

# The Implementation of Vocabra Games to Teach Vocabulary for High Motivated Students in Elementary School

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## Abstract

This study was aimed to investigate the implementation of vocabra games faced by the Elementary Students in one of the schools in Indonesia. The sample in this study was the fifth grade students having high motivation in vocabulary mastery. This research was a qualitative study using purposive sample. In collecting the qualitative data, the researchers did observation, interview and distributed questionnaire. This study revealed some findings related to the students' high motivation in vocabulary mastery. There were some implementation of vocabra games which come from the students' motivation in vocabulary mastery, they were (1) the implementation of using vocabra games; (2) the students' motivation in vocabulary mastery with high motivation; and (3) the aspect of vocabulary as the indicator in mastering vocabulary. Concerning with those statements, the researchers would like to review a various media in vocabulary mastery. That is vocabra games. This media gives positive effect and suitable to the students with high motivation.

**Keywords:** EYL Students, vocabulary, vocabulary mastery, vocabra games, motivation.

## Introduction

The core problem that young learner faced in language is about how to memorise new word. There are a lot of languages in this world and each country has its own language. We know that English language is the universal language which is used to communicate with other nations. That is why it will have a good result to study English from basic level, especially for teaching and learning vocabulary. Although the person is not an English, she or he definitely uses English to communicate with other people in the world. It is unfortunate that the word *language* is often used to cover all forms of communication (Broughton et al., 2003, p. 25). Not only communicating English language, but also becoming as formal and second language in several countries. Even though every language has its own style, in fact it is the same with other language, it is as bridge to communicate for one person to other person. The basic rules of one language are the same as those of all languages (Swarbrick, 2003, p. 9).

In learning English the students are demanded to understand and use the language skill such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. But before the students achieve all of them, they should pass some steps in learning English. In the first step students will study vocabulary because it is the most important component in English.

Vocabulary can be defined, roughly as the words we teach in the foreign language. However a new item of vocabulary may be more than a single word: for example, post office and mother-in-law which are made up of two or three words but express a single idea (Ur, 2009, p. 60).

There are several definitions of vocabulary proposed by some experts. According to Caroline and David (2005, p. 121), vocabulary is the collection of words that an individual knows. Hatch and Brown (1995, p. 1) prove that the term of vocabulary refers to a list or set of words for a particular language or words that individual speakers of language might use. Ur (1996, p. 60) argues that vocabulary is the words we teach in the foreign language. Brown (2001, p. 377) views vocabulary items as a boring list of words that must be defined and memorized by the student, lexical forms are seen in their central role in contextualized, meaningful language. Cerce and Murcia (2001, p. 285) state that vocabulary is central to language acquisition whether the language is first, second or foreign language. Nation (2008, p. 30) states that the learner needs to know of the "words". It means that students need to know the words not only the meaning but also the spelling, pronouncing, and the usage of words.

From the aforementioned definitions, it can be concluded that vocabulary is a set of words or collection of words that must be memorized by a student or an individual speaker in order to construct new sentences or words covering its meaning, pronunciation, spelling, and using word.

In vocabulary mastery, there are several indicators of vocabulary proposed by some experts (table 1):

Table 1: Construct the indicators of vocabulary

No.	Ur (1996, pp. 60-62)	John (2000, p. 16)	Jackson & Amvela (2000, p. 11)	Richards & Schmidt (2002, p. 580)	Construct the Indicators
1.	√	—	—	—	Pronouncing
2.	√	—	—	—	Spelling
3.	√	√	√	√	Meaning
4.	—	—	√	√	Using the word

The indicators in this study that are going to be measured from the aspect of meaning are: giving the meaning of word, stating the meaning of word, and labeling the picture based on the expression given. The indicator from the pronunciation aspect is asking the students to pronounce, while the indicator from the spelling aspect is asking the students to arrange letters into a word from jumble letters. The indicators that are going to be measured from the last aspect is the use of words are: using words to make simple sentences.

In vocabulary mastery, this study used direct instruction. There are several definitions of direct instruction proposed by some expert. Direct Instruction characterized by teacher-centered and teacher-dominated classroom (Peterson, 1999, p. 231). Because direct instruction is widely used by teachers, the predominant use of direct instruction technique needs to be evaluated, and educators need to recognize the limitation of these methods for developing the abilities, processes, and attitudes required for critical thinking, and for interpersonal or group learning. Direct Instruction is specifically designed to promote student learning of procedural knowledge and declarative knowledge that can be taught in step-by-step fashion (Arends, 1998, p. 66). Direct Instruction is one of which there is a predominant focus on learning and in which students are engaged in academic tasks, a large percentage of time and achieve at a high rate of success (Bruce, et al., (2002, p. 338).

