

The Effect of Guessing Game on Students' Vocabulary Acquisition at FLC Selong

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Abstract

Vocabulary is an important component in language acquisition, but many beginner students still have difficulty in remembering and using vocabulary in real contexts. Therefore, The objective of the current research is to evaluate how effective the Guessing Game at the Foreign Language Center (FLC) Selong helps students expand their vocabulary in English. This study utilized a quantitative approach with a single group pre-test and post-test design. 20 Level 1 learners that were purposefully chosen made up the research sample. The instrument used was vocabulary tests. According to the findings, students' pre-test average score was 66.50, yet their post-test average score rose to 77.00. The results of the paired sample t-test revealed a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test, with a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000 < 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of Guessing Game was significantly effective in improving students' mastery of English vocabulary. In addition, students showed a positive response to the game-based learning activities as it was considered fun, lowered anxiety, and increased their confidence in using vocabulary.

Keywords: Guessing Game; Vocabulary Acquisition; English Language Learning; Interactive Strategy

INTRODUCTION

The widespread use of English as a second language has an impact on numerous sectors of society, including business, education, and culture. According to the Education First EF (2022), English functions as the most widely spoken second language globally and plays an important role in international communication. This shows that in today's era, language is not only used for everyday conversation but also helps to connect people from different country to unlock more opportunities in various aspects. In addition, according to Crystal (2020), English now takes the most crucial position as a global communication tool. Therefore, educational institutions in various countries, including Indonesia, began to focus on effective English language teaching. This process is not just about introducing grammar, but started from mastering vocabulary as the main foundation of understand and mastering the language effectively.

In developing English language skills, vocabulary plays a very crucial role, because this aspect is the main foundation for writing, reading, listening, and speaking skills. Nation (2022) stated that vocabulary is the main component of language. The students have difficulty to understand the meaning or convey their ideas in a proper way if their vocabulary lacks of words. That is why developing vocabulary mastery needs to be a primary focus, especially for English language learners. In this case, teachers are required to not only introduce new words, but also help students understand the use of the words in real daily contexts. This approach has usually

been found and applied in several English language teaching institutions, including Foreign Language Center (FLC) Selong.

Foreign Language Center (FLC) Selong is one of the English language learning institutions that makes vocabulary teaching as one of their learning focuses. Its regular learning activities use interactive strategies such as working in groups, role-playing, multimedia presentations, and so on. The method used coincides with the communicative approach to language instruction, which stresses language use in authentic contexts. Patmi & Sabaruddin (2021) stated that communicative language teaching (CLT) is effective in teaching vocabulary because it involves students actively through pictures and game, which helps them understand the meaning of words more easily and increases learning motivation. However, even though this strategy has been applied, not all students are immediately able to master new vocabulary fluently in communication. A study by Fauzi & Ridwan (2025) shows that although CLT can improve students' speaking abilities, challenges remain in helping them use vocabulary fluently and confidently in real life communication. This fact shows that students still need additional efforts in order to be more confident in using the words they have learned.

Based on the writer's experience teaching at FLC Selong, students often show high enthusiasm during fun and interactive learning activities such as games, group discussions, or vocabulary quizzes. However, when asked to use the new vocabulary in short conversations or daily descriptions, many of them struggle to recall or pronounce the words confidently. This creates a gap between what students have learned and what they can actually perform in real use. Even though the teaching method is already creative and engaging, students still need more opportunities to apply the vocabulary repeatedly in real context. This issue supports what Zhang (2022) pointed out, that vocabulary fluency requires frequent exposure and practical usage. Therefore, there is a need for learning strategies that help students become more confident and consistent in using vocabulary. One possible strategy is the Guessing Game, which allows students to engage in a fun, low-pressure way while still practicing vocabulary in meaningful communication.

The difference between the learning process and real practice in vocabulary learning is one of the reasons students find it difficult to apply the vocabulary they have learned. According to Harselina et al. (2024), students often struggle with vocabulary mastery, particularly with prepositions, verbs, and pronouns, highlighting the need for more practical application in learning. This indicates that teaching vocabulary is not enough just by explaining the theory. As highlighted by Batu & Hashim (2022) gamification can be a useful tool in learning vocabulary, as it enhances students' vocabulary knowledge, motivation, and other language skills such as speaking and reading. Teachers need to create situations that encourage students to use words actively and repeatedly in the right context. One way that can be used to bridge this is through educational game that are still fun and full of meaning.

