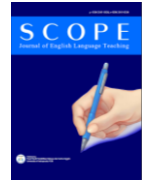




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Research Article

Integrating Scrabble Online as a Tool To Support for Vocabulary Learning

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A B S T R A C T

Scrabble online is an application that can be used to teach vocabulary. In this particular study, researchers used online scrabble on students from a high school in Simalungun. There were six participants in this study. The purpose of this study is to find out how students feel about the effectiveness of using online scrabble to improve their vocabulary. The question that needs to be answered in this study is, "How do students perceive the use of online scrabble in learning vocabulary?" The study presented here was a qualitative descriptive study. Data collected through interviews were then transcribed verbatim and analyzed using content analysis. As a result of this study, it can be concluded that scrabble online is an application that can help students improve their vocabulary when learning English.

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary has an important role in language skills such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), vocabulary is the cornerstone of language skills and lays a large part of the foundation for how effectively students read, speak, and write. Mastery of one's vocabulary is one of the linguistic skills that need to be taught and learned. It becomes the main focus of any process involving language acquisition, especially when a new language is being presented.

Developing one's vocabulary is the most important aspect of learning English because, without it, one cannot communicate effectively or express one's thoughts either orally or in writing. Students are expected to be able to produce words both in spoken and written language, understand the meaning of words, and use words appropriately in sentences. Researchers such as (Laufer 1999; Maximo, 2000; Gu, 2003, Marion, 2018; Susanto &

Fazlinda, 2016; Laufer & Nation, 1999.) have all recognized that it is very important to have a strong vocabulary mastery to make effective use of a foreign language, and can play an important role in the formation of complete spoken and written texts. Given the importance of vocabulary skills, this vocabulary lesson is one of the centers of learning English. It's just that what often happens is that many students, especially in the context of EFL, think that learning new vocabulary is something difficult. Learning vocabulary is a complicated process that requires recognizing, remembering, pronouncing, spelling, and using words correctly (Ayuningtyas, 2008).

Most EFL students face difficulties in learning English (Akbari, 2016). Because, they are English learners who only use English on certain occasions and for certain purposes (Kirkpatrick, 2014). The most common difficulty for EFL students is a lack of vocabulary, which can limit their ability to learn English (Al-Jamal, 2014). Another study shows that the most difficult aspect of learning English, especially vocabulary, is choosing the right words

with limited word knowledge (Abrar, Mukminin, Habibi, Asyraf, Makmur, & Marzulina, 2018). Due to a lack of vocabulary knowledge, some students at one of the universities in Iraq were unable to express their ideas or even debate any topic using language (Keong, Ali, & Hameed, 2015). The same thing happened to Indonesian EFL students as said by Rahmatunisa (2014), that one of the factors causing the lack of vocabulary knowledge of EFL students was a negative attitude toward learning English.

For this reason, various ways are needed to facilitate learning vocabulary so that it can be accepted by students. one of the most widely used today is the use of technology. The use of technology in learning English, especially vocabulary, has been widely used with various technologies. The use of technology in learning has been carried out a lot in previous research studies and one of the most is by using games.

Gamified can improve certain student abilities, gamified can involve students in learning, optimize learning, support behavior change, and socialize students (Krause, Mogalle, Pohl, Williams, 2018; Knutas, Ikonen, Nikula, Porras, 2020; Borges, Reis, Durelli, Bittencourt, Jaques, Isotani, 2013; Dichev & Dicheva, 2017).

Gamification has been widely studied by researchers such as research conducted by (Fithriani, 2021), which showed that students who use gamified in the experimental group outperform their peers in the control group in learning vocabulary. In addition, many researchers have also studied the impact of games on educational environments and found the positive results such as increased interaction, user retention, knowledge, and collaboration (Hakulinen & Auvinen, 2014; Tvarozek & Brza, 2014).

