

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher provides about several essential components that serve as the foundation of the study. It begins with the background of the research, which explains the general and specific problems that led to investigation. Then, the formulation of the research problem clearly states the main question to be answered. The researcher objective outlines the aim of conducting this study. The significance of the researcher highlights the potential benefits for future researchers. The scope and limitations clarify the focus and boundaries of the study. Lastly, the definition of key terms provides clear explanations of important concepts used throughout the research.

A. Background of the Research

Mastering English vocabulary is a crucial aspect of language learning, particularly for early 8th-grade students. Vocabulary functions as the foundation of language use, enabling learners to comprehend texts, express ideas, and engage in communication both in spoken and written forms. Without adequate vocabulary mastery, students will find it difficult to understand reading texts, follow instructions, and construct proper sentences, which in turn affects their overall language proficiency.

In the context of Indonesian education, especially at the junior high school level, vocabulary mastery plays a significant role in supporting students' understanding of various text types in the curriculum, including

functional texts such as narrative texts. However, in practice vocabulary learning is often neglected or taught in monotonous ways such as memorizing word lists without context or repeating dictionary definitions resulting in limited retention and low student engagement. This issue become more evident at **SMPN 2 Sumbergempol**, particularly among students of **class VIII**. They tend to rely heavily on translation, have difficulty recognizing word meanings in context, and are less motivated to learn vocabulary through conventional method. Furthermore, the learning atmosphere often lacks variation, making passive and less involved in the learning process.

During this pivotal stage in their education, students are transitioning from basic language skills to more advanced proficiency. Effective vocabulary instruction is essential not only for enhancing students' communication skills but also for improving their comprehension of English texts. A robust vocabulary allows students to express themselves more precisely, engage in more sophisticated conversations, and understand more complex readings, all of which are vital skills in their academic journey and beyond.

Jean Piaget proposed a developmental psychology theory related to cognitive aspects. According to Piaget (1969), children learn from their surroundings by building upon their existing knowledge and interacting with the environment around them. Through these interactions, they take action to solve problem, which becomes part of the learning process. Piaget

(1969) identified four stages of child development: the sensorimotor stage (from birth to 2 years old), the preoperational stage (2 to 8 years old), the concrete operational stage (8-11 years old), and the formal operational stage (11 to 15 years old). By understanding these stages, we can determine the developmental phases of high school children aged 12 to 15 years.¹

Among the various methods of vocabulary instruction, using word games has been recognized as one of the most engaging and interactive approaches to improve vocabulary acquisition. These games provide a dynamic way for students to encounter and use new words in a fun and memorable context, which can significantly aid retention and understanding. Word games create a low-pressure environment where students can experiment with language, make mistakes, and learn from them without the fear of formal assessment.² However, traditional vocabulary learning methods, such as memorization and translation, often fail to engage students effectively. Students tend to find these methods monotonous, leading to low retention and lack of motivation in learning English. Thornbury (2002) asserts that “Without grammar, very little can be conveyed, but without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed.” This

¹ Cognitive Development and Piaget Development, “Zy Zyxw Zy Zyxwvut” 2 (1964).

² Manuel E Caingcoy, “Journal of World Englishes and Educational Practices (JWEPP) Research Capability of Teachers: Its Correlates, Determinants and Implications for Continuing Professional Development” (2024): 7–16.

statement highlights the importance of vocabulary mastery in language acquisition.³

Therefore, an appropriate pedagogical approach is essential for an effective teaching and learning process. There are several techniques for teaching vocabulary, including the use of pictures, songs, games, and further on. One engaging method vocabulary learning is the use of games, such as Cards. Wright et al. (2006) state that games provide an interactive way for students to acquire and retain new words. Charades, in particular, involves pantomiming words to convey their meanings, helping students connect physical actions with vocabulary.⁴ Cards unlike else charades games, requires miming several elements of a phrase, according to Hidayati. The game's activity in physical activity by using gestures.⁵

This game encourages students to think creatively about how to express ideas without using verbal language, thereby reinforcing their understanding of the words. For early 8th-grade students, who are still developing their linguistic skills, charades can be particularly beneficial. It helps them to connect physical actions with vocabulary, making abstract words more concrete and easier to recall. Additionally, acting out words

³ Por Felipe Risi, “가족식사_Reaction Paper” (2015).

⁴ ROBERT J. BLAKE and GABRIEL GUILLÉN, “Games for Language Learning,” *Brave New Digital Classroom* 4, no. 2 (2021): 131–148.

