THE EFFECT OF USING SCRABBLE GAME STRATEGY ON IMPROVING VOCABULARY FOR 5TH IRAQI EFL PRIMARY PUPILS

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Abstract. The objective of this study is to improve pupils' use of English language vocabulary. The researcher used the scrabble game to improve pupils' vocabulary. Unfortunately, many teachers continue to teach and learn as a chore and understand less teaching strategies and the learning process. In this problem, the teacher must use appropriate media to teach the learning process. The researcher used scrabble game as an interesting educational tool to motivate pupils in the learning process and most of them are interested. The researcher used the test, observation, and questionnaire to collect data. The result of the study is presented in the form of a descriptive explanation. Statistical analysis is used to analyze data about improving pupils' vocabulary.
Key words: Scrabble Game, Vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Statement of the Problem

Vocabulary is an important aspect of language in which the pupils should learn an acquire in order to master a foreign language, such as English. By having a great amount of English vocabulary, it is easier for the pupils to be able to listen, to speak, to read, and to write the words which are related to the target language. There are various variables that could hold up language learning which Iraqi pupils encounter. One of those struggles is the inadequate amount of vocabulary knowledge which can impact the way they listen, speak, read, and write. When they try to read, they would encounter understanding issues, specialists say that these cognizance difficulties are occurring as a result of the words that learners do not understand when they come across them in everyday situations (Nation, 2001:188).

Learning English vocabulary isn't an easy task, it requires using effective strategies to help students understand the nature of the vocabularies and how to employ them in different contexts, whether in English classrooms or in situations that occurred in daily life taking into account the importance of forming grammatically corrected sentences. The problem of the study is determined by the study of the impact of using scrabble game strategy in improving the vocabulary of the English language among the 5th-grade pupils.

1.2 Aims of the Study

1.   Identifying the effect of using scrabble game strategy on developing English language vocabularies among 5th primary grade school pupils in Iraq.
2.   Improving students' use of English language vocabulary

1.3 Hypotheses of the Study

The present study is based on the following hypothesis:
There is no statistically significant difference between the mean score of the pupils who are taught vocabulary according to scrabble game and that of the pupils who are taught vocabulary according to traditional methods.

1.4 Procedures of the study

1.   Selecting a sample of fifth grade school pupils, who are divided into two groups: a control group and an experimental group.
2.   Constructing a pre-test and a post-test exposed to experts to ensure its validity; and calculating its reliability and item analysis.
3.   Designing a lesson plan that demonstrates the use of the device within the classroom environment
4.   Designing the testing instrument which is a (pre-test post-test) model and ensuring its validity and reliability by presenting it to a jury of specialists in language teaching methodology.
5.   Statistically analyzing the data to determine the outcomes of the experiment. Finally drawing conclusions, providing suggestions and recommendations for further studies.

1.5 Definitions of Basic Terms

1.5.1 Effect

It is the change in attitude or state as a result or consequence of an action or a specific factor. Or it is the change that immediately follows an antecedent (Webster, 1989:582).

1.5.2 Scrabble Game

The term scrabble is used to describe a board game to assist pupils to enhance their vocabulary in English. In Oxford Advance Dictionary (1985:1191), Scrabble is a board game in which players try to make words from letters printed on small plastic blocks and connect them with words that have been already placed on the board.

1.5.3 Vocabulary

The term vocabulary has various analogous definitions. Nation (2001:189) defines vocabulary as the ability to completely understand, comprehend and realize the word when it is encountered in a particular context rather than just estimating its meaning. Lastly Diamond and Gutlohn (2006:73) defined it as the list of words in a language that the language speaker is familiar with and is fully able of understanding their meaning and use. For this study, the researcher adopted Diamond's and Gutlohn as the **operational definition**.

Theoretical Background and Previous Studies

2.1 Aspects of Vocabulary

Harmer (2001: 16) stated that there some aspects that have to be discussed in vocabulary, namely: word meaning (synonym, antonym, connotation and denotation), extending word use such as idioms, words combination collocation and the grammar of the words which comprises noun, verb, adjective and adverb.

1)   Meaning
The meaning can be categorized according to the model they are attaching to. It can be classified into three forms: lexicon meaning, morphological meaning and grammatical meaning. Lexical meaning is the meaning that connects words with words. For example, the meaning of a building for human habitation that attached to the meaning of lexical home. Morphological meaning is the meaning associated with morphology. A morpheme is the smallest unit containing information about meaning or function.

2)   Use

According to Nation (2001: 1) "There are some ways to draw the attention to the use of words by quickly showing the grammatical pattern the word fits into (countable/ uncountable, transitive/ intransitive, etc.), giving a few similar collocates, mentioning any restrictions in the use of the word (formal, informal, impolite, only used with the children, etc.), and giving a well-known opposite or well-known word describing the group or lexical set if it fits in".

3)   Spelling

According to Ur (1996: 60) There are some important points to keep in mind when teaching vocabulary that speaks (pronunciation and spelling). The learner must know the type of voice of a word, such as (its pronunciation) and what appears to be (its spelling).

4)   Pronunciation

According to Hewings (2004: 3), linguistic pronunciation is the main component of a word that combines each other. These components range from the individual voices forming a speech, to a path in the field (loud and falling voices are used to convey meaning). Pronunciation is also related to phonemic transcription. Since the vocal texts represent speech sounds consistently, it can be used as an applicable guide to controlling spoken language. The main components of pronunciation are sounds, syllables and words.

