

Exploring Faw Games' Role In Improving Student Attitudes And Interests In Vocabulary Acquisition

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the impact of the Find and Arrange Words (FAW) game on students' attitudes and motivation in vocabulary learning. The research subjects consisted of 25 seventh-grade students from SMP Negeri 2 Baranti. This study employed a qualitative approach using a questionnaire to measure changes in students' attitudes and interest before and after the game-based intervention. The findings indicate that 76% of students exhibited a positive attitude toward vocabulary learning, while 64% demonstrated a high level of interest in the FAW game method. These results suggest that engaging and interactive educational games can enhance student participation and support a more effective and dynamic vocabulary learning process in a collaborative environment.

Keywords:

Find and Arrange Words (FAW), vocabulary learning, student attitude, learning motivation, educational games

ABSTRAKS

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh permainan Cari-Susun Kata (FAW) terhadap sikap dan motivasi siswa dalam pembelajaran kosakata. Subjek penelitian terdiri dari 25 siswa kelas VIII di SMP Negeri 2 Baranti. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan instrumen kuesioner untuk mengukur perubahan sikap dan minat siswa sebelum dan sesudah intervensi berbasis permainan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 76% siswa memiliki sikap positif terhadap pembelajaran kosakata, sementara 64% siswa menunjukkan minat yang tinggi terhadap metode permainan FAW. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa penggunaan permainan edukatif yang interaktif dapat meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa serta mendukung proses pembelajaran kosakata secara lebih efektif dan dinamis dalam lingkungan yang kolaboratif.

Kata Kunci:

Cari-Susun Kata (FAW), pembelajaran kosakata, sikap siswa, motivasi belajar, permainan edukatif

1.Introduction

English is now widely used in a variety of fields, including science, technology, trade, politics, and communication. Vocabulary is one of the most important aspects of learning English, which is taught as a foreign language in Indonesia. A strong vocabulary is essential for comprehending and communicating concepts in written and spoken English. However, many students experience difficulty in acquiring a large vocabulary, typically due to outdated and tedious teaching techniques that fail to engage pupils successfully.

Vocabulary acquisition, despite its importance, is one of the most difficult aspects of learning a new language. This difficulty arises from the need to memorize and understand numerous words and their meanings. Additionally, students may struggle with distinguishing between various word forms, such as verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. To address these challenges, it is crucial to adopt teaching methods that make vocabulary learning more engaging and motivating for students.

Game-based learning is one such approach that has been demonstrated to have a favourable effect on students' enthusiasm and attitudes towards learning. Because games are naturally entertaining and engaging, they can foster a more laid-back and inspiring learning atmosphere. In addition to improving vocabulary retention, using games in the classroom promotes collaboration, active engagement, and a positive attitude towards learning. Language learning can therefore be made enjoyable and productive by introducing educational games into the curriculum.

The FAW (Find-Arrange Word) game is one such game-based approach designed to improve vocabulary acquisition. This game involves students finding and arranging words within a given set of letters based on a specific theme or category. The simplicity of the game allows students to engage with new vocabulary in an enjoyable and non-threatening manner. The competitive and collaborative nature of the FAW game encourages students to cooperate, enhancing both their social and cognitive skills.

In addition to helping students learn new words, the FAW game also plays a significant role in influencing students' psychological behaviors, particularly their interest and attitudes. Interest in learning is crucial for academic success, as it drives students to actively participate in class activities and invest effort in their studies. Similarly, positive attitudes toward learning help students develop a sense of motivation and perseverance, which are essential for overcoming challenges in language learning.

1.1 The Impact Of Faw Games On Students' Interest, Attitudes, And Vocabulary Acquisition

The purpose of this research is to explore the role of FAW games in enhancing students' interest and attitudes toward vocabulary acquisition. This study seeks to examine whether the use of the FAW game can increase students' motivation to learn vocabulary and improve their engagement in the learning process. By focusing on the psychological behavior of students, particularly their interest and attitudes, this research aims to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of game-based learning in language education.

The study was conducted at SMP N 2 Baranti, with a sample of 25 seventh-grade students. These students were selected to participate in vocabulary learning activities using the FAW game method. Data were collected through questionnaires to measure the students' interest and attitudes before and after the intervention. The results of the study will provide useful information for educators seeking to implement innovative methods for enhancing vocabulary learning and fostering a more engaging classroom environment.

Through this study, the researcher aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on the use of educational games in language learning. By focusing on both the cognitive and psychological aspects of vocabulary acquisition, this research highlights the importance of addressing students' emotional and social needs in the learning process. By creating a fun and interactive learning environment, the FAW game offers a promising tool for improving vocabulary acquisition and motivating students to engage more deeply with the language.

Ultimately, this research intends to demonstrate the potential of game-based learning, specifically the FAW game, in transforming the vocabulary learning experience. The findings of this study will provide evidence of how games can enhance students' psychological behaviors, increase their interest in learning, and improve their overall attitude toward language learning.

