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## Scrabble Game in Students' Reading Comprehension

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this research is to explore the effectiveness of scrabble game in students' reading comprehension achievement. One class of 7<sup>th</sup> graders composing 27 students of MTs Jami'iyah, Pondok Aren, South Tangerang, participated In this as samples. This research applied quantitative method with pre-experimental design of one group pretest and posttest. The instruments used in collecting the data were pretest and posttest. There were 25 multiple choice questions given in each test to be done by the students in 50 minutes. A quantitative analysis was firstly taken before computing the data by using statistical analysis of paired sample t-test. The calculation showed that the average score of students' reading comprehension post-test was higher (83.77) than in the pretest (56.22). Besides, the statistical analysis indicated that the significant value of  $0.01 < \alpha (0.05)$ , thus,  $H_a$  was accepted. Referring to the analysis results above, this research concluded that scrabble game was effective media to be used in improving reading comprehension skill of the students.*

**Keywords:** learning media, teaching media, scrabble game, reading comprehension

### Introduction

In the academic setting, the ability of reading comprehension is one of crucial facets that supports the succeed of language learning (Grabe & Stoller, 2013). "Reading comprehension is defined as the process of constructing meaning from the printed text, involving cognitive and social factors" (Kusumarasdyati, 2022, p. 782). This definition explicitly explains that in order to be able to comprehend English text, English learners should use both their cognitive and social aspects. Further, Kusumarasdyati (2022) explained that

cognitive aspect refers to how the readers construct meaning by using their knowledge to be related to new information presented in a reading passage. Meanwhile, social factor refers to readers' way in constructing meaning based on their social background including knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes.

However, Namjoo & Marzban (2014) quoted Farrell (2009) claimed that even reading helps people to be educated and amused, some of them have to struggle in understanding reading texts in a second or foreign language. In relation to

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this statement, a study of Hezam, et.al. (2022) reported that the biggest problems faced by Saudi Arabian EFL learners in reading comprehension were lack of vocabulary and words recognition. In fact, it is undeniable that the readers who have limited words will definitely be difficult to grasp the meaning of the texts they are reading. In another research study, Septia (2022) found that there were four factors that made EFL students difficult in reading comprehension, namely: low reading interest, limited knowledge in translating English texts, lack of reading sources provided by the schools, and lack of parents/family supports to students' reading activities.

In the context of TEFL in junior high school, several prior studies also discussed the problems that the students experienced in reading comprehension. Pahamzah, Syafrizal & Viona (2021) reported that junior high school students in their study mostly got problems in understanding vocabulary and long sentences, using effective strategies and mastering grammar. Similar findings also found by Khofidhoh & Abdullah (2022) who outlined several issues junior high school students faced in reading comprehension, i.e., limited vocabulary and lack of motivation from the teacher. These problems were also found by the researchers in their pre-liminary study at MTs Jami'iyah Islammiyah, Pondok Aren, South Tangerang. The observation done at class 7 at this school showed that the instructional process of reading comprehension subject put the teacher as the centered of learning. The teacher only gave the students time to do reading exercises and then discussed the answers together. The students seemed demotivated and had low interest during the learnings. Besides, the teacher did not use any teaching and learning media that

might decrease students' boredom and changed the atmosphere of the class.

To overcome those reading obstacles faced by the students, Nurdiana, et.al. (2023) opined that applying creative approaches and using various reading strategies only were not enough, the students should be assisted by beneficial innovative teaching media that let them able to relate the text with the knowledge they have. Learning media can be defined as any tool or physical facilities used to deliver learning to students, hence, the students can be stimulated to learn. Hadi, Izzah, Fitriana (2021), said, usually, by using learning media the learning process becomes cheerful and active. Their focus to the learning shows their willingness to learn since they get different learning zone which is usually dominated by the media of text-book.

There are various learning media that can be used in reading comprehension, particularly the one that is appropriate and effective for junior high school students, and one of them is scrabble game. According to Biloan (2016), game can be used as educational instrument that can motivate students and enhance the learning process. Meanwhile, scrabble game as explained by Temitayo, Gboyega, and Samuel (2021) is an instructional word-building game that has been proven to be effective to help students develop their language skills as well as in reading comprehension. Anggraini (2019) added that scrabble game is effective teaching media in English classroom since it challenges students to remember words in a joyful way. Scrabble requires several skills of the players including combining letters, making conclusions from words, and evaluating the words that have been constructed or compiled. Thus, these activities involve students' cognitive processing skills;

working together in using vocabulary and understanding the words.