2.2 The Importance of Teaching Vocabulary

Vocabulary is essential for learning English. It is a key to success. Williams (2013:1) asserted that "vocabulary itself is multifaceted and should be considered as part of the larger language structure and use, involving spelling, pronunciation, and grammatical behavior''. McCarthy (1990: viii) states that: regardless of how well the student has learned the rules, no matter how well the second language sound has mastered in speaking, without words to express a wide range of meanings, L2 communication cannot happen in any meaningful way.

 Vocabulary and grammar are essential elements in the learning process, and vocabulary is still emphasized more. Allen (1983:8-12) states that vocabulary items should be studied before grammar. Most learners spend many years studying English grammar, but they still cannot speak naturally or fluently. Grammar is only part of a language and must be known by the speaker. There is no doubt that knowing grammar can help us speak and write correctly. However, most importantly, you need a good knowledge of vocabulary to speak and write effectively. Numerous studies have shown

2.3 Game and Active Learning

       The use of games in education provides teachers with ways that allow students to become active participants in their learning experience. Gee (2008 :201) describes games as goal-oriented and stimulated preparations for an embodied experience.

Games provide a learning tool, but in order to gain the full immersed experience in the gaming environment, the player needs to become an active participant producer–playing in order to complete the goals/wining situation Gee (2008:43-57).

       Games can enhance learning by providing an active way to build knowledge that was not previously possible (Wideman, Owston, Brown, Kushniruk, Ho, & Pitts, 2007).

McKinney (2010) defines Active learning refers to techniques in which learners do more than just listen to a lecture. Learners do something including discovering, processing and applying information (para. 1). This means that learners are responsible for their own learning; they are involved and engaged (Wellert, 2008).

       Kumar and Lightner (2007:53-63) remark games encourage active learning, collaboration, and interaction. Games allow collaboration, practice, discussion and negotiation in a virtual environment. Through the practical treatment of this virtual environment, learners actively shape their knowledge and learning at the same time.

REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS STUDIES

Banda Aceh (2018)

The purpose of this study is to find out the difference score between the students' vocabulary mastery before and after being taught by using scrabble game and investigate students' responses in implementing the technique of scrabble game. The second grade was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Banda Aceh, which included 64 students where the sample divided into two classes, the students' selected randomly. The sample for this study was VIII-7 consisted of 32 students' as experimental class and VIII-8 consists 32 of students' as a control class. The study used tests and questionnaires to collect the data. The result of this study showed that scrabble game supports English vocabulary. It has been proven based on data from students' t-score of the experimental and control class. It has been shown that the students' t-score of an experimental class higher than the control class. In other words, based on students' responses in the questionnaire, they agree that scrabble game is a convenient way to support learning English vocabulary.

KHAIRINA (2019)

This study was aimed to improve the students' vocabulary mastery by using scrabble games. The subjects of this study were 25 students at 10th grade in SMP n 2 batangkuis in the academic year 2018/2019. This study was carried out using two cycles of action research. The data analysis technique for quantitative data was the students' test scores. As for qualitative data, the researcher used the Miles and Huberman technique. It pointed out that scrabble game could improve the students' vocabulary. This result is reinforced by the results of observation and the interview that students were more active in the class and enjoyed the learning process.

3.1 Design of the Study

The experimental design is a whole series of steps that are taken advance to ensure that appropriate data is obtained a manner that allows for objective analysis leading to valid conclusions regarding the mentioned problem(Gronland,1977:16).
It is the research design that provides the plans to test the research hypothesis developed by the researcher to reach logical conclusions about effect of a particular independent variable on a particular variable(Tavakoli,2012:206).

3.2 Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the present study comprises all 5th grade pupils in the primary schools in Babylon province for the academic year (2019/2020). The sample of the present study comprises (63) pupils of AL-ZOBAIAT Primary school in Babylon province. Such a sample is divided into two groups. The first group (A) is the control group, it consists of (31) students. The second group (B) is the experimental one, it consists of (32) students. After exclusion, the sample decreased to (60) pupils (30) pupils for each group. The experimental group received the treatment based on scrabble game strategy activities taught by the researcher during four weeks in the second term of 2019/2020. The researcher herself taught the experimental and the control group during that period.

3.4 Teaching Material

The teaching material selected to be taught during the experiment included all the required material of the second course for both groups and that is unit (5,6) with everything related to the text-book such as the activity book.

3.5 The Instruction of the Control Group

The teaching of the control group followed the guidelines and the steps provided by the teacher book for the fifth primary grade in teaching vocabularies to the control group.

1-   Read about what food and drink are needed for a picnic.
2-   Read and order a story.
3-   Read the question in the activity book and tell pupils to guess the picture that shows the healthy food.
4-   Explain the meaning of the story.
5-   Ask the pupils if they know the meaning of the new vocabulary.
6-   Write down the new vocabularies and explain their meanings.
7-   Give a model reading by playing the recorder.

3.6 The Instruction of the experimental Group

1-The teacher prepares the subject and sent it to the pupils.
2-The teacher shares videos with his pupils that explain the material using a scrabble game strategy.
3-Conducting electronic sessions between the teacher and pupils to explain the topic and ask questions to pupils and know the extent of their misunderstanding to understand the topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Comparison between the Pre-test and the Post- test Scores of EG

The researcher used the one sample T-test to calculate the difference between the scores of the experimental group across both the pre-test and the post-test. The results show that the mean score of the pre-test is **(**21,56) and that of the post-test is (30.5) with a T-value of (3.105) in (0.5). The statistical results demonstrate that there is a significant difference between the two tests with the post-test being higher than the pre-test (See Table (4.1)

Group	No.	Mean	SD	T- value	Level of significance
Pre-test	32	21.56	7.20	0.307	0.5
Post-test	32	19.98	7.11	3.105	0.5

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