THE EFFECT OF TABOO WORD GAME IN IMPROVING VOCABULARY ABILITY

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Abstract: This study was conducted to investigate the effect of Taboo Word Game strategy on students vocabulary ability. The purpose of the study was to find out the effect of Taboo Word Game strategy had effect on students’ vocabulary ability. The study used research by doing experimental design. The population of this study was 60 Informatics Engineering students of Potensi Utama University in the fourth semester of 2019-2020 Academic Year. A placement test was given to 60 students. 60 students were taken as the sample of this research. The sample was divided into two groups: the first group is the Taboo Word Game group (30 students) and the second group is conventional group (30 students). The instrument of collecting the data was vocabulary test. The writer used independent sample t test formula to analyse the data. The data were calculate by using independent sample t test by SPSS 20 for windows. The result of the analysis shows that $t_{\text{count}} > t_{\text{table}} = 3.941 < 2.66329$ is higher at the level of significance 0.05 and the degree of freedom (df) 58. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted.

Keywords: Student, Taboo Word Game, Vocabulary

I. INTRODUCTION

Language has an important role for human life to express their ideas, emotion, and desires. Many people over the world speak English language when they meet in international meeting, workshop, conference, etc. Many countries have set the language as a compulsory subject at school. English language well known as second language.

The first language and second language have different definitions, namely the first language is a language that is obtained naturally by children, in which there is a process of imitation, repetition and become sedentary behavior. Whereas the second language is the target language, which is a language that is intentionally learned with a specific purpose, both for education, career and so on. The method of acquiring the first language is not much different from the second language, namely imitation, repetition, but there are other aspects that affect the critical period.

Brown (2008) states that a second language is a target language, a language that is intentionally learned for a specific purpose, such as to achieve a successful career or fulfill the requirements to master a foreign language. Children are easier to master a second
language than adolescents and adults (Fitriyani & Nulanda, 2017). Adult students make faster initial progress, but final success in mastering a second language is never as good as children (Santrock, 2007).

Nunan (2003) states that in the world of business, industry, and government, workers are expected to immediately improve their English skills. Therefore, parents want their children to get English teaching as early as possible in order to obtain benefits for academic interests and future business careers (Sad, 2010).

The process of introducing foreign languages consists of several language components that are part of a language program. In general, the language component consists of three, namely: grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Suyanto (2007) states that vocabulary is a collection of words owned by a language and gives meaning when we use that language.

Linse (2005) argues that vocabulary is a collection of words known by someone. From some of the opinions mentioned above it can be concluded that the vocabulary is a parts of a sentence that is owned by someone. In general, humans learn words or vocabulary faster when supported by visual aids, such as pictures or objects. Learning English vocabulary and grammar will be better if in context related to the world of children, so it is easy to practice or to communicate.

Attention to increasing vocabulary mastery ability is lacking especially in the era of the introduction of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). However, as the development of English Language Teaching (ELT), some experts have begun to think that the development of vocabulary in students is as important as the development of structure / grammar, especially in learning English.

One area that can be targeted to help improve reading comprehension is vocabulary knowledge. Language vocabulary is very important as an initial foundation for learning languages, including English. There are many ways to improve English vocabulary, such as reading literature, conversing, listening, making pocket notes, multimedia, and games (Hapsari & Sumihar, 2003).

As cited from National Reading Panel (2000), researchers have identified a strong relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. Hawkins, Hale, Sheeley, and Ling (2011) argued that as students’ vocabulary knowledge increases, so does their ability to construct meaning from text. A variety of methods for improving students’ vocabulary have been explored in the literature.
Vocabulary problems often interfere with communication; communication will stop when the person communicating is not using the right words. This shows the importance of mastering vocabulary because communication will be difficult without good vocabulary mastery. This is in line with the objective of communicative competence in English learning classes.

Some vocabulary learning strategies proposed by Palmberg (1990). Palmberg argues that there are two types of vocabulary learning methods. The first type focuses on exercises and activities oriented to the target language, namely English. The second type focuses on developing students' vocabulary skills related to students' language background and student learning experiences.

The indication of the failure in learning English can be seen through some facts that the students do not have good vocabulary ability. Although they have some vocabularies but they cannot speak English. It can be viewed from two points of view. Firstly, score of writing and speaking. In expressing a same topic, students are easy to write sentences then speak. In writing they are not bounded by the pronunciation and intonation. They only focus on connecting the sentences by structure. Secondly, the frequency of using English is low.

Those facts are far different from the expectation of teaching and learning English. Considering the gap between reality and expectation, the researcher is interested in overcoming the problems. There are many factors that influence the process of teaching English. Firstly, the students do not have many vocabularies to practice their English. The secondly, lack of motivation in learning English. Thirdly, teaching and learning processes are not supported by facilities such as language laboratory. And the last is that teachers have not had many strategies in teaching English.

