

# **Students' Perception on The Use of Games in Language Learning at MAN 3 Sleman**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this research is to investigate students' perception on using games in vocabulary learning at MAN 3 Sleman. The participants were one male of X-IPA 3, one female of X-IPA 3, and one female of X-IPA 1. This research was investigated by using descriptive of qualitative research. The data were collected from observation field notes, interviews, and documentations. All data were collected based on Lindsay & Norman (1972) for theory about perception, and Hadfield (1999) which is about the types of games. The focus of the investigation were reinforcement as a signal, learning by awareness, learning by experimentation, and importance of expectation in perception and collaborative games and competitive games as the types of games. This research revealed that games is a meaningful way in language learning because games can reduce negative feelings during the learning process. The implication is teachers should consider the integration of games in language learning and the types of games.

*Keywords: Games Based Language Learning, Perception*

## **I. Introduction**

Learn foreign languages is a challenge for learners and teachers as well. Because they have to various kinds of teaching method to help students to help students achieve learning goals. Huyen & Nga (2003) stated that learners are boring if during teaching learning process just listen what teacher says and there is no the other activities. Therefore, Thornbury (2002) emphasizes the importance of building a relaxed and playful atmosphere in the classroom can to overcome student fears of inaccuracy that can often interrupt the learning process. Games is one of the potential solution to create meaningful learning.

By implementing the games, the learners will not forget the moments when they played the games. Moreover, in education using games has widely been acknowledged to engage and motivate learners when it used well in classrooms, according to (Hammer & Lee, 2011) as cited in (Lam, 2014). So that, based on the explanation above can be concluded that games have benefits for language learning because game helps learners easier to remember words, encourage learners' interaction, improve their communicative skills and enhance their motivation to learn English. In line with that, Matthew & Fisher (1988) as cited in Yip & Kwan (2006) stated that game playing is another popular way to engage learners in language learning.

MAN 3 Sleman is an institution on the level of Senior High School. It is a boarding school that makes use English and Arabic as the excellent programs. As it is stated one of mission of MAN 3 Sleman is "offering quality education, prioritizing culture, creativity, innovation, and fun". Especially in English subject, the teacher applies fun activity like the use of games. It proved on the result of observation when the game was in progress, students seems relaxed and enjoyed it. Hopefully English can be mastered by the students for daily communication tool. It can be summarized that motivation for vocabulary learning is simply to make working with fun activities.

As a teacher who teach foreign languages need to develop teaching methods in order the activities are not monotonous and one of strategies is by implementing games. Besides that, the basic teaching and learning English concept at MAN 3 Sleman is based on the curriculum 2013 revised 2016, it is clearly stated that one of the learning objectives in English subject is to achieve the goal of communication in a variety of contexts, whether oral or written which covers listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. In the same line, based on lesson plan, the aim of the learning process in every material are students can understand carefully about goals, functions, benefits, text structure, and language elements. Then students are also expected to be able to respond the meaning in oral and write texts and obtain information after read a text properly and corectly. The basic for mastering those skills is vocabulary. In addition, using games in vocabulary learning can create an enjoyable atmosphere and still has meaningful.

In conclusion, there are some reasons why the researcher decided to investigate using games in vocabulary learning based on some problems as has been mention it. According to Mubaslat (2012) games can be used in any part of the lesson as an effective way of language teaching such as presentation, practice, and production stages. Furthermore, Wright, Betteridge, & Buckby (2006) stated that games is an activity which is entertaining and engaging, often challenging and an activity in which learners play and usually interact with each other. So it is a chance for students to use team-building skills because games can implementation in work in pairs or groups and also can help passive students to show their ability. In addition to Richard & Patricia (1988) games are giving motivation, able to minimize students' anxiety, and give students a chance for real communications in real life. So that, games are not merely fun but also give a chance to face challenges and to solve problems. Finally, the students could also learn to concentrate and to think carefully. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate students' perception on using games in language learning and to know the types of games.

