
Improving Students' English Vocabulary Mastery Through Interactive Classroom Activities

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Abstract

Vocabulary is crucial in learning a language. It helps students understand things, talk to each other, read books, and write stories. Many students struggle to learn new English words. This is because they don't use English much, don't practice enough, and the teaching methods aren't very engaging. These problems make it difficult for students to learn words, which means they lack confidence and don't participate as much in English class. This study examines how classroom activities can help students learn English words. Researchers examined activities such as playing word games, talking in groups, telling stories, pretending to be someone, and engaging in fun exercises. This study was conducted at SDN Kenjeran 248 Surabaya, with third-grade students. Researchers wanted to make the classroom a fun place to learn. Researchers found that some students lacked basic vocabulary such as sweeping, writing, reading, and so on. Researchers will conduct classroom activities that can help students learn words. When students do fun things and work together, they want to learn more and participate more. They remember new words more easily. So, doing fun things in class is a way to help students learn new words and make learning English more fun and engaging.

Keywords: *English vocabulary development, classroom learning activities, vocabulary acquisition, student engagement, English language learning*

INTRODUCTION

English is an important language that people use to communicate with each other all around the world. It is used for education, technology and talking to people from countries. In countries like Indonesia English is taught to kids from a young age so they can learn the language skills they need to succeed in the world.

One of the important things about learning a language is learning new words, which is called vocabulary. Vocabulary is the foundation of language learning. If you do not know words it can be hard to understand what you read express your thoughts talk to people and learn other language skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Knowing a lot of words is very important for students who want to do in English class. If you know a lot of words you can understand what you read follow what your teacher is saying and express your thoughts with confidence. On the hand if you do not know many words it can be hard to understand what is going on in class and talk to people effectively. So learning words should be a top priority when teaching English.

Even though learning words is important a lot of students still have trouble learning English vocabulary. One reason is that learning words can be boring if it just involves memorizing lists of words and translating them. In a lot of classrooms the teacher is in charge and students just have to memorize words without getting to use them in real-life situations. As a result students might forget the words they learned and have trouble using them when they talk to people.

Another problem is that students do not get to participate when they are learning new words. Students are more likely to learn and remember words if they get to take an active role in the learning process. However if the classroom is boring and students just have to sit they might lose interest in learning English. This is especially true for students who need to have fun and interactive lessons to stay engaged. So teachers need to come up with interesting ways to teach vocabulary that get students involved.

One way to make learning words more interesting is to use interactive activities in the classroom. Interactive activities are things like games acting out scenes, group discussions and competitions that get students involved and engaged. These activities help students learn words in a more meaningful way. When students get to interact with each other and their teacher they can get an understanding of what words mean how to pronounce them and how to use them correctly.

Using activities in the classroom also helps students take a more active role in their learning. Of just listening to the teacher students get to participate and contribute to the lesson. Research has shown that when students are actively engaged they are more motivated, interested and likely to do in school. When students enjoy learning they are more likely to remember words and use them in different situations. So using activities when teaching vocabulary can be a very effective way to help students learn.

In addition interactive activities help students learn how to communicate. Vocabulary is not a list of words. It is a tool for talking to people. When students get to practice using words in real-life situations they can develop their language skills and become better communicators. As a result learning words becomes more meaningful and relevant, to students everyday lives.

Given how important it's to know a lot of words and the benefits of interactive activities it is worth exploring how these activities can help students learn new words. By understanding what works and what does not teachers can come up with ways to teach vocabulary and create more engaging lessons.

Although vocabulary mastery is recognized as a crucial component of English language learning, some students continue to demonstrate limited vocabulary knowledge and struggle to use English effectively. Traditional vocabulary teaching methods often fail to actively engage students and may not provide sufficient opportunities for meaningful vocabulary practice. As a result, students struggle to remember and apply newly learned words in different contexts.

The problem addressed in this study is the inadequate level of English vocabulary mastery of third-grade students at SDN Kenjeran 248 Surabaya and the need for effective teaching strategies to improve vocabulary learning outcomes. Specifically, this study investigates whether interactive classroom activities can improve students' vocabulary mastery by encouraging active participation, meaningful interactions, and increased engagement in the learning process.

Based on this problem, this study seeks to answer the following research question:

How can interactive classroom activities improve students' English vocabulary mastery?

Many people have researched how we learn words and what methods are most effective for teaching English. We know that games, videos, collaboration, and talking to each other can be very helpful in learning words. These things can make a difference in how well students learn new words and how eager they are to learn. However, there are still some unknowns. Therefore, we need to conduct research to determine how effective these methods are in various situations.

Some studies have examined the use of technology to help learn words, but not many have examined what we can do in the classroom without a lot of technology. This is important because not all schools have access to technology. Therefore, it is crucial to find ways to make learning fun and interactive in the classroom.