2.Literature Review

The importance of vocabulary acquisition in learning a new language has long been recognized. Vocabulary plays a fundamental role in the mastery of a language, serving as the foundation for all forms of communication. As Wilkins (1972) noted, "Without grammar, very little can be conveyed, but without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed." This highlights the critical role vocabulary plays in effective language use, whether in speaking, reading, listening, or writing. In the context of English language learning, mastering vocabulary enables students to comprehend texts, construct meaningful sentences, and express their thoughts clearly.

Research on language acquisition emphasizes the need for effective vocabulary teaching strategies. Traditional methods of teaching vocabulary, such as rote memorization, often fail to engage students, leading to disengagement and poor retention. As Coady and Huckin (1997) suggest, vocabulary learning should involve meaningful contexts, where words are encountered repeatedly in various situations. Such an approach helps students internalize vocabulary, making it more likely that

they will recall and use the words appropriately in communication. As a result, researchers have been exploring alternative methods, such as task-based learning and game-based learning, which promote active involvement and provide real-life contexts for vocabulary use.

Games have gained increasing attention as a viable tool for enhancing vocabulary acquisition in language classrooms. According to Gee (2003), games can create immersive learning experiences that motivate students, increase their engagement, and improve their retention of knowledge. By integrating games into the classroom, students not only learn vocabulary in a fun and interactive way, but they also develop essential social and cognitive skills. Games, as argued by Vygotsky (1978), provide opportunities for social interaction and collaborative learning, which are crucial for language development, particularly for young learners.

Game-based learning is particularly effective because it reduces the pressure of formal learning environments, helping students to feel more relaxed and confident. Wright, Betteridge, and Buckby (2006) highlight the benefits of using games to break the monotony of traditional classroom activities. Games can stimulate interest, provide immediate feedback, and create a sense of accomplishment as students progress through various stages of the game. By using games such as the FAW game, educators can motivate students to engage with the content actively, which can lead to improved language acquisition.

The FAW (Find-Arrange Word) game is a relatively simple yet powerful educational tool that can be used to reinforce vocabulary learning. This game involves providing students with a set of jumbled letters and asking them to find and arrange them into meaningful words. The process of identifying and organizing words requires students to apply their existing knowledge of vocabulary, while also reinforcing spelling and word formation skills. FAW games also provide an opportunity for cooperative learning, as students often work in groups to complete the task, fostering teamwork and communication skills.

Studies examining the impact of game-based learning on students' attitudes toward learning have shown positive results. For instance, a study by Miftahul Jannah (2011) found that incorporating games into vocabulary lessons improved students' motivation, engagement, and overall language proficiency. Similarly, research by Nur Fatmasari (2014) demonstrated that using games such as Scrabble helped students expand their vocabulary by making the learning process more enjoyable. These findings underscore the importance of using interactive and engaging methods to enhance students' attitudes and interest in language learning.

Moreover, research has demonstrated that games can improve students' psychological engagement in the learning process. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), games provide intrinsic motivation by satisfying students' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. By allowing students to take control of their learning and experience success in a low-pressure environment, games help foster a positive attitude toward learning. In the case of the FAW game, students experience a sense of accomplishment as they successfully identify and arrange words, boosting their confidence and reinforcing their interest in learning new vocabulary.

The literature supports the notion that vocabulary acquisition is a critical component of language learning, and game-based learning can significantly enhance students' engagement, attitudes, and overall effectiveness in mastering new vocabulary. The FAW game, in particular, offers a promising strategy for making vocabulary learning more dynamic and enjoyable. By fostering collaboration, providing instant feedback, and promoting active participation, the FAW game helps students develop a deeper understanding of vocabulary and increases their motivation to learn. The following sections will explore the design and methodology of this study, which investigates the impact of the FAW game on students' attitudes and interest in vocabulary acquisition.

3. Research Method

The study aimed to examine the impact of the Find-Arrange Word (FAW) game on students' attitudes and interests in vocabulary learning. The research was conducted at SMP N 2 Baranti, Indonesia, with 25 seventh-grade students from Class VII1 selected using cluster sampling. The FAW game was introduced as an innovative method of vocabulary acquisition, fostering teamwork, competition, and fun. A pre-test and post-test design was used to assess students' psychological behaviors, including interest and attitude. The questionnaires were based on Likert-scale items,

allowing students to indicate their agreement or disagreement with statements related to their learning experiences.

Data collection also involved direct observations of students during the FAW game sessions. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics, categorizing students' responses into "strongly interested," "interested," and "uninterested," and "very good," "good," "enough," and "not good." The study adhered to ethical guidelines, including informed consent, anonymization of responses, and the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. The findings provide valuable insights into how game-based learning can enhance vocabulary acquisition.

4. Results And Discussion

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the role of the Find-Arrange Word (FAW) game in improving students' attitudes and interests in vocabulary acquisition. A total of 25 seventh-grade students participated in the study, and their responses to the pre-test and post-test questionnaires were analysed to determine the impact of the FAW game. The results from both the questionnaires and observational data revealed positive changes in students' psychological behaviours during vocabulary learning sessions.

