The Utilization of Word Chain Games

to Improve Senior High School Students' English Vocabulary Mastery

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Abstract
Vocabulary is very important to be mastered by those who are learning a foreign language, especially for the students at Senior High School. This research was conducted at MA Miftahul Qulub Polagan. Most of the MA Miftahul Qulub Polagan students had difficulties in mastering English vocabulary. It was caused by the method of teaching vocabulary. So, the students felt bored and they did not have the motivation to learn vocabulary. Therefore, learning innovation is needed to build their motivation to learn vocabulary. This research utilized the Word Chain Game to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The research design was classroom action research which has two cycles of implementation. The test, observation, and field notes were utilized to collect the data. The research showed that the student's vocabulary mastery increased in each cycle as in cycle I, 63% of students reached the cumulative score, and in cycle II, 87% of students reached the cumulative score. Cycle I showed the average score of students' mastery was 73, and cycle II showed the average score was 80. It can be concluded that the Word Chain Game can improve students' vocabulary mastery. It is suggested to implement Word Chain Game in vocabulary teaching.
Keyword: English Learning; Vocabulary; Word Chains Games.

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is learned at school from elementary up to university level because English as an international language is very important to be learned. So, people can interact with others from different countries easily. Besides, English is also important for students because many text books are written in English. So, the students need English not only for communication or speaking but also for understanding these books. In addition, the advancement of information and technology is written in English such as usage procedures, features, and other things. Therefore, the main goal of learning English is to communicate both orally and in writing (Muttaqien, 2017).

Vocabulary isthe core of language.Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. It is crucial to master the vocabulary for people who learn languages, especially foreign languages because by mastering vocabulary people can speak, listen, read, and write foreign languages easily (Richards & Renandya, 2002). The most basic thing in learning English is vocabulary mastery as a competency standard that should be owned by students. Therefore, vocabulary mastery is necessary. In the reality of daily activities, the researcher observed that only humans are able to use verbal communication and learn it (Dewi et al., 2014). Thus, a person will not be able to communicate in the target

language if the vocabulary mastery is poor. Students who have good ability in vocabulary are easier to communicate in daily life. If the students have poor vocabulary mastery, they will have obstacles in constructing utterances in speaking and writing. Conversely, if the students have high vocabulary mastery, they will compose and arrange words into a sentence easily.

Based on observation at MA Miftahul Qulub there are several problems related to learning English. Among them are (1) learning English is less varied, causing the students to be lazy and seem monotonous, (2) the students' vocabulary skills are still low, and (3) the students are not confident in composing and speaking English. Lack of English vocabulary mastery causes students to be less fluent in speaking English, less able to express ideas or opinions in written form, and less able to understand the content of reading text. It makes the students feel unable to listen properly to what is conveyed or said by the teacher when delivering learning in class. According to most students, English is considered to be a frightening specter. The students tend to be silent and passive when asked to use English. They do not dare to speak English. One of the factors that causes low scores in English is their poor of vocabulary. Lack of English vocabulary mastery causes students confused in conveying opinions, feelings, thoughts, suggestions, questions, and answers. So, they mostly choose to be silent rather than convey their feelings and opinions in the process of learning English in class.

From the results of the research, it was found that one of the factors causing the low mastery of students' English vocabulary was in effective teacher's teaching method(Nappu, 2014). In teaching vocabulary, the teacher just asked the students to memorize some English words without using media. The method makes the students feel bored and they have difficulties mastering vocabulary. The students often forget the vocabulary that they have memorized before. The success of a teacher's learning is largely determined by how the learning material is presented to students. The teacher's teaching method influences the students' motivation to study. So, the teacher should be able to choose the appropriate method of teaching and create an innovative and creative strategy. Teaching vocabulary needs creative and innovative techniques because it plays an important role in the students' success in mastering vocabulary. It also makes the students able to learn better(Astuti et al., 2018). One technique that can motivate and increase learning enthusiasm is a game.

A game is a play thatconsists of rules, goals, and fun. The study explained that there are two games to be played such as a competitive game which players or teams compete to be the winner and a cooperative game that players or teams work together to reach the goals(Fatima et al., 2019). One type of game for learning that is suitable for increasing English vocabulary is word chain games. The word chain whispering game is where the teacher whispers a message/information to students. The student whispers the message or information to the next student whether it reaches the last student or not (Putri, 2018). Word chain game is the kind of game in which the players come up with words that begin with the letter that the previous word ended with. The implementation of teaching vocabulary by using a word chain game is the class is divided into some groups, divided the board into the member of the group, one of the students from each group come up to the board and give them time to write a word, another student from each group come up the board and write another word beginning with the last letter of the previous word (Sperling, 2009). Vocabulary learning techniques through word chain games are included in cooperative games. Students are divided into several small groups that will work together to complete the vocabulary

game given by the teacher. The game isa fun, challenging activity that can overcome student boredom in learning English. Besides, learning techniques through games can also increase learning motivation and language skills including aspects of vocabulary, so learning will be useful and meaningful.

