

## **IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY IN READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH GAMES AT SMPN 259 JAKARTA**

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### **Abstract**

This research aims to improve mastery of English vocabulary in reading comprehension through the use of game methods at SMPN 259 Jakarta. The type of research used is classroom action research using the Kemmis and McTaggart model. The subjects in this research were 33 students in class VIII at SMPN 259. The research took place over three cycles and each cycle consisted of one meeting. Data collection techniques use observation techniques and need analysis tests. Data analysis techniques use quantitative descriptive and qualitative descriptive. The results of the research show that the use of the games method can improve vocabulary mastery and students' learning outcomes in reading comprehension. In the pretest vocabulary activity, the class average score was 71.75, while the reading value was 68.18. After being given treatment for 3 cycles, the average post-test vocabulary score was 91.13 and the post-test reading score was 86.95. With this, it can be concluded that through the game method, students' reading comprehension ability increased by 27%.

**Keywords:** game, reading comprehension, vocabulary

### **Introduction**

English language skills are very important in the era of globalization. A good command of English provides the opportunity to learn science and technology from other, more developed countries (Sari, Lapiana, & Sudaryanto, 2022). In addition, the ability to communicate in English can open up opportunities for cross-border collaboration (Agung, Scholastica, & Widiantara, 2022). Therefore, English language skills play an important role in the progress of a nation. According to Novianti (2020), learning English emphasizes four language skills namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The main thing in the process of learning English is vocabulary mastery as a basis for understanding English concepts. In learning English, vocabulary is very important to master because it will affect other English skills such as listening, reading, writing, and speaking (Amirzai, 2021). A similar opinion was also expressed by Komachali and Khodareza (2012) stated that "Vocabulary is a separate part of any language learning process. It would be impossible to learn a language without vocabulary". So, the richer a person's vocabulary, the more helpful it will be in mastering the language, in this case,



English. If students do not master vocabulary, it will be difficult for them to understand conversations and reading in English. In addition, they will find it difficult to communicate verbally and in writing in English (Sa'd & Rajabi, 2018). Thus, vocabulary mastery is a priority to have good English skills. However, the results of the study show that there are still many students who have difficulty mastering English vocabulary (Dewati, 2020).

Lack of vocabulary mastery can hinder students' reading comprehension abilities. Comprehension is the main thing in reading to be able to grasp meaning. The students' low vocabulary has an impact on the student's ability to understand the content of the discourse. It can be seen from the fact that there are still many students who do not understand the meaning of words in a discourse and have difficulty finding the main idea of a paragraph in a discourse. Apart from this, students also still have difficulty in concluding the content of the discourse. Meanwhile, understanding the meaning of a word, finding the main idea, and concluding the content of the discourse are 3 important things among several other things that determine the ability to understand the content of the discourse text in reading skills (Dalman, 2017).

According to Sudijono in Aprinawati (2018), comprehension is a person's ability to understand or comprehend something after that something is known and remembered. Understanding requires knowledge of vocabulary and its meaning. According to Maher Salah (2008), Nations (2001), and Stahl (1990) (Anjomshoa & Zamanian, 2014), Vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension are closely related, and this relationship is not one-directional, since vocabulary knowledge can help the learner to comprehend written texts and reading can contribute to vocabulary growth.

One of the factors causing students' lack of mastery of English vocabulary is low motivation and self-confidence in learning English. This can be caused by the less varied learning methods in the classroom so that students are less able to play an active role (Agistiawati & Asbari, 2020). Therefore, teachers need to find and adapt learning media to the needs and characteristics of students to be able to create a more meaningful learning process because learning processes that are meaningful for students can affect learning outcomes (Bhakti, Astuti, & Rahmawati, 2020). So, learning methods are needed that can increase motivation and encourage students to be active in the learning process. One method that can be used is learning English through games.

The use of games in the process of learning English has several benefits, namely, teachers can convey material more interestingly, students can more easily understand and remember the vocabulary being taught, and more active interaction between teacher and students causes students to become more motivated to learn (Sahrawi, Hafis, Sari, Astuti, & Wiyanti, 2018). In addition, the use of games in the classroom can create student-centered learning so that students can play a more active role in the learning process. The class atmosphere becomes more enjoyable so that it can increase students' interest in learning (Anisa, Marmanto, & Supriyadi, 2020). Learning innovation can be done using an application that is already available (Shalikhah, 2017). The task of the 21st-century teachers who are known to be "literate" in technology today is not only to act as teachers but also to be learning managers (Rusman, 2017). Therefore, a teacher is required to be able to

provide creative and enjoyable learning services for students to achieve the desired learning goals (Tiana, Krissandi, & Sarwi, 2021).

