

### The Use of Taboo Game to Enrich Students' Vocabulary in Junior High School

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#### Abstract

*This study has purpose to investigate the implementation of the taboo game to enrich students' vocabulary to solve students problems such as students lack of motivation, students lack of confidence and students lack of vocabulary. The method used in this research is Classroom Action Research. The research was conducted in two cycles at SMP Negeri 2 Soe started from 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2023. The participants were 20 students of VII E of SMP Negeri 2 Soe. This research used several data instruments. There are observation checklists for teacher and students to see students' activity in the learning singular and plural nouns use taboo game in improving students' ability in memorize the nouns and tests to measure students' initial ability in the class. The research findings showed that the taboo game can enrich students' vocabulary. The mean score of the students in the pre-test increased significantly from 58 to 78 in the posttest 2.*

**Keywords:** Enrich; Taboo Game; Vocabulary.

#### INTRODUCTION

Language is a system of communication which consists of a set of sounds and written symbols which are used by the people in a particular country or religion to talk and write. Without a language people cannot express or convey their mind or their feeling. Based on Chomsky cited in Tami (2013) defines language as a set of sentences (finite and finite sentences) and each sentence constructed with some elements. Therefore language is talk about vocabulary. Vocabulary is one of the most important aspect of any language because learning vocabulary we will know a new word and new meanings. Fahrurrozy (2015) stated that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provide much of the basic for how well learners speak, listen, write and read. Therefore, vocabulary is very important to many people. Vocabulary has an important role in learning English especially for students to help to understand and express the language.

However, based on the preliminary research when the researcher did the teaching practice in school, there were some problems when students learning English. The first problem is students' lack of vocabulary because when they studied in elementary school, they did not learn English; therefore students do not have enough English background. The second is students lose their self-confidence and they are affraid to make mistakes in speaking English because when they mispronounce a word they will be laughed by their friends. The last is students lack of motivation in learning English. Students think that English is very difficult because the teacher did not use media in teaching and learning process. Teaching media is one of the best ways to improve students' vocabulary. Teaching media also can make the students relax when they do teaching and learning process. Donmus (2010) assumed that there is a significant improvement in the process of learning when the game was used as a teaching media. Therefore, game is one of the tools in learning process. The game aims is to develop students enthusiastic, help the students to remember, entertain the students, classroom activities not boring, creative learners and help student to be critical thinking.

There are so many games that can be used in learning activity. Akdogan (2017) also stated that some institutions consider that using a game can be very helpful in improving students' interpersonal skill

and vocabulary if the students are engaged in playing with their friends. Game is media that can be use by the teacher to teach the students. One of the games that can be used to enrich students' vocabulary is a game called taboo. Taboo game is a guessing word game created by Parker brothers in 1989. Taboo is a word guessing game commonly used at school. Hasbro cited in Reni (2019) stated that the taboo game has been used as a model for a general chemistry collaborative activity. The importance of vocabulary became a concern for many teachers to find the most effective way to enrich students' vocabulary. Since it has been the most priority in learning a foreign language, teachers are required to pay more attention to enrich students' vocabulary.

The researcher chose students of SMP Negeri 2 Soe because based on the result of observation during teaching practice, grade 1 students come from elementary school and they had not learned English yet. Besides, most of the students have little motivation to enrich their vocabulary because they are not given special time to learn vocabulary in the classroom. Based on the problems above, there are research question and objective of the study. The question is how taboo game enriches students' motivation, confidence and vocabulary and the objective of study is to find out the implementation of taboo game in enriching students' motivation, confidence and vocabulary.