⁵ Nur Hidayati, “The Use of Charade Game to Teach Vocabulary (An Experimental Study of the Seventh Graders of MTs . Miftahul Khoirot Branjang in the Academic Year of 2014 / 2015),” *Journal of English Language Teaching* 5, no. 1 (2016): 1–5.

helps to cement them in students' memories through the use of physical movement, which can be particularly effective for kinesthetic learners.⁶

Therefore, charades can enhance students' ability to infer meaning from context, a critical skill for reading comprehension. As students watch their peers act out words, they learn to use visual clues and contextual information to deduce meanings, which mirrors strategies used in reading comprehension. This skill of making educated guesses based on context is invaluable, as it allows students to navigate unfamiliar texts more effectively. Additionally, this game promotes collaborative learning, as students work together to guess the words and discuss the actions, fostering a supportive classroom environment where peers help each other learn.⁷

Incorporating word games like charades into vocabulary instruction not only makes learning more enjoyable but also addresses different learning styles. Some students may benefit more from visual and kinesthetic learning experiences, which charades effectively provide. This inclusive approach recognizes that students learn in varied ways and tailor instruction to meet these diverse needs, promoting a more equitable learning environment.

⁶ Muhammad Fauzi Bafadal and Humaira Humaira, "The Use of Charades Games in Teaching Vocabulary to the Junior High School Students," *Linguistics and Elt Journal* 5, no. 1 (2019): 14.

⁷ Aulia Rahmah and Yuli Astutik, "EnJourMe (English Journal of Merdeka): Culture, Language, and Teaching of English Charades Game: Does It Affect Students' Learning on English Vocabulary?," *English Journal of Merdeka): Culture, Language, and Teaching of English* 5, no. 1 (2020): 75–83.

Furthermore, word games can be easily adapted to different proficiency levels and learning objectives. For instance, cards can be used to reinforce specific thematic vocabulary, such as words related to nature, emotions, or historical events, aligning with the broader curriculum. This flexibility allows teachers to integrate vocabulary instruction seamlessly into their lesson plans, ensuring that it complements rather than competes with other learning goals.

Therefore, games enhance communication skills, improve comprehension, and make learning enjoyable, thus fostering a more profound and lasting understanding of the English language. By making vocabulary learning interactive and fun, educators can inspire a love of language in their students, equipping them with the linguistic tools they need to succeed academically and in their future endeavors. The incorporation of such dynamic teaching strategies underscores the importance of innovative approaches in education, ensuring that students are not only learners but also enthusiastic participants in their educational journey. Ernawati (2021) found that studies focused on senior high school students, and few have explored the impact of Cards on younger learners in junior high school setting.⁸

⁸ Ahmad Zuhri Rosyidi and Atika Salman Paris, "The Effectiveness Of Using Word Cards As A Media On Learning Vocabulary For The Tenth Graders Of Ma Nw Sikur," *Tut Wuri Handayani : Jurnal Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan* 1, no. 2 (2022): 54–60.

B. Formulation of Research Problem

1. Is there any effect of using charades word games on students' vocabulary at eighth grade of SMPN 2 Sumbergempol?
2. How does students' English vocabulary mastery compare before and after the implementation of the Charades word games?

C. Purposes of the Research

Based on the research question, the purpose is to investigate the impact of the Charades word game on 8th grade students' vocabulary mastery of English vocabulary at SMPN 2 Sumbergempol. Specially, to determine whether the game identify supporting and hindering factors in its implementation, and compare student vocabulary mastery before and after using the game. This comprehensive approach seeks to delve into the ultimate effectiveness of interactive learning methods in language education.

D. Significance of the Research

This researcher hopes that the result of this study gives contributions for:

1. Theoretical Benefit

After conducting the research, the researcher hopes that the results of the study will enrich the body of knowledge related to using charades games for teaching vocabulary.

2. Practical Benefits

For Future Researchers:

This research is expected to provide new insight for future researchers to conduct better studies on similar teaching and learning cases. It can serve as a reference for studies on the same topic.

D. Scope and Limitation of the Research

This study is conducted at SMPN 2 Sumbergempol, focusing on early 8th-grade students. The researcher limits the study to the effectiveness of Charades word games in improving vocabulary mastery, excluding other factors that might influence vocabulary learning. The study uses a pre-experimental research design, which may have some limitations due to the presence of disturbed variables. The researcher acknowledges the time constraints and the need to conduct the study in two class, which may not be representative of the entire student population.

E. Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions are used in this study:

1. Effectiveness: Refers to the ability of Charades word games to produce a significant difference in vocabulary mastery among early 8th-grade students.
2. Teaching: The process of transferring knowledge, skills, and attitudes from the teacher to the students.
3. Vocabulary: The component of language that includes words used in communication, which is a crucial aspect of language learning.
4. Charades Word Games: An application of vocabulary gaming where students play out words by moving the body to answer.