.56.

The researcher tested the hypothesis by comparing the values of tcounted and ttable. Based on that result, the researcher concludes that hypothesis of this research is accepted since the value of tcounted is higher than the value ofttable.It indicated that the use of word chain game increased vocabulary mastery of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Tinombo.

**DISCUSSION**

This study aims to increase vocabulary mastery of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1Tinombo through word chain game which is focused on three part of speech such as noun, verb, and adjective.The first step in conducting this research was to give the pre-test to the students. There were three kinds of test; multiple choice, completing, and matching words. Each test has ten items and one score of each correct answer.

The researcher found that they had lack of vocabulary, it was known from the result of their pre-test. Commonly, many students were failed in completing and matching words. They could not complete a text well based on the category of words (noun, verb, and adjective) and they could not match some words for instance matching job and the place with a thing and its function. The researcher found that the students who had correct answer in completing word is only 21%. In matching word, there is only 33% who can answer. In multiple choice, the students who had correct answer is 43%.

After having the pre-test results, the researcher conducted treatment to the experimental .First, the researcher prepared the material includes lesson plan, attendance list, etc. There were eight meetings. Each meeting focused on one part of speech so that at the last meeting was reviewed the previous meetings. After explaining the material, the researcher told rules of word chain game and how to play it.

Next, the researcher divided students into some groups and asked them to play word chain game. There were some problems that she faced for instance; the students should run in playing this game so that the class sounded noisy, they could not make a chain word if there were z,y,o,q, and x letters.

After conducting the treatment, the researcher gave post-test to experimental groups. The post-test result of experimental group is higher than pre-test result. It can be seen that the mean score of pre-test is 30.6 and post-test result is 63.6. The student who had correct answer in completing word is 25 %, matching word is 70 %, and multiple choice is 95%. There is a significant improvement which can be seen students progress in both tests.

However, this method is effective to increase students’ vocabulary since there were an improvement of experimental group. It is also proved that tcounted (9.56) is higher than ttable (1.72). It means that the hypothesis is accepted. In other word, this method gives an improvement to the students. Based on the result of pre-test, there was different score which indicated that the students had more vocabulary particularly on the noun, verb, and adjective as stated in scope of this research.

This current research had same result to the previous studies which have been done by Izzah. The finding of Izzah’s study shownthat the students’ vocabulary improved successfully through word chain game.The average result of the students’ score in cycle I was 64.4 and in cycle II was 76.1.It proves that using word chain game as a technique can increase students vocabulary mastery.

The second study have been done by Nikmah. As the result shows, there was a significant improvement of the students in vocabulary mastery by using chain word game. The percentage of the student score was 66.7% and cycle 2 was 90.5%. It means that the implementation of chain word game improved the students’ vocabulary mastery.

**CONCLUSION**

Main problems that are faced by some students are lack of vocabulary and they did not motivated to learn English. Having lack of vocabulary will be a problem in communication since vocabulary is a key to mastering a language. To overcome this problem, the researcher applied an interesting technique namely word chain game.

By considering to the result of test, the researcher concludes, firstly, the use of word chain game give an improvement to the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Tinombo It can be seen the tcounted(9.56) is higher than ttable (1.72). It means that the hypothesis of this research is rejected.

Secondly, the students’ vocabulary mastery increases. It is shown by the results of the test, the pre-test’s mean score of the experimental group is 30.66 while post-test is 63.66. However the students’ achievement is satisfied enough since the post-test of experimental group has higher score than pre-test one. It is found that most of the students have a significant progress.

Students are easy to remind their vocabulary by playing word chain game, students make fewer mistakes in spelling words, make few mistakes in pronouncing all the words provided and are able to use words in simple sentence .

Next, word chain game is proven to be able toimprove students’ motivation. Their motivation improves during class activities. It can be seen from the students were more focus edto the lesson. The students were interested in the teacher explanation.They seemed enthusiastic with the lesson, they dared to answer questions, asked questions, and got involved actively in the teaching learning process.

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