From the previous research, many games have been conducted to find out the effectiveness of using games on students' vocabulary skills. However, not many researchers conducted research regarding the scrabble online as a vocabulary-learning tool. The rules of the scrabble online are actually very simple, you only need to arrange the letters to form a word, and calculate the score from the letters you put on the Scrabble board. The player with the highest score will win. Each player is provided with 7 random online tiles, the first player starts by arranging words from the boxes in the middle, horizontally or downwards. After the first player has finished, the next player composes a word, intersecting from the letters that the previous player has arranged, when they have placed tiles on the board, each player must take more tiles according to the ones he removed, every time a player finishes playing his turn, he must count the points he earned, empty tiles can be made into any letter, but do not have points, players can use their turns to compose words

or swap letters, the game ends when all the letters have been played, one player has used up his or her tiles, or when there is no room left to create a new word.

Therefore, this research was conducted to find out how the effectiveness of scrabble online on vocabulary mastery based on students' perceptions.

METHOD

Research Design

This research used a qualitative case study. Baxter and Jack (2008), defined a qualitative case study as a research method that make it possible to examine a phenomenon in its context by using various data sources, ensuring that the problem is not examined from one but from various perceptions, making many aspects of the phenomenon. This was in line with the research objective, which is to find out students' perceptions of Scrabble online as a vocabulary learning application.

Participants

This research was conducted at one of the senior high schools in Simalungun District. There were six participants in this research. Participants are involved here on a voluntary basis and they agree to become participants. They were also familiar with this scrabble online. This research was conducted during several meetings where students studied the scrabble online application in learning vocabulary.

Data Collection

Data were collected by using in-depth interviews for several minutes with 3 questions. In-depth interviews are a way of collecting data with the intention of establishing a complete and in-depth picture of the topic under study (Moleong, 2007). In carrying out the interview process, the researcher used a structured interview guide, it is meant that the interview guide has been prepared in accordance with the objectives, making it easier to conduct the interview. The interview aid in this study was a recording device from a cellphone. The cellphone was a recording device that was easy to use and flexible (Sekaran & Bougie, 2017). Interviews were conducted in Indonesian to obtain further information. The data collected through interviews were then transcribed verbatim. According to Herdiansyah (2010), verbatim was an interview process that contains all the things discussed along with the situation, converted into written form as it was, without a single word being omitted, reduced, or edited. Then the results of the interviews were analyzed using content analysis. Bungin (2011) argued that content analysis was a qualitative research technique by emphasizing the meaning of the content that occurs in communication.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding students' perceptions of using scrabble online applications as supporting applications to improve vocabulary, researchers have identified three points that are significant and related to the benefits of using scrabble online applications on students' vocabulary learning such as a more enjoyable learning atmosphere, Increasing student participation in learning vocabulary using scrabble online and Improving vocabulary mastery. Scrabble online game can help students to improve vocabulary, because when playing online Scrabble students have to think a lot critically and know and memorize vocabulary.

The details, the explanation will be discussed in the following.

Theme one: More enjoyable learning atmosphere

Based on the data from resources interview, most of the students found that using scrabble online could increase their sense of positive attitude in learning vocabulary. In addition to reducing their dislike of memorizing vocabulary, they also said that using scrabble online in their vocabulary could improve their memory of the vocabulary that had been taught, as evidenced by the following statement:

"I used scrabble online in vocabulary learning, and I have become more delighted in expressing my aspirations while studying. Honestly, I tend to be silent and do not dare to express my opinions directly. And fortunately, there is this scrabble online application that is applied to learning. So that I can express my aspirations without having to speak directly. (Excerpt 1, participant II).

From the statement from the student, it can be seen that students feel a more enjoyable learning atmosphere, as illustrated in (excerpt I) students feel more delighted. This is reinforced by the opinion (Hebblethwaite, 2009; Voinov, 2010), whose research confirms that Scrabble online games can provide intense and enjoyable mental activity when learning. The same thing is also found in the reflective essay, as can be seen below (excerpt II, participant IV):

"When I studied English last week, I honestly felt that learning English especially, vocabulary was a difficult thing for me and I felt less enthusiastic. But when this week I learned vocabulary by applying this scrabble online application, I felt that I enjoyed the learning atmosphere more and it also changed my view of vocabulary that memorizing vocabulary was not as difficult as thought. (Excerpt II, participant IV).