## METHOD

This research is a classroom action research (CAR) to answer the question. Ary et al. (2010) argued that Classroom Action Research can be used to enhance everyday work practice, resolve specific problems, and develop special projects and programs. Classroom Action Research used to improve daily work practices, find solutions to particular issues, and create unique projects and programs. To find the best solution for the students' problem, the researcher should reflect and then find the real problem that is faced by the students during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In addition, to see students' ability to memorize vocabulary using the taboo game, it was done through the procedure of the study, which consists of two cycles; each cycle has four stages. They are planning, action, observation, and reflection. The method used four stages to assess students' ability to memorize vocabulary, especially in grade VII students of SM P Negeri 2 Soe. In this study the researcher was used pre-test, post-test and students observation checklist. Pre-test used to measure students' initial ability in the class, while post-test used to know students' improvement after treatment. Meanwhile, students' observation checklist used to see the students' performance in teaching and learning process and teacher's teaching implementation.

There are four stages of the process. In planning, the researcher was discussed with the English teacher in SMP Negeri 2 Soe who teaching English. The researcher works collaboratively with the teacher to conduct the study. The researcher prepares the material for students. They are question for pre-test, posttest, and lesson plan and observation checklist. In action, the researcher was give pre-test, treatment and posttest. In the first meeting, the researcher asks students to tell the nouns that they know and after that the teacher will treat the students in the second meeting. Teacher was treatment related to the topic or material use taboo game. In addition, teacher was give explain more to the students what is singular and plural nouns and give them example. The last is posttest, teacher asked students to tell and write again and asking them the nouns that they know and submit next meeting. Observing was done during the teaching and learning process. The researcher observed the students' performance during treatment. There are some aspects that observed from the students, namely the student's preparation, performance, method, activeness and attention. In reflection the researcher and the teacher did the reflection to see the weaknesses appear during the treatment based on the lesson plan and the observation checklist. If the result of the students' vocabulary does not show significant improvement based on the minimum criteria established in that class then the researcher and the teacher come to the second cycle.

In conducting this research, several instruments were used to collect the data needed properly. There were observation checklist and tests. This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Soe. One of the classes in the seven grade class was chosen. This class consisted of twenty (20) students. This implementation was conducted in two cycles, so the descriptions of the steps of CAR were explained in research framework 1 below.