Anggraini cited by Kim (2019) proposed several advantages of using scrabble as media in the classrooms, namely: 1) the students will frequently open the dictionary, 2) the students will understand how the word should be spelled and pronounced, 3) having attractive design that can interest the students, 4) the steps in this game ease the students to understand the learning materials, 5) having instruction booklet on how to use the game to make the students easy to follow. Additionally, Nurjaman (2019) also proposed some steps in applying scrabble game in reading class, i.e., First, the teacher gives the materials will be discussed based on the syllabus; second, the teacher gives the reading text that should be read by the students; third, the teacher puts the students into several groups; fourth, the teacher gives one scrabble to each group; fifth, the teacher explains how to play the game including the rules; sixth, the teacher explains what the students have to do with their reading text through the game; seventh, the students start playing under the control of the teacher.

Seeing the urgency of having the ability of reading comprehension in EFL, and how this skill could be improved through the use of interesting game such as scrabble, in this research, the researchers were interested to investigate the effectiveness of scrabble game in improving junior high school students' reading comprehension. The researchers found that most prior studies reported the use of scrabble game to improve students' vocabulary mastery, the ones which applied this game in reading comprehension were still limited. Therefore, this research fulfilled the gap. The researchers carried out this research under the research question: "Is scrabble

game effective to improve students' reading comprehension skill?". The researchers hoped that this study would give positive contributions to the theories of reading and media in TEFL, besides, English teachers and students might also get beneficial insights on how to insert fun game in their reading comprehension classes.

### Research Method

This research applied quantitative method with pre-experimental design. Creswell (2014) stated that a theory in quantitative research is an interrelated set of constructs (or variables) formed into propositions, or hypotheses that specify the relationship among variables (typically in terms of magnitude or direction). Furthermore, Torgerson (2012, p. 583) defined pre-experimental design as a "practice interventions that rely on the single group pre-experimental research design (also known as "before and after" or "pre-test and post-test")". In this research, the researchers adopted one group pre-test and post-test of Shadish, Cook, & Campbell (2002:108) as follows:

Group A:  $O_1 X O_2$

In which,

$O_1$  = Pre-test  
 $X$  = Treatment  
 $O_2$  = Post-test

There was one class of grade 7 composing 27 students of MTs Jami'iyah Islammiyah, Pondok Aren, South Tangerang. participating in this study. This class was selected by using cluster random sampling out of totally 5 classes of grade 7.

Reading comprehension pre-test and post-test were used as tools in collecting the data. Both tests comprised

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25 multiple choice questions adopted and modified from students' English text-book. The students were given 50 minutes to do each of the test. The data were analyzed through several quantitative analysis; 1) calculating each of the student's score in which one correct answer was valued 4; 2) computing the total score gained by all students in each test; 3) finding the average score in each of the test; 4) formulating the statistical hypotheses; 5) measuring the effect of variable X (scrabble game) to variable Y (students' reading comprehension) by using statistical analysis of paired- sample test; 6) determining the hypothesis and answering the research question. For statistical analysis of paired sample test, the researchers referred to the formula of Hatch (1982). The results of all quantitative calculation were discussed in narrative way inserted in the findings section of this study.

## Findings and Discussion

From the calculation of students' achievement in pre-test and post-test, the results can be seen in the following Table 1:

**Table 1. The results of students' pre-test and post-test**

Description	Pre-test	Post-test
Total score	1518	2262
Mean score	56.22	83.67
Highest score	68	96
Lowest score	36	76

The scores gained by the students above clearly explain that the students performed better in the post-test. In the average, students' post-test result was higher (83.67) than in the pre-test (56.22). These numbers indicated that the students made

improvement after they studied reading comprehension by using the media of scrabble game. The increasing was 2.745 points (from 56.22 to 83.67).

In order to confirm whether the different achievement hit by the students in the pre-test and post-test due to the effect of scrabble game, the statistical analysis of paired-sample test was taken. This analysis would also determine the following hypotheses:

H<sub>0</sub>: Scrabble game is an effective media to improve students' reading comprehension skill

H<sub>a</sub>: Scrabble game is not an effective media to improve students' reading comprehension skill.

The computation of paired-sample t-test revealed that the mean score was 27.111, standard deviation was 6.801, standard error of the mean was 1.308, lower interval was 29.801, upper interval was 24.420 and the result of t-test was 20.731 with degree of freedom of 26 and two-sided significant of  $0.01 < \alpha (0.05)$ . Since the significance score is lower than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , then H<sub>a</sub> was accepted while H<sub>0</sub> was rejected.

## Conclusion

This research work aimed to measure the effectiveness of scrabble game in improving students' reading comprehension skill. Quantitative data analysis revealed that students' reading achievement improved after they were being taught by using scrabble game. Meanwhile, the statistical analysis of paired-sample t-test also proved that the significant value of  $0.01 < \alpha (0.05)$ . These results lead to a conclusion that scrabble game was an effective media used to improve students' reading comprehension.

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