Guessing Game can be an interesting and effective alternative to overcome students' difficulties in using vocabulary in real contexts. This is supported by a study conducted by Siswanto & Astutik (2022), which showed that students' vocabulary mastery improved significantly from an average score of 60.69 to 86.67 after the implementation of Guessing Game in classroom activities. Students will more easily understand the use of vocabulary through some of the activities of Guessing Game, such as guessing based on clues or describing words. According to a study by Siregar et al., (2023), Guessing Game can help students increase understanding, participation, confidence, and reduce stress. The ability to adapt students' learning styles, whether dominant in oral, auditory, or logical thinking aspects, is also one of the advantages of this strategy. Based on Putri & Suryati (2020), adapting teaching strategies to learners' learning

styles, such as kinesthetic, visual, or auditory, can increase participation and comprehension. Therefore, to improve students' learning experience, this strategy is worth considering. As an English language learning institution that has been accustomed to using innovative learning strategies, implementing Guessing Game at FLC Selong will be a suitable complement to existing the strategy. This strategy is easily customized to various classroom activities, such as group work or repetition sessions. It can also be used in a variety of ways, such as using word instructions, picture cards, or identifying specific topic categories. According to Küçük (2023), using interactive game like miming and matching activities helps students better retain vocabulary by involving physical movement and visual stimuli. Besides helping students learn in a fun way, it also encourages collaboration between students and boosts their confidence in speaking English. Fitriyana et al. (2021) added that this type of game also plays a role in creating a positive learning atmosphere because it can reduce anxiety and maintain student motivation. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effect of the Guessing Game on students' vocabulary learning and their ability to use new words in daily communication. Considering FLC Selong's readiness and learning capacity, the study focuses on evaluating how effectively the Guessing Game helps students acquire, retain, and confidently apply new vocabulary in context-based communication, both before and after its implementation.

METHOD

The current investigation adopted the method of quantitative research to examine how the Guessing Game affected the vocabulary growth of FLC Selong students. Saunders et al. (2022) stated that quantitative research uses a positivist approach where data is gathered through standardized instruments and analyzed statistically to test hypotheses. The research adopted a one group pre-test and post-test design. The research procedure was structured into three main phases. First, a pre-test (O_1) was given to evaluate students' vocabulary knowledge before the treatment. Second, the treatment (X) was delivered, in which students engaged in vocabulary-based Guessing Game aimed at improving both their understanding and usage of new words. Third, a post-test (O_2) was administered to measure the level of vocabulary development after the learning activity. By comparing the scores from the pre-test and post-test, the researcher could draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of Guessing Game in enhancing students' vocabulary acquisition.

The research was carried out at FLC Selong, an English learning center located in East Lombok. The course is divided into four levels: Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4. New students can enroll every month, and all of them start from Level 1. After completing one level, students move up to the next in the following month. For instance, students who complete Level 1 will continue to Level 2 next month. This progression continues each month until they reached Level 4. When students complete all levels from Level 1-Level 4, they officially graduate from the program. The participants were selected from a Level 1 of batch 40 at FLC Selong. Although the Level 1 of batch 40 consisted of 65 students, the researcher purposively selected a sample of 20 students. This smaller sample was chosen for practical reasons, such as ensuring manageable data collection and focusing on students who regularly attended and participated actively. These students were appropriate for the study because they are at the beginning stage of English learning and were developing their basic vocabulary skills. Their involvement in the Guessing Game treatment was expected to enhance their vocabulary acquisition.

The data for this study were collected in three main phases. First, a pre-test was administered to determine the students' initial vocabulary knowledge before any treatment was given. This served as a baseline to compare later results. Next, the treatment phase took place, where students participated in several classroom sessions using the Guessing Game strategy. These sessions were designed to help students actively engage with and practice new vocabulary. In

the final phase, a post-test was administered in exactly the same manner as the pre-test. This post-test was designed to evaluate if the students' vocabulary has improved during the course of treatment. Data collected from the pre-test and post-test were quantitatively analyzed using a paired sample t-test to compare students' vocabulary scores before and after the intervention. Prior to the t-test, a normality test was performed to verify that the data distribution meets the assumptions for parametric analysis. The analysis was conducted using statistical software such as SPSS to determine whether the Guessing Game strategy significantly affected vocabulary mastery.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

1. Descriptive Statistics

Researchers in this study analyzed the collected data using descriptive statistics. The mean and standard deviation of the student test results were the goals of this analysis. According to the analysis's findings, the pre-test's mean was 66.50 with a standard deviation of 13.679. A standard deviation of 14.364 was observed in the post-test, while the mean rose to 77.00. Following treatment, this rise in the mean score showed that the students' abilities had improved. The table that follows displays the specifics of the descriptive statistics results:

Table 1. The Result of Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	20	45	95	66.50	13.679
Posttest	20	55	100	77.00	14.364

2. Statistics Required for Testing Hypothesis

a. Normality Testing

The Shapiro-Wilk test was used in this investigation to determine the normality of the data. According to the analysis's findings, the pre-test and post-test data had significance scores higher than 0.05, indicating that they were normally distributed. For the pre-test data, the significance value was 0.430, and for the post-test data, it was 0.195. A statistically normal distribution of the pre-test and post-test data could be inferred as both of these values were above the significance level of 0.05. Table 2 displays the Shapiro-Wilk test results in detail.

