Innovative Vocabulary Learning Through Games-Based Learning at SMKN 3 Parepare

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Abstract

Vocabulary is a fundamental aspect of language proficiency, serving as a critical foundation for communication, comprehension, and academic success. However, many vocational high school students face challenges in mastering English vocabulary due to teaching methods that often overlook individual differences in learning needs and abilities. This study explores the implementation of the "Learning Vocabulary" program, designed as part of a teaching assistance initiative at SMKN 3 Parepare, to improve students' vocabulary mastery through personalized and game-based learning methods. The program integrates weekly vocabulary activities involving nouns, adverbs, verbs, and adjectives, utilizing interactive games such as Word Guessing Game, Memory Match, Scrabble, and Role-Playing. These methods aim to foster student motivation and active engagement while addressing individual needs. Data were collected through vocabulary tests, observations, and interviews, and analyzed descriptively. The results reveal significant improvements in students' vocabulary mastery and motivation, highlighting the effectiveness of games-based learning in creating a fun and interactive learning environment. Challenges, including initial resistance to new methods, were addressed through consistent implementation and student adaptation. This study concludes that the "Learning Vocabulary" program, with its focus on individualized and engaging activities, is an effective model for enhancing vocabulary learning in vocational schools.

Keywords: Vocabulary Mastery, Teaching Assistance, Individual Needs, Games-Based Learning, Personalized Education

Abstrak

Kosakata merupakan aspek fundamental dalam kemahiran berbahasa, menjadi dasar penting untuk komunikasi, pemahaman, dan keberhasilan akademik. Namun, banyak siswa sekolah menengah kejuruan menghadapi tantangan dalam menguasai kosakata bahasa Inggris karena metode pembelajaran yang sering kali kurang memperhatikan perbedaan kebutuhan dan kemampuan individu. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi implementasi program "Learning Vocabulary," yang dirancang sebagai bagian dari kegiatan Asistensi Mengajar di SMKN 3 Parepare, untuk meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa melalui pendekatan pembelajaran personal dan berbasis permainan.Program ini mengintegrasikan aktivitas kosakata mingguan yang melibatkan kata benda, kata keterangan, kata kerja, dan kata sifat, dengan menggunakan permainan interaktif seperti Word Guessing Game, Memory Match, Scrabble, dan Role-Playing. Metode ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan motivasi dan keterlibatan aktif siswa sambil memperhatikan kebutuhan individu mereka. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes kosakata, observasi, dan wawancara, kemudian dianalisis secara deskriptif.Hasil penelitian menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan dalam penguasaan kosakata dan motivasi siswa, menyoroti efektivitas pembelajaran berbasis permainan dalam menciptakan suasana belajar yang menyenangkan dan interaktif. Tantangan, seperti resistensi awal terhadap metode baru, diatasi melalui pelaksanaan yang konsisten dan adaptasi siswa. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa program "Learning Vocabulary," dengan fokus pada aktivitas yang personal dan menarik, merupakan model yang efektif untuk meningkatkan pembelajaran kosakata di sekolah kejuruan

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INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary mastery is a fundamental aspect of language learning, particularly in English. Adequate vocabulary forms the cornerstone of supporting skills in speaking, writing, reading, and listening. Without strong vocabulary knowledge, the ability to understand and use language effectively becomes hindered. This is especially crucial in vocational high schools (SMKs), where English proficiency provides students with an added advantage in facing the increasingly global job market.Despite its importance, vocabulary mastery often poses a major challenge for vocational high school students. Many students struggle to recall and use new vocabulary due to monotonous teaching methods that fail to cater to individual needs. Furthermore, limited time and lack of motivation to learn English exacerbate the issue. This situation demands a more innovative, personalized, and student-centered approach to overcome these obstacles.

In response to this challenge, the "Learning Vocabulary" program was designed as an effective solution for vocabulary learning. This program was integrated into the Teaching Assistance activities at SMKN 3 Parepare, conducted by students from Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang. The approach not only focuses on teaching vocabulary but also employs games-based learning methods to create a fun and interactive learning atmosphere.Games-based learning holds great potential in boosting student engagement and motivation. Games such as Word Guessing Game, Memory Match, Scrabble, and Role-Playing allow students to actively participate in learning, both individually and in groups. In addition to aiding vocabulary retention, these games enable students to practice using vocabulary in real-life contexts, thereby enhancing their communicative skills.

The program is also designed to address the individual needs of students. Students with varying levels of ability receive tailored attention to ensure optimal learning outcomes. Through this method, students are not only taught new vocabulary but are also guided to develop learning strategies suited to their needs and learning styles.

The implementation of this program involved two main stages: the preparation stage and the implementation stage. During the preparation stage, the teaching assistants held discussions with English teachers to identify student needs and design the learning plan. The implementation stage was carried out through a series of games-based learning activities conducted over four consecutive weeks, each with a different focus.

The results of this program showed a significant improvement in students' vocabulary mastery. Moreover, students demonstrated increased learning motivation and active engagement in the learning process. This success highlights not only the effectiveness of games-based methods but also the importance of a personalized approach in English vocabulary learning.With the success of this program, this study contributes to the development of more effective and relevant vocabulary teaching methods for vocational high school students. Beyond serving as a model for vocabulary learning, the program can also be adapted to other subjects that require strong vocabulary mastery. Innovative approaches like this are expected to provide solutions to learning challenges in the modern era.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive approach to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the "Learning Vocabulary" program conducted as part of Teaching Assistance activities at SMKN 3 Parepare. The program aimed to improve students' English vocabulary mastery through games-based learning methods tailored to their individual needs.The research process began with a preparation stage, where Teaching Assistance students collaborated with English teachers at SMKN 3 Parepare. Discussions focused on identifying the students' current level of vocabulary mastery and their specific learning challenges. Based on these findings, the Teaching Assistance team designed a structured program

that integrated weekly games-based activities. This stage emphasized the importance of aligning learning strategies with students' abilities to ensure personalized and effective teaching.