## **II. Literature Review**

### **a. Games Based Language and Games Based Language Learning**

Game is an activity which is entertaining and engaging, often challenging and an activity in which learners play and usually interact (Wright, Betteridge, & Buckby, 2006). To put in another words, games are not merely to provide as enjoyable atmosphere but also to develop students' interaction and communicative skills, their sense of fair play and encourage and enhance cooperation as well. In the other way, games have been integrated for educational purposes recently (Kerts & Kuzu, 2006). Tan, Ling, & Ting (2007) emphasize that to form an innovative educational paradigm, games have been integrated into education, this paradigm known as game-based learning, which to exploit the game as a medium to convey the learning contents. In the same way, Shaffer, Squire, Halverson, & Gee (2005) as cited in Plass, Homer, & Kinzer (2005) that "definitions of game-based learning mostly emphasize that it is a type of game play with defined learning outcomes".

### **b. The Types of Games**

For the most part, remembering new words in foreign language is difficult for foreign learners. Hadfield designs activities to help learners to remember new words through three process: correct the meaning of the word through memorizing games, make the word by themselves through personalizing games, use the word to communicate through communicating games, and make it fun. He decided teach vocabulary by games. According to Hadfield (1999) divided into two types of games. There are competitive games and cooperative games. Competitive games in which either players or teams have to be race to reach the goal first. Then, cooperative games in which players or teams work together to reach a common goal. Furthermore, the activities fall into two further categories; linguistic games and communicative games. In linguistic games, the goal of the game is linguistic accuracy. So that, students remember a new word correctly in vocabulary games. For instance using the correct synonym and antonym. Meanwhile, it is vice versa for communicative games have an aim that is not linguistic. In this case, students are able to successful completed of the games involve implement of the tasks such

as exchanging information, filling in a picture or chart or finding two matching cards rather than producing the correct of language. It can be conclude that in communicative games focus on successful communication.

### **c. Advantages and Disadvantages of Games Based Language Learning**

The aim of educational games is to motivate and teach students with an atmosphere who they can do practice in this subject (Can, 2003). Nonetheless, it is unfair if to think that games just a tool of entertainment because the combination between games and education can become educative and education environments can be entertaining (Alcorn, 1986); (Kuzu & Ural, 2008) as cited in (Donmus, 2010). Then, many researchers have similar results about the advantages of using games in language classroom and have proved it on their researches. Such as, games are effective due to games are giving motivation, able to minimize students' anxiety, and give students a chance for real communications in real life (Richard & Patricia, 1988). Furthermore, (Richard & Patricia, 1988) also argued that game is not mere used in "ice breaking" activities but also it can used to introduce new ideas. Games are very motivating and fun especially in giving chances for passive students to express their ideas and feelings based on Hansen (1994) as cited in (Aslanabadi & Rasouli, 2013). Zdybiewska (1994) as cited in Masri & Najjar (2014) supports that he believes to practice language, games is a good strategy, the reason is games provide a design learning based on students' language needs in the future.

### **d. The Role of Games in Language Classrooms**

A Game is defined as an "activity with rules, a goal, and an element of fun" (Hadfield, 1999). It same with moments where many people in their activity play with other friends more pleasant. However, games are not only fun and enjoyable, but also can provide excellent practice for improving grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and the four language skills. In addition, according to the recent literature Klopfer, Osterweil, & Salen (2009) a learning game is defined as a playful activity that is structured by rules for the pursuit of quantifiable outcomes (e.g., win states and points), and incorporates educational objectives (e.g., knowledge acquisition) as its own end. Wood (2001) investigated the use of

learning games as a learning tool and concluded that game-like formats could be more effective at capturing learners' attention than traditional media such as textbooks. This definition comprises digital and non-digital games used for learning.

In brief, using games in the classroom is important because many students do not have enough occasion to play during their free time and also it can make students be relax for a while. Today, many passive activities such as watching television, playing gadget, and exploring social media are seen as being more exciting than physically playing. This development is not good, and it can have several consequences for community. Based on Piaget, children's games reflect the community and that by playing children learn many of community's rules and regulations (Cole, Cole, & Lightfoot, 2005).