According to Hastuti (2011), so that the learning process is enjoyable, teachers must provide opportunities for students to do what they are learning so that students gain real experience. A learning model with varied types of activities and learning while playing approach, playing while learning can foster students' motivation, self-confidence, and responsibility to carry out the tasks given by the teacher independently. The above follows the results of the author's findings when studying professional teacher education in PPL schools.

This research refers to research conducted by Meidianty (2014). Based on the results of this research, the hangman game method used in this research was able to increase English vocabulary skills by 3.5%. The quality of teacher activity increased by 7%, the percentage of student learning activity in the very active criteria increased by 9%, and the active criteria increased by 1%. This percentage is not optimal, but it describes the real conditions in this study. In addition to this research, I also refer to research conducted by Rantika, Pudjiati, and Megawati (2019). The results of the study showed a significant increase in English learning outcomes in seventh grade. This is indicated by the average result of the test given in each cycle increases. The average score results in each cycle, in cycle 1 it was 70.5 and in cycle 2 it increased to 80.25 and finally in cycle 3 it increased to 80.25 and the results of the interviews conducted concluded that learning English through Spelling Bee Games was interesting for students. Based on these data, the researcher concluded that there was a good increase in students' vocabulary mastery through the Spelling Bee Game in the seventh grade of One Roof Karang Kobong State Middle School.

This is in line with the results of observations made by the author at PPL schools, it can be seen that students still really need help to improve their English vocabulary mastery. To validate these findings, the authors conducted a needs analysis test for class VIII students at the PPL school, namely SMPN 259 Jakarta using the Google form. Based on the results of the analysis of the answers of 33 students, it was seen that 36.4% of the students wanted to improve their vocabulary mastery. Then the largest percentage, namely 51.5% of students, wanted to use learning media in the form of games. The majority of students, namely 75.8%, thought that learning media was able to increase their motivation to learn.

## **Method**

The method used in this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). Classroom Action Research (CAR) is research conducted by teachers (educators) in the classroom or where they teach which focuses on improving learning processes and praxis. Classroom Action Research serves as a tool for solving problems that arise in class and also as a tool for in-service training, where teachers use new skills and methods and sharpen their analytical abilities. Furthermore, as a tool to create innovative learning, as a tool to improve communication between teachers and scientific researchers, as well as a tool that provides alternatives to problems that occur in the classroom (Khasinah, 2015).

According to Mahendra (2020), Classroom Action Research (CAR) is research carried out systematically reflective of various actions carried out by teachers who are also researchers, from the preparation of a plan to the assessment

of real actions in the classroom in the form of teaching and learning activities, to improve the conditions of learning carried out previously. Meanwhile, the implementation of CAR includes the aim of improving the quality of education or teaching carried out by the teachers/teacher-researchers themselves, with the result that it is hoped that there will be no more problems blocking the class.

The research model used by the author in this research is the Kemmis and McTaggart model. Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1992) in Bro (2020) form a CAR cycle that is carried out through phases such as initial reflection, planning, action, observation, and reflection. The phases in a flowchart can be explained as follows:

