Acting Out a Memory-based Game in Classroom: A Study on Elementary School Students' English Proficiency

Suparwoto Sapto Wahono,
UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember
Corresponding Email: itsdelladon@gmail.com

Sayyidah Indah Nadella Ahmad,
UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember
Corresponding Email: itsdelladon@gmail.com

Putri Nuril Hidayah,
UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember
Corresponding Email: itsdelladon@gmail.com

Faradifah Prilia Putri,
UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember
Corresponding Email: itsdelladon@gmail.com

Abstract

English lessons in Indonesia still have various problems as it serves as a foreign language (EFL). This research aimed to solve elementary students problems in learning English by introducing the memory match game technique. Conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Al-Hidayah in Jember, the study utilizes Classroom Action Research (CAR) methodology, emphasizing a cyclical process of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The collaborative approach involves the researcher as the English teacher employing the memory match game, with the real English teacher serving as an observer. Results indicate that 71.43% of class IV students actively participated in the game, showcasing engagement without seeking assistance, while 28.57% appeared less active. The study highlights the potential efficacy of the memory match game technique in early English language education and calls for continued research to enhance teaching and learning practices.

INTRODUCTION

The acquisition of English as a second language is of utmost significance in today's interconnected and globalized world. Fluency in English is not just a language ability, but a crucial factor for achieving success in academics and progressing in one's career. English is the main language used for teaching and communication in many top universities and research institutions worldwide. A proficient mastery of the English language is crucial for individuals who are pursuing higher education and research opportunities, as it enables them to actively engage and understand the international academic community. Hence, the significance of acquiring proficiency in English goes well beyond just language skills, acting as a crucial advantage for both academic and professional growth.

The acquisition of English not only has practical uses but also plays a crucial role in enhancing cognitive and intellectual growth. Acquiring proficiency in a second language, such as English, improves cognitive adaptability, problem-solving aptitude, and ingenuity. Research has indicated that individuals who are bilingual frequently demonstrate enhanced cognitive abilities, such as improved memory retention and the capacity to multitask effectively. English, as a language abundant in literary works and cultural manifestations, grants learners the opportunity to explore a wide range of literary masterpieces, scientific progress, and cultural complexities. In essence, the significance of acquiring English proficiency extends beyond just language skills, acting as a driving force for cognitive development, fostering intercultural comprehension, and providing a route to worldwide involvement and achievement.

Introducing English from an early age allows students to absorb and apply it quickly and easily. The introduction of English to elementary school students is one of the efforts to instill the ability of English as a foreign language. English lessons in elementary schools are local content subjects taught according to need. English lessons are fundamental to be taught young because they easily remember lessons (Espinar & Rodríguez, 2019). As stated, children are active and easy to remember. Elementary school children tend to learn from the environment around them, either from their peers or from adults. Therefore, the children's sensitivity and enthusiasm for learning English are very high. The opinion (Juhana, 2014) states that sharing many experiences for children learning the language is very important.Widiastuti, 2019). Walia (2016) says that effective learning certainly has an impact on learning outcomes. As an English teacher can make learning more creative, therefore a teacher must have a broad insight because English is a subject that is less attractive to EFL students. Therefore, teachers must be able to create a conducive and fun learning atmosphere. Muslimin, Sutapa , and Wardah (2017) say that games are an effective way to teach vocabulary.

One of the English learning strategies using games is Memory Matching Game. Thibodeau and Lemos (2021) state that games have been integral to the development of cognitive science. Memory Matching Game (MMG) is one of games used in teaching and learning English. Klimova (2015) says that the memory matching game technique itself is a technique that involves participants who will be asked to find matching words, pictures, or cards. This game is a very effective method to learn more vocabulary and make students remember vocabulary more easily. as stated by Allen (2006) says that memory matching games are one example of an alternative word, card or picture matching game that also helps people understand words and concepts in a more engaging way. Agustina, Indrowati, and Probosari (2018: 20) state that memory match game is a game that tests and trains the ability to identify, recognize and remember pictures in a certain order.

