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The Effect of Charades Game Toward Students' Vocabulary Mastery at the Ninth Grade Students of MTs

Muhammadiyah Kubangkondang, Cisata, Pandeglang, Banten - Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigates the effect of the Charades Game toward students' vocabulary mastery at the ninth grade of MTs Muhammadiyah Kubangkondang in the academic year 2025/2026. The research employed a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test control group. A total of 36 students participated, with 18 students in the experimental group and 18 students in the control group. The experimental group was taught using the Charades Game, while the control group received instruction through a conventional method. Data were collected using a multiple-choice vocabulary test and analyzed through descriptive statistics, normality and homogeneity tests, and independent samples t-test. The Shapiro-Wilk test confirmed that the data were normally distributed, and Levene's test indicated homogeneity of variances. The results of the independent samples t-test further confirmed a significant difference in post-test scores between the experimental and control groups ($p = 0.038$, Cohen's $d = 0.718$), favoring the experimental group. It can be concluded that the Charades Game is an effective teaching strategy for enhancing vocabulary mastery among junior high school students. The research recommends integrating game-based learning into English language teaching to foster engagement, motivation, and improved learning outcomes.



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INTRODUCTION

As social creatures, humans cannot detach themselves from language activities that serve as tools for communication in interpersonal interactions grounded in the cultural fabric of society. Language is a distinctive form of human interaction that allows the exchange of thoughts, opinions, and ideas. In today's era of globalization, English has become one of the international languages that must be

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mastered, especially by non native learners. Mastery of English—particularly vocabulary—is crucial for gaining access to scientific and technological advancements from around the world. According to Pajarwati et al. (2021), English proficiency in Indonesia is essential for society to assimilate scientific and technological progress from other countries. This fact demonstrates that the development of scientific knowledge and technology is closely linked to the role of English. Consequently, vocabulary mastery is the primary foundation of English language learning, because it directly influences speaking, writing, and comprehension (Nation, 2001). Without an adequate lexical repertoire, students will struggle to express ideas and interact effectively in a foreign language, creating a major obstacle to learning.

Effective language use depends on both the breadth and the functional deployment of vocabulary. Novari et al. (2021) argue that, in order to communicate effectively in a foreign language, a person must possess a sufficient vocabulary and be able to employ it appropriately. This aligns with Sudirman (2015) viewed that the wider a learner's vocabulary, the more flexible the student becomes in conveying ideas, making interaction more engaging and less monotonous because the words used vary across different contexts. This phenomenon underscores the close relationship between lexical breadth and the quality of communication in a foreign language.

Based on the researchers' observations at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Muhammadiyah Kubangkondang in January 2025, they found that students' ability and interest in learning English remain low. Many learners experience difficulty understanding English lessons, especially with vocabulary expansion. Contributing factors include a lack of motivation to memorize new words, fear of making mistakes when speaking, and a monotonous, rote based teaching method that fails to attract or empower students.

To address these problems, the researchers chose the charades game as an interactive and enjoyable learning intervention. Charades is a game that involves demonstrating a target word through body movements and facial expressions without using verbal language, prompting other participants to guess the word's meaning (Wati & Qomar, 2020). The activity is conducted in small groups to foster collaboration and build confidence. The study employs a pre test/post test design to measure vocabulary mastery before and after the implementation of the game, alongside direct classroom observations to record student participation, engagement, and emotional expression.

Previous research by Wati & Qomar (2020) has demonstrated that charades can increase learners' interest and significantly improve vocabulary acquisition. Their findings indicate that game based approaches are not merely entertainment; they constitute effective instructional strategies that produce tangible improvements in students' overall language competence.

The Researcher aims to investigates the effect of the Charades Game toward students' vocabulary mastery and makes the research entitled "The Effect of Charades Game Toward Students' Vocabulary Mastery at The Ninth Grade Students of MTs Muhammadiyah Kubangkondang in Academic Year 2025/2026."

Concept of Vocabulary

Vocabulary constitutes a fundamental component of language proficiency, serving as the building blocks for effective communication. According to Nation (2001), "vocabulary refers to the words of a language, including single items and phrases or chunks of several words which convey a particular meaning." This definition encompasses not only individual words but also multi-word units that function as semantic wholes in communication.

Harmer (2007) further emphasizes the critical role of vocabulary in language learning, stating that "without grammar very little can be conveyed, but without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed." This perspective highlights the primacy of lexical knowledge in language acquisition and use, positioning vocabulary as a foundational element that enables all other language skills.

In the context of English language teaching, vocabulary mastery involves both receptive knowledge (understanding words when encountered in reading or listening) and productive knowledge (using words appropriately in speaking or writing). This dual aspect of vocabulary knowledge presents particular challenges for learners and requires instructional approaches that address both dimensions effectively.

Concept of Charades Game

The Charades Game is a word-guessing activity where players represent vocabulary items through physical actions, gestures, and body movements without speaking. The game typically involves dividing students into teams, with one student acting out a vocabulary word while teammates guess. This structure promotes peer interaction, collaborative problem-solving, and immediate feedback, all of which contribute to effective vocabulary acquisition.

Charades originated in the 18th century as a parlor game in France and England. Blackwood (1850) described it as "Acting Charades or Deeds Not Words," highlighting its emphasis on non-verbal communication. The game gained popularity as a social entertainment activity, particularly among the educated classes who valued wit, creativity, and dramatic expression.