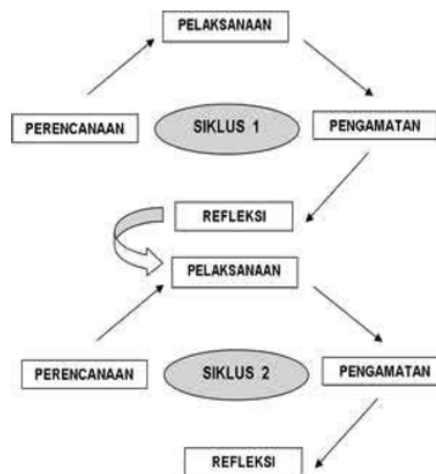


Figure 1. Kemmis and Taggart CAR cycle

This Classroom Action Research consists of 3 cycles with the number of meetings once in each cycle, so there are a total of 3 meetings. This research was carried out at SMPN 259 Jakarta with the research subjects being 33 class VIII H students. The data processing technique in this research uses qualitative and quantitative descriptive techniques. According to Sugiyono (2019), the qualitative research method is a research method based on postpositivism philosophy which is used to examine objects in natural conditions (real conditions, not set or in experimental conditions) where the researcher is the key instrument. According to Kurniasari (2022), qualitative descriptive analysis techniques are techniques used to collect, process, analyze, and present data descriptively. In this technique, data can be presented in graphical form such as plots or diagrams, and can also be in numerical form, for example calculating the average or standard deviation. Qualitative descriptive analysis techniques are usually closely related to research related to social phenomena that cannot only be measured with numerical data.

## Findings and Discussion

### *Cycle 1*

On May 4, 2023, the author conducted teaching in cycle 1 of Classroom Action Research (CAR) in class VIII H with the learning topic "Notice" from short functional texts. Before starting the lesson, the writer also conducted a pretest as a form of initial assessment. This pretest consists of two categories, namely the vocabulary pretest and the reading comprehension pretest.

The vocabulary pretest aims to measure students' understanding of vocabulary related to the material "Notice, short message, and announcement". The results of this pretest provide an initial description of the level of student's mastery of the vocabulary to be used in learning. In addition, the pretest also informs the extent to which students already know the words related to "Notice, short message, and announcement".

Meanwhile, the reading comprehension pretest was designed to test students' understanding of reading texts related to "Notice, short message, and announcement". This pretest assists the writer in evaluating the student's ability to understand and analyze the English text as a whole. The results of this pretest provide an initial indication of students' ability to understand the content of English texts.

After the pretest is complete, it continues with treatment using the "Notice" material. In this lesson, the author uses various relevant learning strategies and methods to teach the concept, structure, and use of notice in everyday life. The author provides examples of various interesting notices and involves students in discussions and activities that encourage understanding and application of the concepts being taught. Apart from that, the author also provides games-based online LKPD using the WordWall application after discussing the notice material.

During treatment, the author actively monitors student participation and provides constructive feedback. The author seeks to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment, where students feel comfortable to contribute and share their thoughts about the material. The author also utilizes visual aids and other resources to enrich learning and facilitate student understanding.

After treatment, a post-test will be carried out in the third cycle to evaluate students' understanding after taking notice of material learning. The post-test results will be compared with the pretest results to see students' changes and progress in understanding vocabulary and reading comprehension related to notice.

In the reflection stage, the writer analyzed the pretest and post-test data, evaluated the effectiveness of the teaching strategy that the writer used, and identified steps that the writer could take to improve learning outcomes in the next CAR cycle. Overall, learning in cycle 1 runs smoothly and according to the teaching modules that have been designed. Based on the results of the pretest shows that the student's abilities related to vocabulary and reading comprehension are still quite low and do not meet the class average. The student's average score for the vocabulary pretest was 71.75 while the student's average score for the reading comprehension pretest was 68.18. Then after being given the first treatment and spelling online games, the class average showed the number 97.87.

Table 1. Pretest

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>score</b>
Vocabularies	71.75
Reading Comprehension	68.18
Average	69.96

Note: Has not reached the minimum standard

### *Cycle 2*

On May 10, 2023, the author held a learning session in cycle 2 of CAR in class VIII H. The material that the author taught that day was one of the topics of a short functional text, namely "Short message". In this meeting, the authors continued the second treatment using interactive and digital games such as Kahoot.

When starting the activity, the author introduces the students to the forms of short messages. Next, we continued with game-playing activities. The game that the author designed is called "Write It and Find Me!". Students are asked to take a piece of paper containing vocabulary. They work in pairs and create short messages using the words they get. Apart from that, they also have to write the meaning of the short message on separate paper.

After completing the short message, the papers were collected and shuffled on the teacher's desk. Students then take papers randomly one by one. They opened the paper and all the students came forward. Taking turns, they read the paper they got and looked for a partner who had the matching paper. After finding a partner, they were asked to sit together and work on LKPD 2 in the form of a Quiz Game using Kahoot. After being given treatment until this second cycle, the learning outcomes of students began to increase, the average student achievement score in this second cycle was 81.47. This is following what is expected, that media learning games will motivate students' learning.