In addition, Games play an important role in the history of cognitive scientific research (Gray, 2017), memory matching games have a number of properties that make them attractive and fun learning paradigms. Learning vocabulary is not limited to learning words partially. Based on the results of previous research and existing theories, matching games can be a good way to teach and deliver material in an easy and fun way. Vocabulary can be phrases, expressions or idioms. As stated by Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) have observed that most of the English language consists of lexical phrases, which range from phrasal verbs (two or three words) to longer expressions.

Some of the problems that exist in the research location include lack of student motivation in learning English, lack of vocabulary mastery, lack of student confidence in actualizing English, especially in conversation. This study aims to improve the shortcomings experienced by students in English language learning.

METHODS

The research design used in this study is a collaborative classroom action research, involving collaboration with the English teacher of Madrasah Aliyah Al-Hidayah Jember. This study used classroom action research involving several stages consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. This type of research is used to provide solutions to problems that exist in the classroom. This research was conducted in class IV elementary school. The number of research subjects was 21 students. The success criterion in this study is if students achieve a score of 60. This is because English is still a foreign language. Due to time constraints, researchers only conducted in one cycle. In addition, in that cycle the researcher considered students had reached the specified criteria.

According to Kember (2000) statement that action research has several main characteristics, those are; (1) action research is concerned with social practice which it involves direct interaction of teacher and group of students (2) action research is aimed towards improvement (3) action research is a cyclical process which involves some phases of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (4) action research is pursued by systematic inquiry (5) action research is participative.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were taken from the results of pre-test and post-test given to the fourth grade students of MI Al-Hidayah. Students were asked to participate in the memory matching game. After collecting data, the researcher analyzed it to get a percentage of the research results. The data are displayed as follows:

Table 1. The result of pre-test and post-test.

No.	Students' Initial	Pre-test Score	Post-test score
1	ED	60	75
2	ST	65	70
3	ADM	75	77
4	DV	75	80
5	PTR	76	76
6	DMS	55	80
7	RK	48	75
8	WND	56	60
9	LA	60	70
10	ML	60	75
11	IN	55	60
12	RND	35	65
13	MRTN	45	55
14	SRH	52	65
15	RK	56	56
16	LL	56	60
17	CC	60	60
18	DLL	72	72
19	FRH	46	50
20	NRL	58	58
21	TM	40	40
Total		**1205**	**1379**
Mean		**57,38**	**65,67**

From the table 1, it can be explained that there were 12 students who obtained scores between 35-59. Meanwhile, there were 5 students who obtained scores of 60-69. Then there were 4 students who obtained scores of 70-89. This means that students' proficiency in English is still below average. The data can be seen in the figure below.
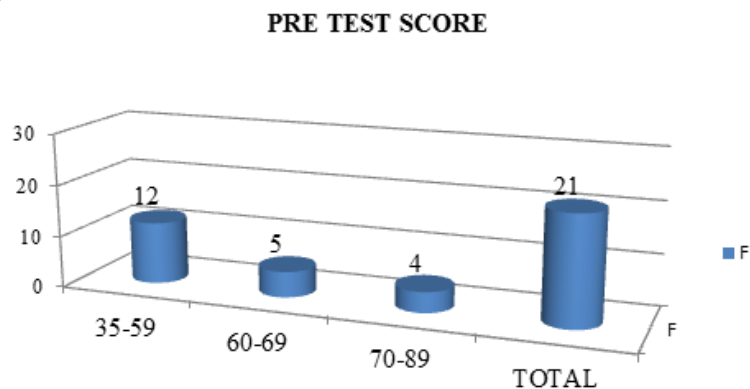