The researcher was interested in conducting a research in improving students’ vocabularies. The ability of learning English is commonly measured by the ability of how related the vocabularies and the sentence. In this case, taboo word game strategy can be applied as a strategy to solve the problem. The reason is that taboo word game is more active yet fun. When they learn individually the weakness of students will be evitable and it will make them give up and feel bored. Instead, when playing a game, they will be encouraged to learn more.

One of the games that can be used to develop students' vocabulary mastery skills is a game called Taboo. Considering the benefits of taboo word game strategy, the writer was interested in testing of how far taboo word game strategy improving students’ vocabularies.
The title at this research is “The Effect of Taboo Word Game in Improving Vocabulary Ability”. The hypothesis proposed in this study is that there are significant differences between the results of the pre-test and post-test experimental groups.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vocabulary

The word "vocabulary" is a word that represents briefly from a number of collections of words in the language (Joklova, 2009). Vocabulary is a number of words that students know in a language. Vocabulary continues to grow in line with increasing age which is very useful as a communication tool (Komachali & Khodareza, 2012).

Keraf (2000) also adds that vocabulary is the whole word that is owned by language, and one's vocabulary. This means that the entire word in someone's memory will immediately cause a reaction when heard or read. Soedjito and Saryono (2011) vocabulary is the vocabulary or wealth of words owned by a language. Hastuti, et al (1993) suggested that vocabulary or vocabulary is also called vocabulary is the words contained in a language. Sometimes the vocabulary is interpreted as words arranged alphabetically called glossaries.

Scarcella (2003) states that academic vocabulary words are one element of academic English, variations or lists of English that are used in professional books and are characterized by specific linguistic features related to academic discipline. According to Mohammadnejad, Nikdel, and Oroujlou (2012), vocabulary is the basic element of a language used to label things like objects, traits and verbs to explain the purpose of what is to be conveyed.

Evison and Cowie (2008) explained that vocabulary is; (1) a number of words known and used by students, (2) a number of words used in language, (3) a list of words consisting of words and their meanings. According to Komachali and Khodareza (2012), vocabulary usually develops and increases at every age level, and fundamentally functions as a communication tool.

As students move through the years of schooling, the literacy demands of their academic work are increasing (Schleppegrell, 2004). Academic language is primarily accessed through texts, not conversation, and some children are well-positioned to gain access to this language and others are not (Corson, 1997).
Actually there are various kinds of vocabulary that can be known by second language learners, such as single words, set phrases, variable phrases, phrasal verbs, and idioms (Folse, 2008), where the explanation is as follows:

1. Single words. This type is used more often than other words. With single words, not only the word room but also the bedroom and dining room. Third this example is considered one word even though the dining room requires two words, to express a concept, while bedroom requires only one word.

2. Set phrases. This type includes more than one word and is always changing. In the phrase set on the other hand (vice versa), for example, it cannot be said in the other hand, or in other hands, or in other fingers, even though this choice is semantically related. Set other phrases such as now and then, the bottom line, ladies and gentlemen, and all of a sudden.

3. Variable phrases. While this classification consists of components that will remain the same, there are several variations, often with the words personal pronouns, possessive adjectives, or word orders.

4. Phrasal verbs. Phrasal verb or phrasal verb includes two or three words with the first verb word and the second (and third) particle word. Many verbs can be used as verbs in phrasal verbs, but common verbs include put, take, come, call, make, go, and get. This basic verb is often combined with nine particles - up, down, on, off, in, out, away, back, and over to form unique words. For example, the verb take combined with these nine particles makes nine phrasal verbs: take up, take down, take on, take off, take in, take out, take away, take back, and take over. Because of its quantity and frequency, phrasal verbs are very difficult vocabularies for English learners. What's more is in fact each phrasal verb can also be polysemous, that is, each can have several different meanings.

5. Idioms. All languages contain idiomatic expressions, and each of these idiomatic expressions or idioms is a separate vocabulary. A group of vocabulary can be categorized as an idiom if the meaning of each word is different from the overall meaning of the word. (Folse, 2008).

Harmer (1991) summarizes that knowing words (vocabulary) means knowing about the meaning, use of words, word formation, and word grammar. The meaning of the word is also governed by metaphors and idioms. In collocation, a word coincides, like, headache, earache, and so on. In addition, styles and lists are applied by distinguishing the language that will be used by someone in either a formal or informal context, for example hello
Word formation can also make words that mean seeing them in the context of their grammar. This means that we see how suffixes and prefixes work (im-, or-) as in imperfect and perfect, inappropriate and appropriate. The latter is about the grammar of words used by distinguishing the use of words based on the use of certain grammatical patterns such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc.