The theoretical gap of this research and the previous one are included in the methodwhich has used in teaching implementation. This research implemented the word chain games to improve students' English vocabulary while in the previous research implemented motivation and competitive game in teaching vocabulary. Eventhough the same scope of vocabulary skill is included in this research, but different media of teaching have been used in this research. Word Chain Games is the game which still used as a proper technique to improve vocabulary skill for students (Hudawidayanti, 2012).

From some of the explanations above, it can be concluded that learning through games has a positive effect on students' vocabulary mastery and the effective technique in increasing vocabulary mastery. According to the problems above, the researcher conducted research to find out how far word chain games improve students' vocabulary mastery.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design is a Classroom Action Research (CAR) in two cycles. Action research is trying out the ideas in practice as means of improvement and increasing knowledge about the curriculum, teaching and learning (Kemmis & Taggard, 1988). CAR consists of four stages namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. The planning was created by reflecting on the analysis and results from preliminary study. The researcher planned all connected to the action research. When the researcher implemented the plan; the collaborative teacher conducted observation in the class to collect the data. The researcher also collected the data at the end of the cycle by scoring the students' achievement on test. After gathering the data, the researcher and the collaborative teacher analyzed the data. The analysis of the data was performed in the reflection based on evaluation, and the outcome of the reflection determined if the action was successful or not. Thus, the population in this research was the students of SMA Miftahul Qulub Polagan Galis, with the sample the students of class XII PA2 MA Miftahul Qulub Polagan Galis, they are 30 students. This research was conducted in the 2021/2022 academic year in August-October 2022.

The data was obtained from: 1) observation in the class during the vocabulary teaching-learning process using observation sheet, 2) field notes, and 3) the students' vocabulary score. The data is classified into three parts. Firstly, the data obtained from the preliminary study which is intended to get the real condition about the problems which were faced by the teacher and the learners throughout vocabulary lesson. Secondly, the data obtained from the implementation of the action, was related to the process of instruction learning vocabulary utilizing Word Chain Games in the classroom. The data are taken when the researcher began the lesson in the classroom, the observer (collaborator) observes the activities and all reactions of the students from opening up to closing activity in the classroom by using an observation sheet, the third, the data was taken from the test score that given in the cycle 1 and 2 to know the students' vocabulary achievement.

The research instruments used in this research are an observation sheet used to collect the data on the students' activities during the teaching and learning process; field

notes used to record when the researcher heard, saw, experienced, and thought in the class; the test was utilized after the teaching by using Word Chain Games; and the test was used to know the students' increasing in vocabulary mastery after to be taught using Word Chain Games at the end of each cycle. This study was considered successful if it already met the criteria of success as follows the students' vocabulary mastery was considered improved when 70% of the students could reach the minimum passing grade determined by the school, which was 76.

The data analysis technique used descriptive analysis. Quantitative data in the form of vocabulary values were analyzed using the Excel program to find out the average value of the students' vocabulary test results. By comparing the scores obtained before and after the action, it can be known the increasing of the students' vocabulary mastery.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
1. Initial Conditions
The results of the pretest before the implementation ofthe Word Chain Game showed the highest score for the vocabulary lesson in class VIII C was 80 and the lowest score was 48 with an average score of 59. The students who got scores below 76 were 22 students and the students who got scores above 76 were 8 students. So, it was only 27% the percentage of success. The majority of students were not confident to speaking English because students' vocabulary skills were still low. At the time of observation, there were several problems in mastering English vocabulary, including that there were still few students who actively expressed their thoughts and answered the questions from the teacher directly because most of the students were still doubtful and afraid to pronounce the words. So, the teacher did not get a response properly from the students. The students had poor vocabulary mastery. It needed further research and innovation in the process of learning English.

Table 1. The Test Results in the Preliminary Study

Students	Score was below 76	Score was above 76	Percentage of Success	Average	Passing Grade
30	22	8	26,66%	59, 06	76

2. Cycle I
The process of cycle I consisted of 4 steps, they were planning, action, observation, and reflection. At the planning stage, the teacher made learning instruments, lesson plans, and syllabus. At the action stage, the teacher carried out the English learning process with word chain games. Students were divided into several groups. Then one of the students in the group read the English word and conveyed it to a friend in the same group by whispering. Then after arriving at the last friend, the student must say the English word and convey the meaning or translation.