Based on explanation above, direct instruction is teacher-centered technique that includes frequent lesson where the teacher presents information and develops concept through demonstration and lecture which are focused on utilizing systematic and explicit instruction by providing feedback and correction of students' mistake to engage them in successful academic task. Moreover, direct instruction is specifically designed to promote student learning of procedural knowledge and declarative knowledge.

There are several teaching steps to teach vocabulary using direct instruction proposed by some experts (table 2).

Table 2: Construct the teaching steps using direct instruction

No.	Ur (1996, pp. 11-12)	Cross (1996, pp. 63-	Marzano (2004, p.	Construct the Teaching step
1.	√	—	√	Explaining
2.	√	√	—	Sound, meaning, and repetition for memorizing and testing
3.	√	√	—	Written form for testing in the word
4.	—	—	√	Discussing, refining, and reflecting.

There are several definitions of vocabra games proposed by some expert.

Rider (2003) says that Abra Vocabra Game is real-world words, words that anyone is likely to read in a newspaper, hear on the news, read in a magazine. In fact, just seeing and hearing the words outside the classroom reinforces for students the idea that the words are useful and important ones to know.

Hadfield (1999) summarizes that Abra Vocabra Game is memorizing, personalizing, and communicating vocabulary games which become a set of new words to integrate them into our existing word store easily based on in a daily activity.

Samston (2001) says that Abra Vocabra Game is helping students improve their vocabulary as a relatively easy project for the classroom and one that reaps results almost immediately where this teaching media powerfully makes the students easy, interesting, practical and enjoyable in vocabulary mastery.

Extracting from the definitions above, it can be concluded that Abra Vocabra Game or Vocabra Game is the process of memorizing, personalizing, and communicating vocabulary games which become a set of new words to integrate them into our existing word store by real-world words, words that anyone is likely to read in a newspaper, hear on the news, read in a magazine.

There are several definitions of motivation proposed by some expert.

Harmer (2002, p. 51) states that motivation is essential to success in most fields of learning because a learner wants to do something to succeed at it.

Whittaker (1970, p. 142) states that motivation is a broad term used in psychology to cover the internal conditions or states that activate or energize person and that lead to goal directed behavior.

Sorrentiono and Liggins (1990, p. 4) explain that motivation is a process pushing someone to act as his desire.

According to Brown (2007, p. 168) motivation is from behavioral, cognitive and behaviorist perspective. Behavioral views motivation as the anticipation of reward and it is driven to acquire the positive reinforcement. By the previous reward, the action will be repeated accordingly. In this case, motivation occurs because the mercy of the external forces such as parents, teachers, peers, educational requirement, job specification, and so forth.

Beck (1990, p. 28) defines that motivation is a psychological aspect dealing with behavior differences among individual from time to time. It is a process to push someone to act based on a certain objective.

Schunk in Driscoll (1994, p. 292) states "Motivation refers to the process where goal-directed behavior is instigated and sustained."

Weiner in Driscoll (1994, p. 292) also states "Motivation is often inferred from learning, and learning that is usually an indicator of motivation for the educational psychologist".

Essentially, motivation is a process to encourage a person to reach a goal. Motivation, like intelligence, cannot be directly observed. Motivation can only be inferred by noting a person's behavior, a type of movement as a part of process of taught, passion, desire, emotion, need, interest, curiosity, and psychology aspects.

There are several aspects of motivation proposed by some experts (table 3):

Table 3: the aspects of motivation

No.	Arden in Rohmah (2012, p. 242)	Dornyei (2001, p. 72)	Sadirman (1994, p. 91)	Construct aspects of motivation
1.	—	√	√	Knowing the goal of learning
2.	√	√	√	Having expectation
3.	√	—	√	Having curiosity of something new
4.	—	√	√	Having interest on subject which will be studied
5.	√	—	√	Having self-determination and self-control on subject which will be studied

### Research Elaboration

Another research about using games was also carried out by Aisah (2014) in her research about the use of abra vocabra game in increasing students' vocabulary. She proved that "Abra Vocabra" can increase significantly the students' vocabulary shown by the statistical analysis that the percentage between pre-test and post-test namely 6.89% using experimental research. Thereby, by using "Abra Vocabra" game can increase significantly the students' vocabulary in learning process.