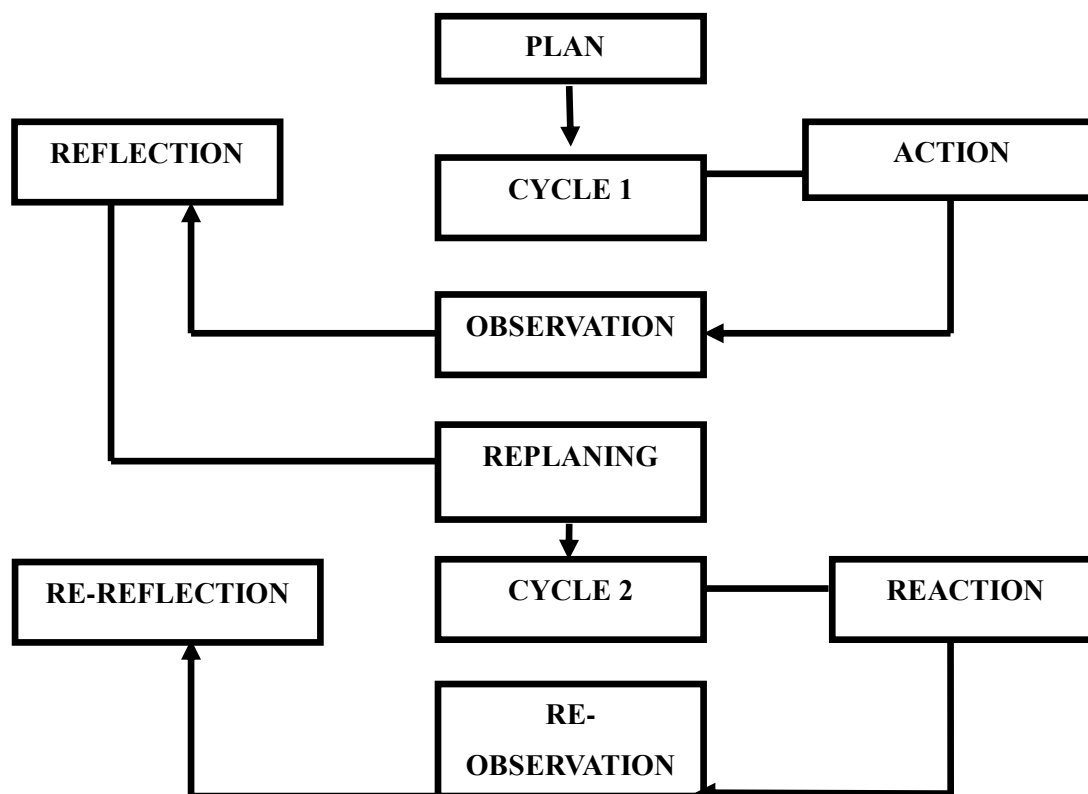


Figure 1. Classroom Action Research Test Cycles

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## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### FINDINGS

This action was done in the first grade of SMP N 2 Soe. When the researcher took part in the class, the researcher found some problems in the classroom. The first problem is the lack of vocabulary among the students because they do not have experience learning English. The second problem is the lack of confidence of the students; they are afraid to make mistakes in speaking English because when they mispronounce the word, they will be laughed at by their friends. The last problem is a lack of motivation to learn English. The students think that English is very difficult to learn. The finding deals with the answer to the problem statement, which aims to enrich the students' vocabulary. This research was conducted in two cycles. In the first cycle, there were four stages done by the researcher and the English teacher by following the stage of classroom action research, namely: planning, acting, observing, and

reflecting. This cycle had four meetings: one for the pre-test, two for the treatment, and one for the post-test. The researcher gave a pre-test on August 1, 2023.

In this meeting the researcher told the students that the researcher was conducted the research in their class in order to know their ability in vocabulary before doing the action of the classroom action research. The researcher asked the students about nouns in the class. After that, the researcher gave the students quiz. The quiz was write down the noun that they know at least 20 nouns and do not open the dictionary and the researcher just give the students 20 minutes to write the nouns.

Based on the result of pre-test, the data showed that the mean score of pre-test is 58. There were only four students or 20% of the students who got the score above the minimum criteria established or *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal* (KKM). Meanwhile, the other 16 students were below that criterion. By looking at the result of students' pre-test, it could be seen that almost of the students there was still very low in vocabulary. After analyzing the result of pre test, it could be conclude that most of the students at VII E of SMP N 2 Soe had small vocabulary size and low understanding of singular and plural nouns. So, it needs to find out the solution to overcome the problem. The researcher use Taboo Game as the media in teaching vocabulary as an innovation in teaching and learning process. The action research conducted in two cycles, every cycle followed the procedures of action research involving planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

In planning, the researcher began to prepare lesson plan, materials (singular and plural nouns), and media (Taboo Game), and observation lists and consulted with the English teacher in the class for this research. In planning, the researcher prepared the pre-test in the first meeting to know the vocabulary ability of the students. The lesson plan used in this cycle was created so that researchers could see problems regarding vocabulary in students through pre-test by considering students' weaknesses shown in the pre-test. Based on the results of the students' pre-test, the researcher began to apply the Taboo Game in singular and plural nouns material and to enrich the students' vocabulary. Media is needed to open their understanding so they can enrich their vocabulary. This classroom action research was carried out from July 31, 2023, to August 14, 2023. The researcher carried out the teaching and learning process based on the RPP that had been prepared. At the first meeting, the researcher gave treatment to students twice, namely by using the Taboo Game on singular and plural nouns. After the researcher gave a quiz to students at the first meeting, she taught them about definitions and examples of singular and plural nouns at the second meeting. Researchers used taboo games at the second meeting as a medium to enrich students' vocabulary. At the third meeting, students was better understand how to play taboo games because they already know how to play the game, so they can play well and enrich their vocabulary. After the researcher gave treatment to students at the second and third meetings, the researcher then gave a post-test to see the enrichment of the students' vocabulary. On August 4, 2023, researchers conducted a post-test by giving quiz about singular and plural nouns.

