CLASSROOM OBSERVATION ON USING SCRABBLE GAME IN TEACHING VOCABULARY

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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary is an essential component in learning English as a foreign language, serving as the fundamental foundation for mastering key skills such as reading, writing, and speaking. However, many students face significant difficulties in memorizing and understanding new words due to monotonous and conventional teaching methods that often lack student engagement. This study aims to observe and describe the implementation of the Scrabble game as an innovative learning medium in teaching vocabulary. The research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method through direct classroom observation to capture phenomena as they occur naturally. The subjects were the 10th-grade students of MA Darul Ulum Amessangeng. Data were collected systematically using observation checklists, detailed field notes, and documentation. The results showed that the use of the Scrabble game created a highly fun, collaborative, and interactive learning atmosphere. It significantly increased students' intrinsic motivation, activeness, and overall participation during the teaching and learning process. Additionally, the game helped students improve their practical ability to spell words correctly, recognize diverse meanings, and arrange sentences with proper structure. The study concludes that Scrabble is an effective, enjoyable, and sustainable medium to enhance students' vocabulary mastery, making it a highly recommended tool for English teachers in similar educational contexts.

Keywords: Classroom Observation, Scrabble Game, Vocabulary Mastery, Teaching Media, Qualitative Descriptive.

1) INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is basically the collection of words we know in a language that allows us to talk and share ideas in our daily lives. The studies from Mbere et al., (2025) Vocabulary mastery is one of the most essential components in learning English. Hrp, (2023) Without sufficient vocabulary, students cannot communicate effectively or express their ideas both orally and in writing. Another study from Anthonius et al., (2023) Learning vocabulary is often considered boring and difficult by students. Afidah et al., (2022) Conventional methods such as memorizing word lists, copying definitions, and translating texts tend to make students passive and less interested.

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To overcome this problem, teachers need to apply innovative and interesting learning methods. Arslan, 2024) One of the effective alternatives is using educational games. Wulandari, (2021) Games are believed to make the learning process more enjoyable and reduce students' anxiety. Scrabble is one such game that is not only entertaining but also educational. (Anthonius 2023) Playing Scrabble in groups promotes active participation and strengthens social bonds among learners. Febrilia et al., (2024) The implementation of Scrabble as an educational tool serves as an effective medium for enhancing students' lexical proficiency. (Mbere 2024) Scrabble continues to be a highly beneficial tool for language learners, providing diverse advantages that range from vocabulary enrichment to the development of cognitive and social abilities. Since Scrabble is inherently a collaborative or competitive group activity, it fosters social engagement and encourages students to become more active participants in their learning environment.

This game requires players to arrange letters into meaningful words, which makes it very suitable for practicing vocabulary and spelling. Another study from Chairani, (2021) Scrabble is a multi-player activity suitable for two or more students, where the primary goal is to accumulate points based on the individual values of the letters used to construct words during the game. Untung Nopriansyah et al., (2024) According to Hajar (2019), Scrabble is a board game designed for two or more individuals or teams. The primary goal is to assemble words from letter tiles to accumulate points, with the winner determined by the total score derived from each word created throughout the match. In pedagogy, Scrabble is utilized as an engaging yet cognitively demanding educational tool. It facilitates active vocabulary acquisition and reinforces linguistic knowledge through kinesthetics practice, allowing students to enhance their memory retention in an organic manner. Afaniya Ika et al., (2025).

This article presents the results of a classroom observation conducted to see how the Scrabble game is used in teaching vocabulary and what effects it has on the students.

2) METHODS

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method. The purpose of this design is to describe the phenomena that occur naturally in the classroom without any manipulation or

treatment. Lambert, (2012). Specifically, this study employs classroom observation to see the real process of teaching and learning vocabulary using the Scrabble game. The observation was carried out at [MA Darul Ulum Amessangeng Maros], specifically in [X Grade] consisting of [20] students.

The instruments used in this research were:

a. Observation Checklist: A list of criteria to assess teacher's activities and students' responses.
b. Field Notes: Used to write additional descriptions, comments, and interesting events during the lesson.
c. Documentation: Photos or videos to support the data.

Data Analysis Technique

The data were analysed descriptively. The researcher analysed the results from the checklist and field notes, then categorized them into themes such as: 1) Classroom atmosphere. 2) Students' participation. 3) Effectiveness of the media.

3) RESULTS

Based on the observation conducted in the classroom, the findings are presented as follows:

The Implementation of Scrabble Game

The teaching and learning process was divided into three stages:

a. Pre-Activity

The teacher started the class by greeting and checking attendance. Then, the teacher explained the topic and reviewed previous materials. The teacher introduced the Scrabble game, explained the rules clearly, and divided the students into small groups.

b. Main Activity

Each group received a set of Scrabble tiles and a board. The students were asked to arrange letters into words based on the theme being studied. The teacher acted as a facilitator, guiding students when they found difficulties in finding words or determining their meanings.

c. Post Activity

The teacher and students concluded the lesson together. The teacher evaluated the activity, corrected mistakes, and gave feedback.