The implementation stage was conducted over four weeks, with each week introducing a unique game to enhance vocabulary learning. In Week 1, the Word Guessing Game encouraged students to guess words based on contextual clues provided by their peers. Week 2 introduced Memory Match, where students matched words to their definitions using game cards. Week 3 utilized Scrabble or Boggle to help students form new words and use them in sentences. Finally, Week 4 involved Role-Playing, where students used the learned vocabulary in realistic scenarios to strengthen their practical communication skills.Data collection methods included vocabulary tests, classroom observations, and interviews. Pre- and post-tests were used to measure improvements in vocabulary mastery, providing quantitative data on the program's impact. Observations during the games-focused sessions documented student engagement and participation, while interviews with students and teachers provided qualitative insights into their experiences and the program's effectiveness.

The data analysis process involved comparing pre- and post-test scores to identify vocabulary mastery improvements. Observational data were analyzed to assess engagement levels, and interview responses were reviewed to highlight the program's strengths and areas for improvement. These combined data sources allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of the program's impact.Overall, the research method demonstrated a systematic approach to implementing and evaluating the "Learning Vocabulary" program. By focusing on personalized, interactive, and game-based learning methods, this study provided valuable insights into effective strategies for enhancing vocabulary mastery among vocational high school students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The implementation of the "Learning Vocabulary" program through games-based learning demonstrated significant improvements in students' vocabulary mastery at SMKN 3 Parepare. The pre-test and post-test results showed a notable increase in students' ability to recognize, understand, and use English vocabulary effectively. For example, students who initially struggled with basic vocabulary were able to construct sentences and engage in role-playing activities using the words they learned.

Observations during the program revealed high levels of student engagement and enthusiasm, particularly during interactive activities such as the Word Guessing Game and Memory Match. These games encouraged active participation, teamwork, and a sense of competition, which motivated students to excel. Furthermore, the weekly vocabulary collection activities reinforced their learning, helping students retain new words and apply them in different contexts.Feedback from students and teachers highlighted the program's positive impact on motivation and learning outcomes. Many students expressed that the games-based approach made learning vocabulary enjoyable and less intimidating. Teachers also noted an improvement in classroom dynamics, as students became more confident and willing to communicate in English.

Discussion

The success of the "Learning Vocabulary" program can be attributed to its games-based learning approach, which aligns with constructivist theories of education. By integrating fun and interactive activities, the program created an engaging learning environment where students actively constructed knowledge through participation. This finding supports previous studies that highlight the role of gamification in enhancing student motivation and retention.

One key factor contributing to the program's effectiveness was its focus on individual

needs. By tailoring activities to suit students' varying levels of proficiency, the program ensured that all participants could progress at their own pace. For instance, weaker students received additional guidance during games, while more advanced students were challenged to apply vocabulary in complex scenarios, such as role-playing. This approach aligns with differentiated instruction principles, emphasizing the importance of addressing diverse learning styles.

Another significant outcome was the improvement in communication skills. The role-playing activity in the final week provided students with an opportunity to use vocabulary in realistic contexts, thereby bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. This aligns with language acquisition theories that emphasize the importance of contextualized learning in achieving fluency and confidence.

Despite its success, the program faced challenges, such as initial resistance from students who were unfamiliar with games-based learning methods. However, as the sessions progressed, most students adapted and became more engaged. This highlights the need for consistent implementation and gradual introduction of new teaching methods to foster acceptance and participation.In summary, the "Learning Vocabulary" program successfully improved vocabulary mastery and student motivation through its personalized, interactive approach. The findings underscore the potential of games-based learning as an innovative strategy for addressing vocabulary challenges, particularly in vocational education settings.

integration of games-based learning and personalized teaching approaches, the program successfully addressed the diverse needs of vocational high school students, enabling them to recognize, understand, and apply vocabulary in meaningful ways.

The program's interactive activities, such as Word Guessing Game, Memory Match, Scrabble, and Role-Playing, not only enhanced vocabulary retention but also fostered active participation and motivation among students. This highlights the value of engaging and context-based learning methods in creating a positive and effective learning environment.One of the program's key strengths was its focus on individual needs, which ensured that students with varying levels of proficiency received appropriate support and challenges. This personalized approach contributed significantly to the students' progress and their ability to use vocabulary confidently in communication.While the program encountered some challenges, such as initial resistance to games-based methods, consistent implementation and adaptation strategies helped students overcome these obstacles and fully engage in the learning process. This demonstrates the importance of introducing innovative teaching methods gradually and with clear objectives. the "Learning Vocabulary" program serves as a model for enhancing vocabulary learning in vocational high schools. Its success underscores the potential of games-based and personalized learning approaches in addressing language learning challenges. Future implementations of this program could expand its scope to include other language skills and subjects, providing further opportunities for improving educational outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the "Learning Vocabulary" program as part of the Teaching Assistance activities at SMKN 3 Parepare proved to be effective in improving students' English vocabulary mastery. Through the

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