From the student statements it can be seen that students feel the same way that by using Scrabble online they also feel more enthusiastic in learning English. It can be concluded that online scrabble is an application that can make students feel different things when learning vocabulary using the online scrabble application.

Theme two: Increasing student participation in learning vocabulary using scrabble online

Based on the data from resources interview and reflective essay, most of the students said that using scrabble online in vocabulary learning can increase their participation and activity. This can be proven from the following statement:

"At first I thought this online scrabble game was the same as regular learning. But it turned out differently. To be honest, I am an introvert and find it difficult to get along with many people, but when I learn vocabulary with this application I feel different things, I only need to press the ok button and the results are immediately registered." (Excerpt III, participant V).

From the statements of the participants above, it can be concluded that when students participate in learning vocabulary, students feel different things. This is supported by opinion (Taniredja, et al 2018) which states that participation can encourage students to develop their thinking and feelings. Therefore students can feel different things when learning vocabulary by using the Scrabble online application. The same thing is also found in the reflective essay, as can be seen below (excerpt IV, participant VI):

"After learning vocabulary using this scrabble online application, I was very enthusiastic about answering the questions posed by the researcher. Moreover, the question trained me to think quickly because the question is a contested question where when the answer to the question is correct, a prize will be given (Excerpt IV, participant VI)".

Based on the statements of the students above, it is possible to conclude that internal and external factors can influence the success of the teaching and learning process. External factors to consider include choosing appropriate and effective learning methods to increase student absorption. As a result, it is critical to select the appropriate learning method. Scrabble online is an excellent application for increasing vocabulary.

This application can engage students in the learning process. This study also agrees with Glover's (2013) findings, which confirm that using online scrabble games in the classroom can stimulate and motivate a new generation of students who grew up in the video game era.

This study's findings also validate previous research from Oblinger (2004), who found that games encourage students to take an active role in the learning process, thus supporting active learning, experiential learning, and problem-based learning.

Theme three: improve vocabulary mastery

Based on the data from resources interview and reflective essay, most of the students said that using scrabble online in learning vocabulary could improve their vocabulary mastery. This can be proven from the following statement:

“Learning while playing scrabble online has a significant impact on the improvement of my vocabulary mastery. This is due to the fact that I frequently look up vocabulary in the dictionary, and as a result, I know a great deal of vocabulary that I was previously unfamiliar with that was used by my opponents. After becoming proficient in using the online version of scrabble, I acquire new vocabulary words on a daily “. (Excerpt V, participant I).

From the statement of the participant above, it can be concluded that learning while playing has a positive impact on students in increasing their vocabulary mastery. This is supported by Piaget and Inhelder (2010), who argues that games are a medium that enhances students' cognitive development. The same thing is also found in the reflective essay, as can be seen below (excerpt VI, participant III):

“Playing scrabble online can help me in mastering vocabulary automatically because it affects brain work in playing scrabble online, scrabble online emphasizes more on students' thinking patterns and remembering so that it has an effect on increasing vocabulary mastery”. (Excerpt VI, participant III).

Based on the students' statement above, it can be concluded that scrabble online can improve students' vocabulary mastery. Because when students play scrabble online automatically it affects their brain work when playing. This online scrabble emphasizes the mindset and memory of students. This is reinforced by the opinion (Lam, 2017) which says that the proper use of scrabble online games in the classroom can not only increase motivation and learning experience but also facilitate the accuracy and fluency of language learners. This is also agreed by (Kapp, 2019) who argues that online scrabble can also develop in education because it can support and motivate students to improve learning processes and outcomes.

Based on the findings above, the benefits of using scrabble online in vocabulary learning include a more enjoyable atmosphere, Increased student participation in learning

vocabulary using online scrabble, and Improved vocabulary mastery.

Learning vocabulary using online scrabble has several benefits, such as a more enjoyable learning atmosphere. As illustrated in (Excerpt 1, participant II) students feel more delighted. The same is also felt by other students that by using scrabble online they also feel more enthusiastic about learning English.