Students' Engagement and Motivation

One of the most significant findings was the high level of student participation.

- Enthusiasm: Students looked very happy and excited. They were more active compared to the usual teaching method.
- Interaction: Students discussed actively within their groups. They helped each other to find possible words based on the letters they had.
- Competition: The competitive nature of the game made students think faster and try harder to get the highest score.

Improvement in Vocabulary Mastery

Through the game, students practiced several skills:

a. Spelling: Students had to arrange letters correctly to form words. This trained their accuracy in spelling.
b. Meaning Recognition: Before writing a word, students had to ensure they knew the meaning, which was checked by the teacher.
c. New Vocabulary: Students learned new words from their friends or other groups during the presentation of answers.

Classroom Atmosphere

The class atmosphere became lively and fun. The noise was controlled and categorized as "productive noise" because it came from discussions and learning activities. Students felt relaxed and enjoyed the lesson, which reduced their fear of making mistakes.

Challenges

During the observation, several minor challenges were found, such as limited time allocation and the limited number of game sets. However, these problems could be overcome by good time management and clear instructions from the teacher.

4) DISCUSSION

The observation shows that using Scrabble in the classroom is an effective way to teach vocabulary. The key findings include: 1) Structured Implementation: The lesson followed a clear three-stage process (Pre, Main, and Post-activity), where the teacher successfully transitioned from an instructor to a facilitator. 2) High Engagement: Students showed more enthusiasm than in traditional lessons. The game's competitive nature and group-based structure encouraged active participation and "productive noise. 3) Skill Development: The game directly improved three areas of vocabulary mastery: Spelling (accuracy), Meaning (understanding), and Acquisition (learning new words from peers). 4) Positive Environment: The fun atmosphere reduced "language anxiety," making students feel comfortable making and correcting mistakes.

These findings align with previous research, including that of Anthonius and Andanti (2023), which demonstrates that using Scrabble as a tool for teaching English vocabulary yields positive results. Implementing Scrabble in the classroom fosters a supportive environment that significantly improves students' vocabulary mastery (Nopriansyah et al., 2024). Furthermore, the use of Scrabble as a learning tool has been shown to heighten student interest in English acquisition compared to baseline levels. This effectiveness is evidenced by the children's increased enthusiasm and active participation throughout the learning sessions. Consequently, the game serves as an efficient medium for vocabulary development, facilitating a shift in student proficiency from "Starting to Develop" to "Developing According to

Expectations" (Qatrunnada & Zuhriyah, 2024). Utilizing Scrabble as an educational instrument not only facilitates a quantitative increase in students' vocabulary but also establishes a pedagogical framework that is both productive and entertaining for young learners (Ikbar, 2025). The efficacy of Scrabble is enhanced by its inherent gamified structure, which establishes a low-stakes, engaging atmosphere. This environment effectively promotes student motivation and encourages peer collaboration (Farich & Wahyuni, 2025).

While the findings are positive, there are several limitations to consider regarding the scope and execution of the observation:

- Resource Constraints: The limited number of Scrabble sets may prevent every student from having equal "hands-on" time with the tiles, potentially leaving some students less engaged than others in larger groups
- Time Sensitivity: Scrabble is a slow-paced game. The observation noted that "limited time" was a challenge, which suggests that students might not have had enough time to finish their games or explore more complex vocabulary.
- Sample Size and Duration: Since this was a single classroom observation, the findings may not represent how students would perform over a long period. It is unclear if the "enthusiasm" was due to the game itself or simply the novelty of doing something different from the "usual method."
- Assessment Depth: The observation focuses on immediate vocabulary recall. It does not measure long-term retention—whether students actually remember and use these new words in their writing or speaking a week later.
- Thematic Restrictions: Because students were asked to find words based only on a specific theme, their creativity might have been limited by the letters they were dealt, sometimes leading to frustration if the "right" letters didn't appear for that theme.

5) CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the classroom observation, it can be concluded that:

The implementation of the Scrabble game in teaching vocabulary runs well and smoothly. The use of Scrabble game effectively increases students' motivation and participation in learning. The game helps students improve their vocabulary mastery, especially in spelling and meaning recognition. The learning atmosphere becomes more enjoyable and less boring. It is recommended that English teachers utilize games like Scrabble as a regular teaching medium to make vocabulary teaching more meaningful and enjoyable for students.

Suggestions

Preparation: Teachers must prepare enough sets of Scrabble or create DIY versions using cardboard/cardstock. Variation: Modify the rules sometimes. For example, require students to make a sentence using the word they just placed to practice grammar as well. Assessment: Combine the game score with a formal assessment to ensure that the educational goal is achieved.

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