#### **e. Students' Perception**

Usually perception used to express opinions. According to Gibson, Donnelly, & Ivancevich (1991) perception is a process cognitive that used by individual to interpret and understand the environment around it. Then, Gibson also stated that every people must have different perceptions because the way people perceive an object is different as well, although the same object. Furthermore, Walgito (1981) as cited in (Tania, Liando, & Maru, 2018) described perception is an impression from someone who someone gets through stimulation, organisation, and interpretation of an object that become integrated activities. In conclusion, by concluding information and interpretation of the message so that someone can give a response regarding either good or bad or positive or negative about it. Lindsay & Norman (1972) further mention that there are four stages in cognitive process: reinforcement as a signal, learning and awareness, learning by experimentation, and the importance of expectations.

Due to the research aims to investigate students' perception on using games in vocabulary learning, so that this research talks about perception through sense of seeing on using games in vocabulary learning. Students' perception will be greatly influenced by many factors such as students' experiences, feelings, imaginations, marks, memories, and beliefs. It means that the stimulus given will

form choices and actions in response to it. Based on the aim of this study, to investigate students' perception the researcher pick two stages by Lindsay & Norman (1972) as an analytical construct. There are learning by experimentation and the importance of expectations. As mention before that to get perception it depends on learners' experience towards an obejct or event. Then, Léger (2009) stated, every learners in language learning must have their own learning goals and expectation as well that affect on their willingness to contribute in activities. It can be summarized that to know students' perception, the researcher must look for how learner's experience toward using games in vocabulary learning and what are learners' expectation in vocabulary learning in language learning.

### **III. Research Method**

This study was intended to find out answer to the problem formulated. The researcher tried to investigate how students' perception on using games in vocabulary learning at MAN 3 Sleman. In order to solve problem, the researcher needed to employ a design. Design of this research is qualitative research, specifically descriptive study research. There are three participants of this research, including 1 female of X-IPA 1, 1 male of X-IPA-3, and 1 female of X-IPA 3. Source of data comes from observational field notes, interview questions, and documentations. The data collected through observation in 3 times and interviews with three participants, lesson plan and photos as documentations.

### **IV. Research Findings and Discussion**

#### **a. Findings**

##### **Observation**

The observation of this research was conducted in three meetings in X-IPA 1, X-IPA 2, X-IPA 3 with same the teacher but different times and topics. During the observation, the researcher made field notes which will used as data to this research. The researcher focused on the whole activities to analyze how using games in vocabulary learning that occured in the class.

During observation the researcher found that there were two games who the teacher used. There were guessing games and matching games. Wherein, the teacher used guessing games to teach about descriptive text, and for matching games to teach about derivation. In X-IPA 3, the teacher used guessing games to teach descriptive text. Then, in X-IPA 1 and X-IPA 2 teacher used matching games to teach about derivation. Then, the researcher took notes during the class and it which will later be used to analysis on using games in vocabulary learning in the English class at MAN 3 Sleman.

### **Interviews**

The interview involved three students, including one female of X-IPA 3, one male of X-IPA 3, and one female of X-IPA 1. From interview sessions, this research will be know how students' perception on using games in vocabulary learning. In this case, the participants would convey the data based on their point of view related to students' perception on using games in vocabulary learning. Furthermore, for participants from X-IPA 3 was interviewed in same times and places at MAN 3 Sleman and for participant from X-IPA 1 was interviewed at KFC Artos Mall Magelang and all of interview sessions doing by face-to-face. The two students as participant who was joinning on guessing games at X-IPA 3 and one student who was joinning on matching games at X-IPA 1. Hopefully, these participants could give rich data related to this research which is the result of interviews as the main data source in this research.

### **Documentation**

In this research, the documents that were analyzed were lesson plan and pictures. Another documentation will be presented in this sub-chapter are some pictures during using games in vocabulary learning in the classroom. For lesson plan is gained from the teacher and some pictures was taken by the researcher.