Over time, charades evolved from a purely recreational activity to an educational tool, with teachers recognizing its potential for language learning, vocabulary development, and creative expression. The game's adaptability to various content areas and age groups has contributed to its enduring presence in educational settings.

In contemporary language education, charades represents one of many game-based learning approaches that have gained prominence as educators seek more engaging, student-centered instructional methods (Wright et al., 2006).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test control groups to investigate the effect of the Charades Game on students' vocabulary mastery. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018), "in experimental research, the investigator tests the effect of a treatment by administering it to one group and withholding it from another, then comparing the outcomes."

The quasi-experimental approach was selected due to practical constraints in random assignment, as students were already organized into intact classes. This design still allows for causal inferences while maintaining ecological validity in the natural classroom setting Ary et al. (2019). The population comprised 54 ninth-grade students at MTs Muhammadiyah Kubangkondang during the 2025/2026 academic year.

The sample included two classes: the experimental group (Class 9B, n=18) instructed using the Charades game and the control group (Class 9C, n=18) taught via conventional methods. One class (9A) was used for instrument testing.

Data collection involved administering vocabulary tests before and after the intervention. Validity and reliability of the instruments were confirmed through preliminary testing. The empirical validity was tested using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation formula with data from the try-out class (Class 9A). Items with correlation coefficients below 0.430 were discarded, resulting in the final 25-item instrument. The internal consistency reliability of the instrument was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha formula, yielding a coefficient of 0.876. According to Pallant (2020), this value indicates high internal consistency, suggesting that the instrument reliably measures vocabulary mastery.

Treatment in the experimental group included two sessions of vocabulary learning through the Charades game, while the control group received traditional teaching focusing on memorization. Data analysis utilized descriptive statistics and inferential testing, including normality, homogeneity, paired and independent sample t-tests, conducted using SPSS 27.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study results indicate a significant improvement in vocabulary mastery in the experimental group. The mean score increased from 52.44 (pre-test) to 64.89 (post-test), with a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.001$) and a very large effect size (Cohen's $d = 3.034$). Post-test scores in the experimental group were also significantly higher than those of the control group ($p = 0.038$), with a medium-to-large effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.718$). These findings support the hypothesis that the Charades game is an effective method for facilitating vocabulary acquisition compared to conventional methods.

Tabel 1. Pre-test and Post-test Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean Difference
Experimental (n=18)	52.44	64.89	12.45
Control (n=18)	48.33	53.78	5.45

In this study, the normality test was carried out using the Shapiro–Wilk test, which is recommended for small sample sizes ($n < 50$) due to its higher statistical power compared to the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test.

Tabel 2. Normality Test

Tests of Normality		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
Group of The Research	The	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Data of The Research	Pre-Test Experiment	0,169	18	0,184	0,961	18	0,62
	Post-Test Experiment	0,152	18	0,200*	0,973	18	0,859
	Pre-Test Control	0,126	18	0,200*	0,979	18	0,935
	Post-Test Control	0,129	18	0,200*	0,952	18	0,465

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The results of the Shapiro–Wilk test showed significance values greater than 0.05 for all datasets: pre-test experimental group ($p = 0.620$), post-test experimental group ($p = 0.859$), pre-test control group ($p = 0.935$), and post-test control group ($p = 0.465$). These results indicate that none of the datasets deviate significantly from a normal distribution.

Tabel 3. Homogeneity and Independent Sample t-test**Independent Samples Test**

Post-Test Score	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Equal variances assumed	0,326	0,572	2,154	34	0,038	11,333	5,261	0,641	22,025	
Equal variances not assumed			2,154		33,851	0,038	11,333	5,261	0,640	22,027

Levene's test (Homogeneity) for equality of variances showed a p-value of 0.572, which is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. This indicates that the variances between the two groups were equal, and therefore the "Equal variances assumed" row was used for interpretation.

The results of the t-test indicated a statistically significant difference between the experimental group ($M = 64.89$) and the control group ($M = 53.56$), $t(34) = 2.154$, $p = 0.038$ (two-tailed) $< \alpha = 0.05$. The mean difference was 11.333 points, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 0.641 to 22.025. This suggests that the experimental group achieved higher vocabulary mastery scores compared to the control group after the intervention.

The interactive nature of the Charades game likely promotes active student engagement and motivation, leading to better retention and understanding of vocabulary. The findings align with previous research indicating that game-based learning enhances language skills by fostering a more dynamic and stimulating learning environment (Bafadal et al., 2018; Rahmah & Astutik, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of statistical analysis and the discussion in the previous chapter, several conclusions can be drawn. The Charades Game significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery in the experimental group, as shown by a substantial increase in scores from the pre-test to the post-test ($M = 52.44$ to $M = 64.89$, $p < 0.001$) with a very large effect size (Cohen's $d = 3.034$). In contrast, the control group taught with conventional methods also showed improvement ($M = 51.78$ to $M = 53.56$, $p = 0.016$), but the gain was minimal with a mean difference of only 1.78. The independent samples t-test further revealed that the post-test scores of the experimental group were significantly higher than those of the control group ($p = 0.038$) with a medium-to-large effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.718$). These findings demonstrate that the Charades Game is more effective than conventional methods in enhancing students' vocabulary mastery. Overall, the results confirm previous research and emphasize that game-based learning, particularly the Charades Game, offers a more engaging and effective approach to vocabulary acquisition compared to traditional teaching methods.

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