Scrabble online can Increase student participation in learning vocabulary using Scrabble online. As an illustration in (excerpt IV, participant VI), students feel enthusiastic in answering questions. They become more involved in learning. This study also agrees with Glover's (2013) findings, which confirm that using online scrabble games in the classroom can stimulate and motivate a new generation of students who grew up in the video game era.

In addition, the benefit of applying online scrabble in learning vocabulary is improving vocabulary mastery. As an illustration in (Excerpt VI, participant III), online scrabble emphasizes more on students' thinking patterns and memory more so that it affects the increase in vocabulary mastery. Online Scrabble games can be used as reinforcement in increasing vocabulary because in the Scrabble game there is the repetition of vocabulary many times. This is reinforced by (Tumardi & Sopingi, 2013) that reinforcement can help maximize learning because learning outcomes can be remembered by students in a relatively lasting manner. It is very possible for students to remember English vocabulary longer.

So that, the teacher can use the online version of scrabble as a learning medium to help students improve their vocabulary. The online version of scrabble provides the opportunity for the teacher to center learning activities on vocabulary. Students will not acquire knowledge in a passive manner through the teacher's explanations. Students have not changed their study habits, such as writing words on paper, attempting to memorize, or learning passively through teacher explanations (Nguyen & Khuat, 2012). As a result, the educator ought to make an effort to establish a fresh and accommodating educational setting. Online word games like scrabble have the potential to significantly improve students' vocabulary retention and comprehension. The students expressed a preference for the relaxed environment, the sense of competition, and the motivation that the online scrabble games brought to the classroom. This is supported by Nguyen and Khuat (2012), which states that playing online scrabble games can provide relaxation and fun for students, thereby assisting students in learning new words and remembering them more easily. This is a significant finding. Students will have the motivation to improve their vocabulary mastery if they are engaged in the process of learning vocabulary by

using scrabble online in vocabulary learning. If students are engaged in the process of learning vocabulary, students' cognitive abilities can be stimulated through the use of this online game-based learning, while their motivation can also be increased. When used as a learning medium, students show a high level of interest in the activity.

Students believe that playing scrabble online games makes it easier for them to learn vocabulary, and students mention that learning while playing can change the atmosphere of the classroom to make it more relaxed and fun so that students can use their imagination and creativity. It can also be seen that playing scrabble online can improve the vocabulary memorization elements of students. Students think that playing scrabble online games makes it easier for them to learn vocabulary. It is hoped that the students' overall educational experience in the classroom will be improved as a result of this circumstance.

Playing Scrabble online also helps students improve their ability to memorize new words, which is an important part of expanding their vocabulary. Students may find it easier to memorize challenging words, and it may also help them expand their vocabulary. When it comes to expanding one's vocabulary, memorization is by far the most important skill to acquire. If students are unable to memorize words, they will not be able to develop their vocabulary skills. Students can learn new words in a fun way by playing Scrabble online, which is used by many schools. Students exercise their long-term memory by playing an online version of the word game scrabble and attempting to recall previously learned words. In addition, students learned a lot of new vocabulary by competing against their friends in online scrabble games.

Students can have a positive learning environment created for them by using online scrabble for vocabulary learning, and students can also have a positive impression of the activity. The researcher discovered that six of the students had favorable opinions about the use of scrabble online for the development of vocabulary. This was discovered in light of some of the comments made by the students. Students can improve their vocabulary through the use of online word scrabble game. In addition, students increase both their degree of autonomy and the amount of physical activity they engage in when online scrabble games are used in the classroom. Playing Scrabble online is a fantastic way for children to refresh their memories of previously learned words and can even help them learn new words.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research is to find out how students feel about the use of online scrabble games to improve their language and vocabulary skills. This research is a

qualitative investigation using interviews as its primary data collection method. This study's research question is, "How do students' perceptions of online scrabble in learning English vocabulary mastery?" Online scrabble is being used as an instructional tool. Students' statements that playing online scrabble games makes them feel happy and increases their self-confidence as well as their vocabulary mastery when learning to use this online game provide evidence that English and online scrabble can affect students' vocabulary in ways such as improving memory skills. This can be demonstrated by students who state that playing online scrabble games increases their vocabulary mastery.

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