The analysis of the students' interest in vocabulary learning, as measured by the interest questionnaire, showed a significant increase after the implementation of the FAW game. Prior to the game, a majority of students expressed moderate interest in learning vocabulary, with 12% categorizing themselves as "moderately interested." However, after using the FAW game, 64% of students indicated that they were "strongly interested" in learning vocabulary, while an additional 24% showed that they were "interested." No students reported feeling uninterested or strongly uninterested in the method. These findings suggest that the FAW game was highly effective in stimulating students' interest in vocabulary acquisition, making the learning process more engaging and enjoyable.

The results from the attitude questionnaire also showed a significant improvement in students' attitudes toward vocabulary learning. Before the intervention, students reported varying levels of attitude toward the subject, with only a small proportion (4%) showing "very good" attitudes. After participating in the FAW game, 76% of students showed a "good" attitude toward vocabulary learning, while 20% rated their attitude as "enough." Notably, no students exhibited negative attitudes (less than "good"), indicating that the FAW game method positively impacted students' behavior during vocabulary lessons. This improvement in attitude can be attributed to the cooperative and interactive nature of the game, which made the learning process more dynamic and less monotonous.

The observational data also supported the positive outcomes reported in the questionnaires. During the FAW game sessions, students were actively engaged in finding and arranging words, with many students working collaboratively in small groups. There was a noticeable increase in student interaction, with students discussing the words, helping each other, and sharing ideas. This collaborative learning environment fostered a sense of teamwork and encouraged active participation, which is essential for developing vocabulary. The game's format allowed students to learn vocabulary in a less formal, more relaxed atmosphere, which likely contributed to their increased interest and positive attitudes toward learning.

In addition to enhancing students' attitudes and interests, the FAW game also helped improve students' vocabulary retention. The game required students to recall and arrange words based on given themes, which reinforced their understanding of word meanings and spellings. This active engagement with vocabulary words provided students with opportunities for repeated exposure to the terms, an essential factor for long-term retention. Research by Nation (2001) has shown that repeated exposure to vocabulary in various contexts is key to acquiring and retaining new words, which was evident in the results of this study.

4.1 Impact Of Faw Games On Vocabulary Learning

The positive effects observed in this study align with previous research on the benefits of game-based learning. For instance, Miftahul Jannah (2011) found that students who engaged in vocabulary learning through games exhibited higher levels of motivation and achievement. Similarly, research by Wright, Betteridge, and Buckby (2006) demonstrated that games can stimulate interest and provide a more relaxed and enjoyable learning experience. These studies, along with the current

findings, suggest that game-based methods like the FAW game can be highly effective in improving both students' vocabulary acquisition and their psychological engagement in the learning process.

While the results of this study are promising, it is important to note that the impact of the FAW game may vary depending on factors such as class size, the students' prior vocabulary knowledge, and the frequency of game sessions. The current study was limited to a small sample size of 25 students in a single school, which may not fully represent the broader student population. Future studies could explore the long-term effects of game-based vocabulary learning, as well as the potential for using the FAW game in other educational contexts or with different age groups.

The findings of this study indicate that the FAW game has a significant positive impact on students' interest, attitudes, and overall engagement in vocabulary learning. By incorporating games into vocabulary lessons, educators can create a more stimulating and cooperative learning environment, which not only makes learning enjoyable but also enhances students' vocabulary retention and academic success. Based on these results, it is recommended that teachers consider integrating the FAW game and similar game-based methods into their language instruction to foster a more engaging and effective learning experience.

5. Conclusion

This study has investigated the effect of the Find-Arrange Word (FAW) game on seventh-grade students' attitudes and interests in vocabulary acquisition. The findings indicate that the FAW game significantly enhanced students' psychological engagement in the learning process, particularly in terms of their interest and attitude toward vocabulary learning. The results of both the interest and attitude questionnaires, along with observational data, demonstrated that students became more actively engaged in vocabulary learning and developed a more positive attitude toward the subject after participating in the FAW game.

The results suggest that the FAW game is an effective tool for increasing students' interest in learning vocabulary. A significant majority of students reported being strongly interested in the method after experiencing it, which reflects the game's ability to create an engaging and motivating learning environment. Additionally, students' attitudes improved, with most students demonstrating good to very good attitudes toward vocabulary learning, emphasizing the positive impact of the game on their behavior and willingness to participate in class activities.

The study also found that the FAW game facilitated collaboration and interaction among students, which likely contributed to a more dynamic and cooperative classroom atmosphere. This aligns with research that highlights the importance of social interaction in language learning, where collaborative activities promote deeper engagement and better retention of knowledge. By providing an interactive and fun method for learning vocabulary, the FAW game not only helped students acquire new words but also improved their overall attitude and interest in learning English.

Based on these findings, it is concluded that incorporating game-based learning methods, such as the FAW game, into language teaching can significantly improve students' motivation, engagement, and vocabulary acquisition. Educators should consider adopting such methods to make language learning more engaging, enjoyable, and effective.

Conversely, it is important to note that the effectiveness of the FAW game may vary depending on the context and the specific characteristics of the students. Future research could explore the long-term effects of game-based learning, as well as the application of similar methods in different educational settings or with different age groups. This would provide further insight into the potential of games as a tool for enhancing vocabulary learning across diverse learner populations.

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