

ABSTRACT

Vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role in English learning, particularly for elementary school students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. However, many learners still struggle to understand, retain, and apply English vocabulary due to conventional teaching methods that mainly rely on memorization. This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of language games in improving students' vocabulary mastery, identify the types of games that are most effective for vocabulary learning, and analyze their impact on students' motivation and classroom participation. The research employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) using the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which includes planning, action, observation, and reflection stages. The study was conducted at SD Sultan Iskandar Muda with 40 fourth-grade students as participants. Data were collected through vocabulary tests (pre-test and post-test), observation sheets, interviews, and documentation. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used for data analysis. The quantitative results showed a significant improvement in students' vocabulary achievement. The mean score increased from 58.4 in the pre-test to 68.7 in Cycle I post-test, and further rose to 82.3 in Cycle II post-test. The percentage of students who reached the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) also improved, from 30% in the pre-test to 55% in Cycle I and 85% in Cycle II. In addition, qualitative findings indicated that language games such as word matching, memory card games, guessing games, and simple role-play activities were effective in enhancing vocabulary retention and usage. These activities also positively influenced students' motivation, participation, and confidence during learning.

Keywords: Vocabulary Mastery; Language Games; EFL; Classroom Action Research; Student Motivation; Elementary School Students.