Based on lesson plan, the teacher allocated 6 x 45 minutes so she divided into three meetings and 90 minutes for each meetings. However, the teacher applied games in the first meeting. In every meeting; the first 20 minutes is to prepare students psychologically and physically to be ready to receive the lesson; the next

60 minutes is to discuss about the material; and the last 10 minutes is for closing the class.

## **b. Discussions**

The aim of this research is to investigate students' perception on using games in vocabulary learning at MAN 3 Sleman. There are two parts of analysis in this discussion. The first is using games in vocabulary learning that used in English class at MAN 3 Sleman. The second one is analysis on students' perception on using games in vocabulary learning at MAN 3 Sleman.

### **Perception**

Basically perception is an observation by individual or a process of giving meaning as a result of observing about an object, people, event, and so on through the five senses, which is obtained by concluding information and interpretation of the message so that someone can give a response regarding either good or bad or positive or negative about it. Lindsay & Norman (1972) further mention that there are four stages in cognitive process; reinforcement as a signal, learning and awareness, learning by experimentation, and the importance of expectations. However, in this research just find data that involve learning by experimentation and the importance of expectations.

### **Learning by Experimentation**

The result of interviews, the participants conveyed their perception about using games in vocabulary learning based on their experiences when played guessing games and matching games in English class.

**“I think using games in English learning is good and effective because the students do not get bored and it also make the class is conducive and it’s fun as well because we do not reading and listening constantly, those are less good because our brains cannot absorbed well.”**

(I1/LE/2)

**“In my opinion, using games in vocabulary learning is very effective because English as a foreign language for us so we rare use it. If we learn it eee for sure we use unique ways in order not getting bored.”** (I2/LE/2)

**“...because I think games eee because the situation in class is not always conducive I mean sometimes we were sleepy, getting bored with the**

**previous lessons if we used games for sure we will go motivated again and we also what's ... initially if we used games for sure we will like that lesson nah if we have been liked for sure we also will excel in the lesson"**  
(I/2/LE/13)

The students' perception stated that using games in vocabulary learning are effective, fun, and not get bored. It means that by using games in vocabulary learning students keep struggling with the lesson. It coupled with the aim of educational games is to motivate and teach students with an atmosphere who they can do practice in this subject (Can, 2003).

### **Importance of Expectation**

In this session focus on students' goal whether their goals have achieved or not yet. In the result of data interviews below showed that there are some expectation on using games in vocabulary learning from the participants.

**"Ya, in my expectation in this games there is not only historical places in one place like Yogyakarta but also it can add historical places from the place that less famous in order become famous. Then, yesterday for the flashcards there are some vocabularies as clues to easy describe it but I think it should be removed to be more challenging"** (I/1/IE/14)

**"My expectation with this game, the historical places are not only in local but the historical places in another cities or overseas because we rare know them so it will be challenging"** (I/2/IE/15)

From data interview above showed that the participant A and B has expectations for guessing games but their expectations are not appropriate with the real situations. However, through guessing games their goals in vocabulary learning are achieved. However, through guessing games their goals in vocabulary learning are achieved. It supports by data interviews from participant A and participant B below about wheather by using games affect on their vocabulary learning.

**"In my opinion, there is affect in my vocabulary learning because when described the historical place to members group is spontaneous at the time. There were gave clues and gave responses about the historical places based on the clues that the teacher have given. When describing the historical place based on clues to members groups, I can practice my vocabularies knowledge, which one vocabulary that suitable with this historical place....."** (I/1/IE/4)

**“Yes of course ! because games is our routines ya hehe so we are not getting bored during playing game. Nah, in addition if its game using english either online or offline, it must become a unique activity and also fun” (I/2/IE/3)**

Meanwhile, for participant C her expectation on matching games is not suitable with what she thinks but it has possitive response.

“Ya mba, of course because usually in vocabulary learning using memorization method but in this game used brain teaser that not get bored. **Actually, my expectation with this game it might be very bored but apparently it was very fun.**” (I/3/IE/14)

**“That games affect on my vocabulary learning because except it adds my new vocabularies, I can find the ways to find the meaning of those vocabularies” (I/3/IE/4)**

Participant C showed that matching games has benefit in her vocabulary learning. Besides the games is fun, through matching games she can find the ways how to find new vocabularies. It can be conclude that matching games can help her to improve her vocabulary knowledge.