Figure 1. Pre-test score

Furthermore, there are 5 students who obtained scores between 40-59. Meanwhile, there were 6 students who obtained scores of 60-69. Then there were 10 students who obtained scores of 70-89. The data can be seen from figure 2 below.
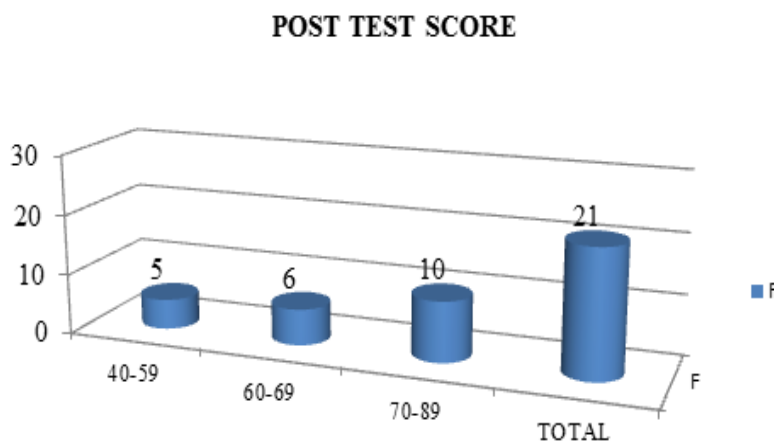

Figure 2. Post-test score

There are several important notes in the results of this study that cause students' abilities to increase. They are 1) students are motivated by using memory matching games techniques, 2) students feel happy with learning methods, 3) learning activities are more active and interactive. The results of this study are in

line with Lina's research (2020) which states that memory matching games can improve students' vocabulary skills which can be seen from the pre-test results to be better in the post-action test results on figures I and II, and this opinion is also supported by Mujib and Rahmawati (2012: 29) that the memory matching game is one of the games that has educational elements and is obtained from the educational game section. Rahmawati et al. (2020) also proved that the memory matching game technique can improve students' vocabulary skills.

The memory matching game learning method can be used as an alternative to learning English in elementary schools. By using this method, learning in class will be more fun. This can increase students' interest in learning English such as mastering English vocabulary faster due to interesting and fun learning. As stated by Tapilouw & Setiawan (2008) that increased retention can be assisted by using learning media, namely through interactive multimedia technology-based learning the example is the memory matching game. Memory matching game can enhance students' retention because through this game students will be more enthusiastic in learning English, students will try to remember and memorize what they get in the game. This game will make students interested because it is visual-based. With this memory matching game, students can learn with interesting methods through games. Basically, this memory matching game is based on memory. Sadia (2008) says that critical thinking cannot only be taught through the lecture method, because critical thinking is an active process. Critical thinking can be taught by encouraging students to be more active such as creating learning that involves students directly. This can build critical thinking skills. Critical thinking can be taught through empirical data and problems given (Masek, 2011).

Retention of students using memory matching game will be more than students who do not use the method, this indicates that this method can stimulate and involve students' cognitive structures (Herlanti, Rustaman, & Setiawan (2007). This achievement proves that the memory matching game technique can train and improve English language skills. Sutama (2014) said that with this technique, students involve various aspects of critical thinking skills, namely logical thinking, inductive, deductive, evaluative, providing logical arguments in decision making.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there was no significant difference between male and female students' speaking anxiety in performing English poems. The level of anxiety for poetry performance was mostly in the state of moderate, which shows that the students still got problems on coping themselves with public speaking performance. However, this problem was just slight and they could overcome it better with the treatment of public speaking practice. Next, it is also concluded

that there was no significant difference on male and female students' anxiety dealing with their poetry performance. The possible causes for the result were related to similarity of treatments given by their speaking and creative writing teachers for male and female students in class; as well as the similarity on their psychological performance for poetry.

This study did not examine the factors caused the slight difference of poetry performance done by male and female students deeply. Therefore, it is suggested to further research to conduct phenomenology research dealing with factors causing the slight difference of poetry performance based on gender.

REFERENCES

Agustina, K., Indrowati, M., Probosari. RM. (2018). Penerapan Guided Inquiry Berbantu Memory Match Game untuk Meningkatkan Retensi dan Kemampuan Berpikir Kritis Siswa Kelas X SMA Implementing Guided Inquiry with Memory Match Game to Improve Students' Retention and Critical Thinking Skill. *Jurnal Pembelajaran Biologi*, 7 (1) 20.