Table 2. The result of Shapiro-Wilk

	Statistics	df	Sig
Pre-test	.136	20	.430
Post-test	.137	20	.195

b. Homogeneity Testing

The One-Way ANOVA approach was used to perform a homogeneity test to ascertain whether the variance of the data was homogeneous. According to the test results, the significance value was 0.611, higher than the 0.05 threshold. This suggests that the variance of the data in this investigation is homogeneous. Therefore, it can be said that one of the prerequisites for parametric statistical tests is met by the pre-test and post-test data.

Table 3. Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.263	1	38	0.611

3. Testing Hypothesis

The researcher used the Paired Sample t-Test as a statistical test to assess whether the Guessing Game's use had a significant impact on students' vocabulary growth in English. According to the test results, the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) was below than the significance limit ($\alpha = 0.05$), at 0.000. This suggests that the vocabulary scores of the pupils before and after the treatment differed significantly. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis (H1) was accepted and the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected. This indicates that the use of guessing games at the Foreign Language Center (FLC) Selong has a significant impact on students' vocabulary mastery. The fact that students' average score increased from 66.50 on the pre-test to 77.00 on the post-test further supported this conclusion.

Table 4. Paired Samples Test

	T	Df	Sig 2 tailed
Pair 1 Pre-test post-test	-5.207	19	.000

Discussion

This study sought to examine the impact of the Guessing Game on students' English vocabulary development. The findings indicated a meaningful improvement in students' vocabulary acquisition after the treatment. The statistical test confirmed that this improvement was significant, demonstrating that the Guessing Game was effective in enhancing learners' vocabulary mastery. These results suggest that incorporating interactive and game-based strategies into English language learning can foster greater student engagement, motivation, and confidence. The Guessing Game, in particular, provides students with opportunities to practice vocabulary in a dynamic and enjoyable context, which not only aids retention but also encourages active participation. This aligns with previous studies highlighting the effectiveness of gamification in language learning, as it combines cognitive processing with social interaction, thereby reinforcing learning outcomes. In this regard, the Guessing Game can be considered a valuable pedagogical tool for vocabulary instruction, especially for beginner-level learners who need repeated exposure and practical application to internalize new words. This finding supports the theory of Li & Zhang (2022), which states that games in language learning can create a more fun learning atmosphere, motivate students to be active, and help them understand and remember vocabulary more effectively. In addition, these results were also in line with research from Sayd & Nazarudin (2022) which concluded that the use of Guessing Games was proven effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery because it combines cognitive elements and social interaction in the learning process. Therefore, it can be concluded that Guessing Game was a relevant and useful method to be used in learning English vocabulary in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the Guessing Game had a positive and significant impact on students' vocabulary mastery at Foreign Language Center (FLC) Selong. The improvement observed between the pre-test and post-test results demonstrates that this strategy effectively supported learners in acquiring and applying new vocabulary. These results emphasize the value of interactive learning methods in overcoming vocabulary retention challenges faced by beginner-level learners. The evidence suggests that the enhancement in students' performance was a direct outcome of the structured use of Guessing Game activities, rather than chance. Accordingly, this strategy holds strong potential for broader application in other EFL contexts, where it can serve as an engaging and practical approach to vocabulary instruction.

The improvement showed that the Guessing Game method was able to create an interactive learning atmosphere and encourage students to be more active in understanding and using new vocabulary. The activity of guessing words through clues or gestures not only increased students' engagement, but also helped strengthen their memory of the learned words. The learning process became more enjoyable as students not only memorized, but also experienced and interacted directly with the vocabulary in a livelier context. In addition, the approach catered to different learning styles, allowing both visual and kinesthetic learners to benefit from the process. The integration of physical movement, visual cues, and peer collaboration fostered a dynamic classroom environment. This synergy between engagement and practice was a key factor in enhancing vocabulary mastery.

Therefore, Guessing Game can be an effective alternative learning method to improve English vocabulary acquisition, especially in a learning environment that prioritizes active participation and hands-on experience such as at FLC Selong. Its flexibility allows it to be adapted for various topics, difficulty levels, and classroom sizes, making it a versatile pedagogical tool. The method also supports learner autonomy, as students become more confident in exploring and using new vocabulary outside the classroom. Ultimately, Guessing Game offers not only measurable academic benefits but also contributes to building students' long-term language learning motivation.

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