Taboo Word Game

The Taboo game is a guessing word game created by Parker Brothers in 1989 (Nurjanah & Pratama, 2018). This game is similar to the Catch Phrase game where the player tries to help his teammates guess words using hints in word form. Townsend (2009) describes taboo word games as a quick-thinking word game involved words in multiple contexts with opportunities for students to process and personalize word meanings.

The game Taboo (Hasbro, 2020) has been used as a model for a general chemistry collaborative activity. Taboo is a word guessing game commonly used at parties. This game could be integrated at any point in the curriculum, and is an effective and entertaining way to teach and reinforce central chemistry concepts and review for exams.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The design of this research is quantitative by doing an experimental which is to find the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable they are the Taboo Word Game Strategy and Vocabulary. Nahartyo (2012) states that experimental research is a research design to identify a phenomenon by manipulating conditions through certain procedures and then observing the results of the manipulation and interpreting it.

The experimental design used in this study was nonequivalent pre test-post test control group designs. This research design is a research design that compares two nonequivalent groups and designs that are suitable for purposive research. Measurements in these two groups were twice each, in the experimental group before and after the intervention was given while in the control group two measurements were also taken without treatment (Gravetter and Forzano, 2015).
Instrument of Data Collection

The data of this study was collected by using subjective test. The test was gaming test. The writer tested the vocabulary with fluency, pronunciations, and accuracy of the students. The scoring system taken from two assessors. The assessors were the writer and the lecturer.

Observation is a data collection technique by observing each ongoing event and recording it with an observation tool about things that will be observed or examined (Sanjaya, 2009). Data collection through observation is carried out by researchers and colleagues on the subject of research to get a direct picture of student learning activities in class. Observations made include observations about the learning process of English, student activeness and mastery of students' English vocabulary after learning with the taboo word game approach.

Interviews and discussions can be interpreted as techniques for collecting data using spoken language either face-to-face or through certain media channels (Sanjaya, 2009). Interviews and discussions are conducted after and on the basis of observations in class and document review. Interviews and discussions with peers are carried out after the first observation of the learning activities, which are intended to obtain information about various matters relating to the implementation of student English vocabulary learning. From interview observations and document reviews that have been identified problems exist with regard to learning English vocabulary to students.

Documentation is an instrument to collect data about events or past events that have been documented (Mulyasa, 2009). Documentation is carried out to obtain or know something with books or archives relating to the study. The documentation was used to obtain data from the Potensi Utama University forth semester students of the Informatics Engineering study program. Documentation is also in the form of recordings during the study, which is a recording of the learning process of English vocabulary using the taboo word game approach. In this study the media used to collect the data was HP. The researcher asked the students to following the rule of the game and the researcher recorded by using HP. The two assessors analyzed the speaking of the students.

Research Procedures

The research procedures started by giving pre-test to the students. The score of the students in pre-test is a measurement of their competence in the vocabulary. The pre-test applied before giving treatment.
In the first stage, students are asked to work on vocabulary problems. Students are asked to pair English words with their synonyms in English and use the vocabulary according to their context to complete the sentence. Student work is then assessed and its value is used as a pre-test score.

In the next stage, students were given treatment with the game Taboo Words during 6 Interpretative and Affective Reading lectures (6 weeks). This Taboo Words game is carried out with the help of props called word cards.

In the next stage, students were asked to work on vocabulary problems again. The results of the work are then used as post-test scores. The last stage, students were asked to fill out a questionnaire about how they thought about Interpretative and Affective Reading lectures and their opinions about the Taboo Words game. This questionnaire aims to help analyze the extent to which this game can help students.

After the writer sure that the students understood about how to play the game, finally the students were given post-test. The students came to the real speak, during the speaking process the two assessors taken the scores of each student. And the scores of the two assessors taken from the average score. The result of this post-test used to saw the effect of Taboo Word Game to improve the students’ vocabulary ability.

**Pre-Test**

The pre-test administered before the treatment. The pre-test given to all students. The aim of the pre-test is to find out the homogeneity in the mean score of students. In doing the pre-test, the students will ask to answer some question based on their understanding about vocabulary. And then students’ scores were calculated according to the criteria of assessment.

**Treatment**

The treatment was conducted to the experimental group. The experimental group taught by using Taboo Word Game and another group taught by conventional method.

**Post-Test**

After given the treatment, the writer were given test to class which teach in Taboo Word Game group then were collected their scores.
Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis is one way to solve research problems. Using data analysis can answer and test hypotheses (Nazir, 2003). Analysis of the data of this study used an independent t-test, independent t-test was used to compare two groups that were independent or not bound to each other. To be analyzed using independent t-test research data must meet several assumptions, namely: subject > 30, normal data and homogeneous variance (Sapp, 1999). The analysis in this study was carried out using computerized statistical software to see how effective the Taboo Word Game (X) was to improve vocabulary (Y).