Allen, J. (2006). *Words, Words, Words: Teaching Vocabulary In Grades 4–12*. Portland: Stenhouse Publishers.

Astawa, I Nengah, Mantra, Ida Bagus Nyoman, & Widiastuti, Ida Ayu Made Sri. (2019). Communicative English Language Test: A Prospective Measuring Device For Tourism Practitioners' Employability. *Paper presented at the The 9th International Conference Rural Research & Planning Group*.

Espinar, Angela María Larrea, & Rodríguez, Antonio R Raigón. (2019). The development of culture in English foreign language textbooks: the case of English File. *LFE: Revista de lenguas para fines específicos*, 25(2), 114-133.

Gray, W. D. (2017). *Game-xp: Action games as experimental paradigms for cognitive science*. Wiley Online Library.

Herlanti, Y., Rustaman, N. Y., & Setiawan, W. (2007, April). Kontribusi Wacana Multimedia Terhadap Pemahaman dan Retensi Siswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan IPA: Metamorfosa* , 29-38.

Juhana. (2014). Teaching English to Young Learners: Some Points to be Considered. *Asian Journal of Education and e-Learning* (ISSN: 2321 – 2454) 02 (0.1).

Kember, D. (2000). *Action Learning and Action Research*. London: Kogan Page Limited

Klimova, B. F. (2015). Games In The Teaching English. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Science*, 191 (2015), 1157-1160.

Lina, M, C. (2021). *The Effectiveness of Matching Game Techniq In Teaching Vocabbulary At The Seven Grade Of SMP Negeri 1 Muara Teweh School Year 2019/2021*. Unpublished thesis, Universitas Islam Kalimantan MAB.

Masek, A. (2011). The Effect of Problem Based Learning on Critical Thinking Ability: A Theorical and Empirical Review. *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities* , 2 (1), 215-221.

Mujib, F. & Nailur, (2012). *Metode Permainan-permainan Edukatif dalam Belajar Bahasa Arab.* Yogyakarta : Diva Press

Muslimin, M., et al. (2017). The Use of Matching Game to Support Vocabulary Building for Learning Specific Terms in Local Folklore. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Untan*, vol. 6, no. 10, 13 Oct. 2017.

Nattinger, J. & De Carrico, J. (1992). *Lexical Phrases and Language Teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rahmawati, E.B. Marpaung, M. Siburian, S. Sitorus, PA. (2020). Improving Students' Vocabulary by Using Word Matching Technique of The Seven Grade SMP TD Pardede Foundation. *Journal of English Education, Linguistic, Linguistic and Literature English Department of STKIP PGRI Jombang. 6*(2), 2598-3059.

Sadia, I. W. (2008). Model Pembelajaran yang Efektif Untuk Meningkatkan Ketrampilan Berpikir Kritis (Suatu Persepsi Guru). *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran Undiksha, 2* (2), 19-237.

Sutama, I. N., Arnyana, I. B., & Swasta, I. B. (2014). Pengaruh Model Pembelajaran Inkuiri Terhadap Kemampuan Berpikir Kritis Dan Kinerja Ilmiah Pada Pembelajaran Biologi Kelas XI IPA SMA Negeri 2 Amlapura. *e-Journal Program Pascasarjana Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha* , 4.

Tapilouw, F., & Setiawan, W. (2008). Meningkatkan Pemahaman dan Retensi Siswa Melalui Pembelajaran Berbasis Teknologi Multimedia Interaktif. *Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi* , 1 (2), 19-25.

Thibodeau, Paul H., Lemos, Mikaela de. (2021). Exploring Mental Representation with a Memory Matching Game. *Journal Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, 43*(43)

Walia. (2016). Pengelolaan Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Melalui Permainan Gambar Things Around Us Pada Siswa Smk. *Jurnal Manajer Pendidikan, 10*(4), page. 381-385