After that, the students were asked to make sentences using the vocabulary. The team that could finish quickly and correctly got prizes and good grades. After being given treatment for 8 meetings, all students were given a test to see the extent of the effect and the level of mastery of their English vocabulary. As for the acquisition of student scores in cycle I, namely the lowest score was 60, the highest score was 82, and the average score was 73. It means that 19 students could reach the minimum passing grade and 11 students still failed. And the percentage of success was 63%. The results

of these scores it showed that the score of mastery of English vocabulary after giving action in cycle I had increased. Even though it had increased, it was still in the low category because the average student score was still below theminimum passing grade.Therefore itwas necessary to do more action in cycle II.

It showed that the implementation of the action had an impact on increasing student learning outcomes, especially in terms of vocabulary mastery, even though the increase had not been significant, it still required improvements. The results of observation about the actions of the first cycle could be said that in general, they had not reached the target in accordance with the learning objectives or the objectives of implementing the action. So, it was necessary to improve it at the next cycle stage. From the results of the evaluation carried out, it was known and it could be concluded that the results of the implementation of the actions obtained had not been maximized and achieved the desired results. At the reflection stage, it could be seen (1) that students had not shown optimal activity in the learning process. So, the action was needed in the next cycle; (2) time for interaction between teachers and students was still poor; (3) the teachers did not monitor and guide students one by one in learning; and (4) the average student score was not in accordance with the minimum passing grade.

Table 2 The Results of the Test in Cycle 1

Students	Score was Below 76	Score was above 76	Percentage of Success	Average	Passing Grade
30	11	19	63%	72,8	76

3. Cycle II

Based on the results of the evaluation and reflection carried out in cycle I, then in cycle II, students were given the treatment of learning English with word chain games. In this lesson, each of thestudentswas given the opportunity to play vocabulary games with word chains. After treatment for 8 meetings, all students were given a test to find out their progress and level of English vocabulary mastery. As for students' vocabulary acquisition in cycle II, namely the lowest score was 69, the highest score was 86, and the average score was 80. There were 4 students who got scorebelow 76, and 26 students who got score above 76. So, the percentage of success was 87%. Based on the implementation of the actions in cycle II, data or information about learning out comes could be obtained such as: (a) All students were very enthusiastic and actively participated in learning with word chain games; (b) learning materials and exercises prepared by collaborator teachers challenge students to work on them so that they were very happy and enthusiastic in doing them; (c) the teacher had enough time to supervise or control students in the learning process.

Table 3. The Result of the Test in Cycle 2

Students	Score was Below 76	Score was Above 76	Percentage of Success	Average	Passing Grade
30	4	26	87%	80,00	76

The vocabulary mastery has increased quite significantly as shown in Figure 2. It showed that word chain games are suitable for use in improving English vocabulary mastery. In line with the opinion of Zubaidah showed that with chain whisper learning students are able to remember what is heard and convey the message orally and by what is heard. So the chain whisper game activity has been able to improve children's listening skills because children really listen to what they have heard (Zubaidah, 2013).

The effectiveness and attractiveness of learning English with word chain games can be seen in the ongoing learning process. At the beginning of giving action, especially in cycle I, it can be seen how it looks more active in learning than when the researcher made observations before carrying out the action. This is presumably because learning while playing attracts students' attention. Students were very enthusiastic when learning took place and this learning activity was like being a competition for each group, they tried to do their best, answer every challenge and are able to say English vocabulary well. However, in cycle I it still did not meet the completeness criteria because the average score of students had not yet reached the minimum passing grade. The students were also not fully brave in mentioning English vocabulary. Therefore it was necessary to take action again in cycle II. In cycle II, it could be seen that all students are actively followed with learning activities and interacted with the teacher for instance the students answered the challenges given by the teacher properly and compactly in their groups. The average score was good and exceeded theminimum passing grade limit. The component of the success of the action in this research was an increase in students' English vocabulary mastery as seen from the increase in the final test results when compared to the initial test.

CONCLUSION

Referring to the findings obtained during teaching English vocabulary using word chain gamesin the two cycles, it can be concluded that Word Chain Game is effective in increasing thev vocabulary mastery of students in class XII PA 2 MA Miftahul Qulub Polagan Galis Pamekasan as the improvement of student's vocabulary mastery can be found in each cycle. Learning English in word chain games makes students actively learn English and students become more confident in making sentences in English. In addition, students also become motivated to learn English. It is suggested to implement Word Chain Game in vocabulary teaching and learning process.

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