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Table 1. Homogeneity Test for N-Gain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>10.977</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on table 1 the F value obtained is 10.977 with the Sig. (p) 0.02 (p> 0.01). because the significance value is greater than 0.01 this states that H0 is accepted, which means that the two groups are homogeneous variances. Based on the results of the analysis, the data used to view the t-value is the data at equal variances assumed.

Table 2. The mean gain score of the experimental and control groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post Test</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>74.07</td>
<td>5.265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>81.23</td>
<td>8.455</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the data analysis on table 2, the mean of the experimental group (M = 81.23) was higher than the mean of the control group (M = 74.07). This means that there are significant differences between the mean of the experimental group and the control group.
Based on the data analysis on table 3, it shows the t value of 3.941 with a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$), meaning that there is a significant difference between the results of the post-test experimental group and the control group. To find out the significance it needs to be compared with the t-table value. The t-table value for the free degree 58 ($df = 60-2$) is 2.66329. The t-count value is greater than the t-table value, so it can be stated that Taboo Word Game can improve students' English vocabulary skills.

Taboo Word Game gives significant influence to the students' achievement in vocabulary. The students got improved in vocabulary. In teaching and learning process, the students paid attention to the teacher’s explanation. The students were interested with the Taboo Word Game. In this research, Taboo Word Game is more improve students’ scores in vocabulary than conventional teaching method. Games are an effective strategy in increasing student participation in class activities (Nurisnaini, 2000).

Based on research conducted by Mariyana (1999). He found that by using games, students became more interested, actively involved, and motivated in learning activities. The game also helps students build good relationships with their friends and improve their achievement in learning English. Cross (1992) and Martin (2000) argue that games reduce tension by adding fun and humor to the lesson, and they add an element of competitiveness that motivates students to participate.

Arini (2016) found that the use of taboo games in practicing student pronunciation has activated student participation in class. The repetition used by students to explain back taboo words helps them to practice their pronunciation. Most students in the class are enthusiastic about the game. This relates to students' attitudes towards implementing taboo games related to their pronunciation and vocabulary.

Taboo Games are effectively used in English teaching methods. Another researcher, Susilo (2014) also found that taboo games had a significant effect on improving the speaking skills of 9th grade students.

**Discussions**

The data were obtained from the students achievement scores of the test of vocabulary. They were pre-test and post-test scores from the experimental (Taboo Word
Game) and control group (Conventional Teaching Method). The mean score of experimental group Taboo Word Game was 81.23 the mean score for control group using Conventional Teaching Method was 74.07. The t-count value (3.941) is greater than the t-table value (2.66329), so it can be stated that Taboo Word Game can improve students' English vocabulary skills.

This game is responded to well by students so it makes the atmosphere of lectures better because students feel the game avoids boredom so that they make them more relaxed and comfortable in following the lessons. Students hope the game for this course will be more varied so that they make them better at receiving material.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion
After doing research in Potensi Utama University, the writer can see the improvement of students. Based on the previous discussion, the writer gets the conclusion of this research as follows:

1. Taboo Word Game Strategy is one of the ways that can be used to improve students’ vocabulary ability in teaching and learning process specially in speaking, besides it also motivates and encourages them to deliver their arguments and ideas.

2. Learning can be done in so many way, one of them by playing a game. Because games reduce tension by adding fun and humor to lessons, and students add an element of competitiveness that motivates students to participate. So it is also the ways and can be applied to improve students’ learning ability in teaching speaking because most of Indonesian students are lack of vocabulary for what they should say and bravery to speak.

3. It was proved by the obtained score of independent sample t test. The t-test showed that t-score of Taboo Word Game was more higher than t-score of Conventional teaching method. It meant that Ha (alternative hypotheses) was accepted and Ho (null hypotheses) was rejected.

Suggestion
After doing this research, the writer finds some suggestions, they are:

1. The English teacher can apply Taboo Word Game in class to improve students’ vocabulary.
2. Both teacher and students should be ready in applying the process of teaching and learning by using Taboo Word Game strategy.

3. Implications for further researchers who wants to continue this research, are expected to expand the area of research, not just one generation of students. In addition, it can also involve students from other semesters. In its operations, other researchers can also use other types of games to improve English vocabulary, for example with flash card games, ludo games, and so on.

**Limitations**

The research carried out at the University of Potential Utama is carried out seriously by lecturer and researcher. Lecturer and researcher have tried their best to get the results as planned. However, in the implementation of this research there are still shortcomings, including:

1. The instrument used in the study did not go through a validation test
2. Inadequate ratio of samples and assessors.

**REFERENCES**