In addition, the other research taking vocabra games as teaching media was also undertaken by Itsnan (2013) whose research focused on vocabra game to enrich or improve students' vocabulary, because this game motivates the students to know more about the new vocabulary. With Vocabra, teams compete against each other to define vocabulary words correctly.

Furthermore, there is a research conducted by Sekarini (2013) In her research she used "Spelling Bee" Game to Improve Seventh Graders' Spelling. She used Spelling Bee game as an alternative in teaching and learning activity since this game effectively improved the students' spelling ability. Spelling Bee game is considered as an appropriate game to increase the students' spelling ability.

Uzun et al. (2013) in the journal about developing and applying a foreign language vocabulary learning and practicing game through the effect of voca word. They summarized that Voca word is the name of this game. It is designed as a board game that is played quite similarly to one of world's famous games, monopoly.

Baierschmidt (2013) in his journal about a principled approach to utilizing digital games in the language learning classroom. In a principled approach, he conducted that using a certain game in digital game is able to make students acquire new words without they feel bored and confused.

From the description above, the researchers took about game as the research elaboration using vocabra games.

### Method

This research is a qualitative study using purposive sampling. It is aimed in the implementation of vocabra game faced by the elementary students in mastering vocabulary. 14 students were involved as a sample in this research. The sample consist of 5 boys and 9 girls at the fifth grade which consider as the class with the high motivated student in mastering vocabulary and the mean score is above the passing grade.

The researchers used performance test, interview, and questionnaire in collecting the data. The performance test is used to know the students' mean score. Interview and questionnaire are used to know the internal and external problems. Furthermore, the researcher analyzed the data based on Creswell theory. The analysis of the data was done in the following steps: collecting the data from fourteen participants, classifying the data by coding to generate the setting and people, selecting/displaying the data to make it easier in analyzing and interpreting the data which is involved interpretation or meaning of the data. In addition, the researcher interpreted by adopting the interactive model by Miles and huberman (2014).

**Result and Discussion**

The study revealed that the students have a high motivation in vocabulary. It was shown by the post-test result which was shown that the mean score of the students is 9.5 from the passing grade 7.5. The fact from the post-test was that the mean score is higher than passing grade. The result of the students' post-test in vocabulary showed that their score is over the minimum score of vocabulary. Based on the data, the highest score was 9.5 and the lowest score was 8.0 and the mean score was 8.89. It is shown from the table 4 above.

Table 4: the students' high motivated score using vocabra games

Number of Respondent	Motivation Questionnaire	Vocabulary Test
1	135	9.5
2	133	8.5
3	132	9
4	131	9.5
5	131	9.5
6	130	9
7	130	9.5
8	129	9.5
9	128	8
10	126	9
11	125	9
12	124	8
13	124	9
14	122	8
Mean score	8.89	

The study resulting in mean score for the students having high motivation in mastering vocabulary in: (1) pronouncing; (2) meaning; (3) spelling; (4) Using words by total score from vocabulary test.

This study revealed some findings related to the students' high motivation in vocabulary mastery. There were some implementation of vocabra games which come from the students' motivation in vocabulary mastery, they were:

1. The implementation of using vocabra games.  
 Vocabra Games trigger to stimulate students more active and to be actively involved during the instructional activities by using a lot of Vocabra Game types, the students will have high interest and full attention when they face with different interesting media. This media has interesting type in vocabulary learning process about new words that they are going to learn, some practices, and scores for each task. It will aim at acquiring practice rather than the other media in learning practice. This means that the activities will focus more on using forms to communicate than on the forms themselves. When students use a language to try to solve the problem or achieve some goal, success will be sufficient reward in itself.
2. The students' motivation in vocabulary mastery with high motivated students using vocabra games.  
 In mastering vocabulary using vocabra games, high-motivated students are those who provide artificial reinforcement, generate full interest and participation, consistent regarding mastery of learning, and also have positive attitudes by time period of learning activities. They have high learning motivation and are usually actively involved, have full attention, and will stay involved for a long period of time. Students who are clearly motivated will have a positive display of emotion, and they are satisfied with their work and show more enjoyment in the activity. So, when high motivated students learn new vocabulary using vocabra games, they will not face difficulties and get bored because they can study vocabulary with the various media from vocabra games.
3. The aspect of vocabulary as the indicator in mastering vocabulary. To develop the students' mastering vocabulary, there are four aspects: (1) pronouncing; (2) meaning; (3) spelling; and (4) using words. To develop those four aspects related to the kinds of vocabra game, the researcher finds:
  - 1) Vocabulary Bee