### **Reinforcement as a signal**

Reinforcement means to help learners to get the response that just happened. Reinforcement is also a signal, signifying to the learners just which conditions are the desire ones and which conditions undesire ones. There are some points that involves in reinforcement stages such as feedback, reward, and punishment. However, in this case the data that obtained was about reward that the teacher gave.

**“...who is quick to answer it will get a star and for groups who get many stars will be the winner” (I/1/R/5)**

**“...who was faster eee to guess eee what was decribe by that one students, they will be the winner” (I/2/R/5)**

From data interviews above proved that in guessing games, the teacher gave points or stars as rewards to a group who can guess the historical places faster and correct.

### **Learning by awareness**

Learning by awareness means learners awareness in learning affect on the result of learning. In this context, students were aware that the function of games who the teacher gave was to help students' vocabulary knowledge. It supported by data interviews below.

**“...When describing the historical place based on clues to members groups, I can practice my vocabularies knowledge, which one vocabulary that suitable with this historical place.** When give clues to members group is spontaneously mentioned vocabularies that suitable to describe it.” (I/1/LA/4)

**“...recalling vocabulary because the game as a trigger to recall on new vocabulary. If we forgot the new vocabularies, we can recall it through games that we have played”** (I/2/LA/4)

**“That game has affect on my vocabulary learning because except it adds my new vocabularies, I can find the ways to find the meaning of those vocabularies”** (I/3/LA/4)

From data interviews above proved that by implementing games students were aware that it can help them to memorize new vocabularies easily. It supported by Huyen & Nga (2003) that students seem easier to memorize new vocabularies that they learn well when it is applied in comfortable environment.

### **The Types of Games**

According to Hadfield (1999) there are two types of games. There are competitive games and cooperative games. Competitive games in which either players or teams have to be race to reach the goal first. Then, cooperative games in which players or teams work together to reach a common goal. In this session, the researcher explained about matching games first. There are two session in matching games. First, there is a cooperative games and the second is a competitive games. This data below showed the competitive games and cooperative games in matching games.

“From the beginning, divided into some groups, each group consists six students and then we was given some flashcards. There are many types of

flashcards, first flashcards which consist root words, second flashcards which consist derivation, third flashcards consist translation and forth blank flashcards to we write the result of matching between verbs or adjectives with derivation. **After that, we must matched them with the derivations and translations...** (I/3/TTG/5)

From data above, it is part of cooperative games because the all of members group has same goal to math all of flashcards correctly. The second session is competitive games. It supported by the participants' statement from interviews below.

“After finished, **we write them on the white board and then we compete with other groups in pair groups for example group 1 compete with group 2, group 3 compete with group 4 and group 5 compete with group 6.** So, after we matched between verbs or adjectives flashcards with derivation, we matched them with the translataions but all of the flashcards are closed and randomly. **The teacher asked us to find and match them and for groups who finished first, they are the winner**” (I/3/TTG/5)

## V. Conclusion

In this research based on the research finding and discussion about students' perception on the use of games in language learning at MAN 3 Sleman, which is elaborated in the previous chapter that using games in language learning is an effective strategy to learn language. In this case, foreign learners who learn foreign languages especially English in this context, need varied methods in order to they are not getting bored when teaching learning process. For the reason, students usually feel bored because they have not changed their learning habits, such as reading text and answer some questions based on the text, do some excercises on LKS, or learning passively through the teacher's explanations.

Meanwhile, after the application of competitive games and cooperative games, it can be seen that there exists positive perceptions from students, namely they also enjoyed doing games, they easily to understand with new vocabularies that they have got while games, and they feel that by using games can help them to add their vocabulary size because by implementing games they can memorize it easier because games is a part of mnemonic strategy. Finally, the researcher concludes that using games in language learning is a good strategy to learn foreign language for foreign learners. In addition, students' perception on the use of games in language learning also declare that games help students in language learning.