This study aims to help fill this gap by examining how interactive classroom activities can help students learn words in environments where English is not the primary language. Although previous studies have investigated the use of games, multimedia, and technology-assisted learning for vocabulary development, limited studies have explored how various interactive classroom activities contribute to vocabulary mastery among elementary EFL learners in Indonesian primary schools. Therefore, this study focuses on examining the role of interactive classroom activities in improving vocabulary mastery among third-grade students at SDN Kenjeran 248 Surabaya.

This study is based on the problems identified by the researcher and the gaps identified. The primary objective of this study is to determine how interactive classroom activities work in helping students learn English vocabulary.

The researcher wanted to find out if these activities actually make a difference. Specifically, this study aimed to do the following:

1. Find out how interactive classroom activities are used to teach vocabulary.
2. Observe how these activities affect how students learn vocabulary.
3. Observe how students participate and engage when they engage in interactive learning activities.
4. Provide some ideas about what works to help students learn vocabulary through talking with each other in class.

This research will be beneficial to English teachers and students learning English, helping us better understand how English is taught and how students learn it.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative descriptive research design to investigate the development of students' English vocabulary at SDN Kenjeran 248 Surabaya through interactive classroom activities. The participants in this study were third-grade students at SDN Kenjeran 248 Surabaya during the 2025/2026 academic year. The class consisted of 26 students, including 13 boys and 13 girls, aged between 8 and 9 years old. Participants were selected because they were actively engaged in English learning activities that focused on vocabulary development through interactive classroom activities. The classroom teacher also participated as an additional source of information regarding the implementation of vocabulary learning activities and student engagement during the lessons.

The researcher saw different activities like vocabulary games, group discussions, storytelling sessions and interactive exercises. The researcher paid attention to how the students participated how engaged they were and how they used vocabulary when they were learning.

The learning process was implemented in four stages:

- 1: Increased Student Participation
- 2: Improved Vocabulary Understanding
- 3: Higher Learning Motivation
- 4: Positive Classroom Interaction

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The researcher first organized and reviewed all observation notes and students' learning records. The data were then coded and categorized into several themes related to vocabulary development, student participation, motivation, and classroom interaction. Finally, these themes were interpreted to explain how classroom learning activities contributed to students' English vocabulary development. To ensure the reliability of the findings, data triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from observations, field notes, and assessments. This process helped increase the credibility and accuracy of the research findings.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The research found out that the things students do in class really help them learn English words. Students were more likely to join in and get excited when they learned vocabulary by doing fun things like playing games telling stories talking in groups and pretending to be someone else. When people watched what was happening in the classrooms they saw that students were more willing to use the words they learned when they had to speak or write something compared to when they just had to memorize things the old way. This shows that

doing things in class is a good way to teach students new words and help them learn English vocabulary.

These findings are consistent with previous studies. For example, Nation (2013) emphasized that vocabulary learning becomes more effective when learners encounter words repeatedly in meaningful contexts. Similarly, Beck et al. (2013) found that active and engaging vocabulary instruction promotes better word retention and language development. The current findings also support Yudinseva's (2015) study, which reported that game-based learning activities positively influence vocabulary acquisition and student motivation.

The study has implications for teaching English. Teachers should try to make classroom learning interactive. This can help create an engaging environment and give students chances to practice vocabulary in a meaningful way. Interactive activities can boost motivation, participation and confidence in using English. Teachers can use these activities to help students learn English better.

However this study has some limitations. The research only involved a group of people and was done in one specific school setting. So the results may not apply to all situations. Future studies should try to include people and different types of schools to get a clearer picture.

Overall the findings show that interactive classroom activities really work for improving students English vocabulary. These activities can be a tool for teaching English. Classroom learning activities are effective in enhancing students' English vocabulary development. Can be considered a valuable strategy, in English language instruction. English language teaching can benefit from using classroom learning activities.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate how interactive classroom activities improve third-grade students' English vocabulary mastery at SDN Kenjeran 248 Surabaya. The results showed that interactive classroom activities, such as vocabulary games, storytelling, group discussions, and role-playing, positively contributed to students' vocabulary development. These activities encouraged students to actively participate in the learning process and provided meaningful opportunities to practice and use new vocabulary.

The study also found that students demonstrated greater engagement, motivation, and confidence during English lessons when interactive activities were implemented. Through active participation and interaction in class, students were able to understand vocabulary more effectively and apply it in appropriate contexts. The learning environment became more enjoyable, which supported students' willingness to learn and use English vocabulary.

Interactive classroom activities can be considered an effective strategy for improving students' English vocabulary mastery. These activities not only support vocabulary development but also increase students' participation, motivation, and confidence in learning English. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to incorporate a variety of interactive activities into their classroom teaching to create a more meaningful and engaging learning experience. Future research could involve a larger number of participants and different educational settings to provide broader insights into the effectiveness of interactive classroom activities in vocabulary learning.

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