The students can acquire new word by a vocabulary bee, conducted somewhat like a spelling bee. In a vocabulary bee, the class is divided into two teams. Unlike a spelling bee, however, students aren't eliminated from the game when they miss a word. Because students will probably know most of the words, it's a good idea to add question "levels," to make the game more interesting. Let each student to select one, two or three point question. For one-point question, students simply define the word correctly, and they can earn their team a point. Then ask students to repeat that word for pronunciation and spelling by the teacher. For two-point questions, they must define the word correctly and use it in a sentence. Three point questions require the student to define two words correctly and use both in one sentence that indicates their meaning. To get the students' ability to spell the words correctly, the teacher can give the jumbled letter. It can be the simple media to make the students understand how to spell the letter based on arrangement the letter.

2) Categories

The teacher asks students to work in small groups to categorize the words, to place at least three words in each category after the class has studied four or five word lists. Students should come up with their own categories. There are, of course, no limits to the number and kind of categories students might choose. Just a few examples: "adjectives," "words that begin with t," "words that describe someone who is mad," "words good for describing food," "words that might be used by a doctor," etc.

The teacher is not allowed to try to give the groups any hints. Insist that the students themselves determine the categories, and remind them that there is no one right answer to the exercise. As long as the category has done at least three words and the words must fit the category, the answer is correct. By these three words, the students can study pronunciation and spelling by the teacher's repetition. Then the teacher gives students some simple media such as sentences or pictures to match the three words before, so the students can get the meaning. This exercise really requires creative thinking and a strong understanding of the words. It is an excellent activity for review.

3) Sell It

The teacher divides the class into small groups, and give each group one of the assigned vocabulary words. The teacher ask the group to imagine being an advertisement agency hired to sell the word to the rest of the class. The teacher gives students a short time to come up with an idea. For example the teacher gives three adjective in an advertisement: cheap, satisfied and delicious with three sentences to be matched to each other. The teacher can asks also the students to match the word based on clues for the other topic, it is the same media for sell it that the teacher sells the words to the students and the students will buy those words. So the student can study the meaning. Then the teacher can ask students to repeat those words by teacher's repetition to study pronunciation and spelling. Finally, the teacher can know how far the students understand the meaning words by asking them to use them in a sentence.

4. Dialogue

The teacher asks students to find the meaning in the bracket. The teacher also can ask them to write a short two or three-person dialogue (conversation) using all the words on the vocabulary list. Or ask them to design a short comic strip that includes all the words on the vocabulary list. As a usual simple media, the teacher can serve at least three words with three sentence randomly. Then the teacher asks the students to match them. After they know about the meaning, the teacher asks students to repeat those words to study the pronunciation and spelling. To encourage the students to study vocabulary, the teacher can use jumble words to make the students understand how to use the words to be a correct sentence.

**Conclusion**

In dealing with the aforementioned vocabra games implementation to teach vocabulary for high motivated students in elementary school, the researcher will conduct a further research in enhancing students' vocabulary mastery through vocabra games. This study is expected to give a huge contribution in English language teaching, especially in recognizing the problems faced by the students in mastering vocabulary.

**Appendix**

Data class of students' high motivation using vocabra games:

8 8 8 8.5 9 9 9 9 9 9.5 9.5 9.5 9.5 9.5

1. The highest score is 9.5
2. The lowest score is 8
3. Range is  $9.5 - 8 = 1.5$
4.  $1 + (3.3) \log 14 = 1 = (3.3) (1.14) = 4,762$  (5 is used)
5. The width (interval) =  $1.5 = 0.3$  (0.4 is used)
6. Mean 5

Class limit	Class Boundaries	Mid. Point	Frequency	Fi.Xi
8.0 – 8.3	7.95 – 8.35	8.15	3	24.45

8.4 – 8.7	8.35 – 8.75	8.55	1	8.55
8.8 – 9.1	8.75 – 9.15	8.95	5	44.75
9.2 – 9.5	9.15 – 9.55	9.35	5	46.75
9.6 – 9.9	9.55 – 9.95	9.75	0	0
			14	124.5

$$\text{Mean} = \bar{x} = \frac{\sum f_i x_i}{N} = \frac{124.5}{5} = 8.89$$

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