### *Cycle 3*

On May 17, 2023, you will study the 3 CAR cycle in class VIII H with the material "Announcement text". The entire series of activities can be carried out well and smoothly following the teaching module that the author has designed. The author designed an interactive game called "Let's Build It". Interactive Games "Let's Build It" involving students in interactive games is an effective way to encourage active participation and strengthen their understanding of announcement texts. In this game, students work in groups to compose a complete announcement text using the words they choose. This process allows them to collaborate, understand text structure, and develop written communication skills. Here's how to play the game "Let's Build It!":

1. Students help the teacher stick announcement paper in class
2. Students one by one take the paper containing the word to later insert it into the blank announcement text.
3. Students look for announcement papers and also group members based on the paper they have obtained
4. In groups, students build the announcement text into a good and complete text.
5. In groups, students understand the announcement text they have made and then discuss it with their group mates
6. Representatives from each group explained the announcement text they had compiled and then explained the important information contained in it to other group mates.
7. All groups pay attention to other groups who are presenting their announcement texts

These group discussion activities and presentations provide an opportunity for each group to share important information contained in their announcement text.

This facilitates communication and collaboration between students and increases their understanding of the announcement text. Then the next activity is the use of online games; After discussions and presentations, the authors integrated online games using the Quizalize application. These games can be used as an evaluation tool to measure students' understanding of vocabulary and reading comprehension material. The use of technology in learning provides variety and increases student engagement.

Then the last activity is the post-test; Providing a vocabulary post-test and reading comprehension post-test at the end of the lesson aims to measure students' progress in understanding and mastery of the material after going through the learning process. The post-test also provides useful information in the evaluation of learning and subsequent development. After being given treatment in the third cycle, student learning outcomes began to increase, the average student LKPD score in the third cycle was 89.6. The average value of the vocabulary post-test was 91.13 and the average value of the reading comprehension post-test was 86.96. The following chart shows the increase in student learning outcomes after being given treatment in 3 meetings.

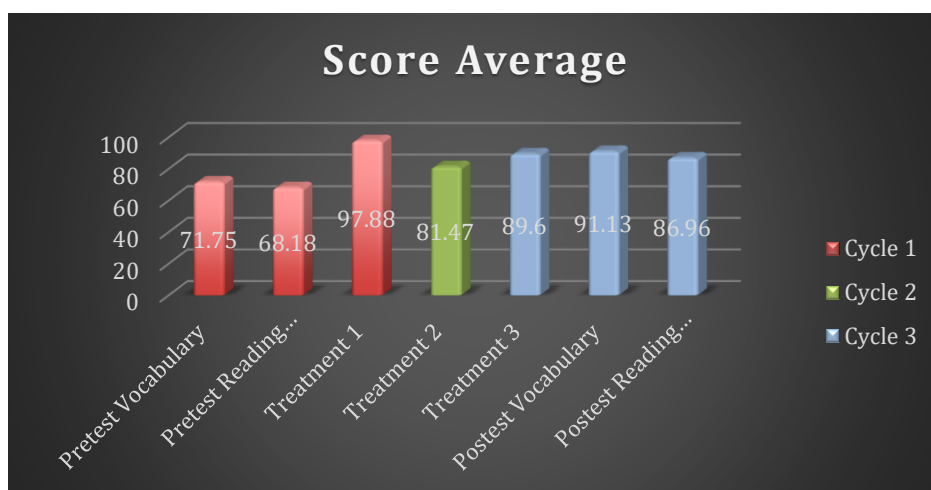


Figure 2. Student Learning Outcomes for 3 Meetings

### Conclusion

This research concludes that the use of the games method can improve students' vocabulary mastery in reading comprehension, especially in class VIII H SMPN 259 Jakarta. By using the game method, students are increasingly motivated to learn English because students can experience their learning with an exciting and fun method. By combining interactive games and online games, we are also able to accommodate all learning styles of students in the class so that the learning provided is fair and accommodates all learning interests in the class. The use of online games that are integrated with technology can also increase students' enthusiasm for learning because technology is very close to their daily lives. Increasing student learning outcomes is shown by the results of the vocabulary pretest the class average value was 71.75, while the reading value was 68.18 before being given treatment, but after being given 3 cycles of treatment, the average post-test vocabulary score was 91.13 and the post-test reading score was 86.95 With this, it can be concluded that through the game method, students' reading comprehension

skills increased by 27% and they were able to achieve the minimum completeness criteria.

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