Data showed that the average post-test score for students in cycle one is 70. From the 20 students, only 10 obtained scores above the minimum criteria established, or *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal* (KKM), at school. On the other hand, there are still 10 students who have not reached the minimum or maximum completion criteria (KKM) set because many students still do not know new vocabulary and are still embarrassed to say these words. They also did not know how to open dictionary quickly when looking for words. So, the students become lazy and not enthusiastic about answering the tests given by the teacher. Based on students' vocabulary acquisition in cycle 1 there was an increase in the average value of students' vocabulary from pre-test to post-test. The data shows that the average student pre-test score is 58 and increases in the post-test. The average score for post-test 1 is 70. This means that there is an increase in the average score of 12%.

After having the result of the post-test, the researcher and the teacher evaluated the students score to see the improvement in their vocabulary. The average score of students' pre-test was 58 and post-test was 70 but viewed from the number of students who passed the minimum criteria established in the school is 70. It means that the result of the students post-test 1 unsuccessful yet based on the minimum criteria established in the school of *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal* (KKM). Students' enrichment after being taught by using Taboo Game will be shown on this Graphic in the next page

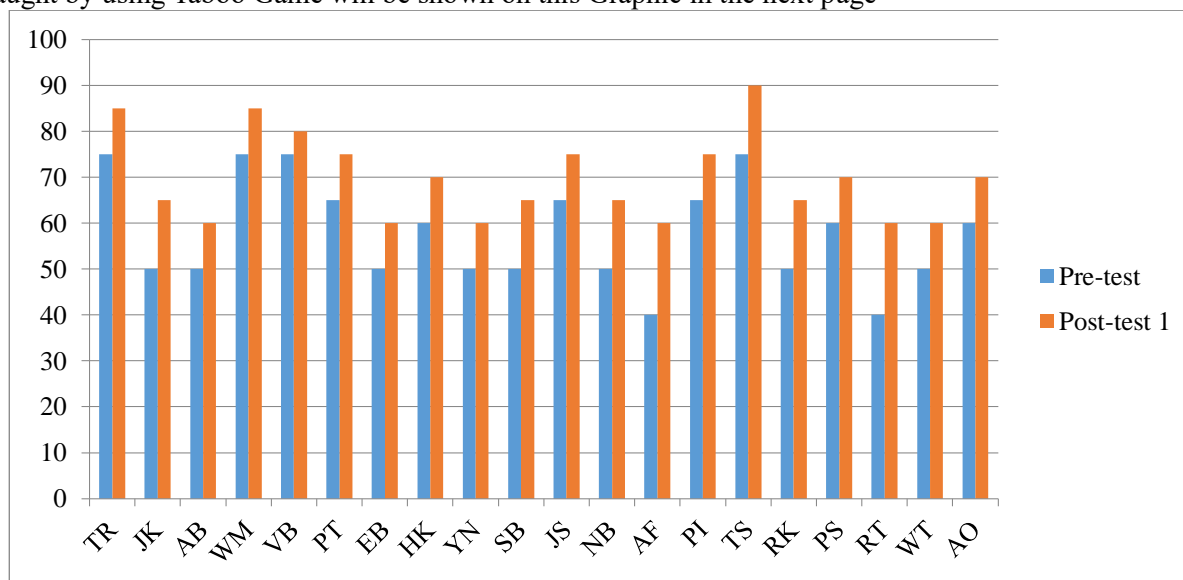


Figure 2. Students Improvement in pre-test and post-test 1

In the second stage is observation and it was done during the treatments. In this part, the observation checklist was also used to check whether the teaching and learning process was done based on the steps provided in the lesson plan or not. From the observation, the researcher finds out the problems from students learning activity. To get the better result and to solve the problems, the researcher decided to go to another cycle. Based on the data above, it could be conclude that the implementation of using the Taboo Game to enrich students' vocabulary on singular and plural nouns has not been successful yet. The criterion for success is that the student's average score is at least 70.

However, there are still 10 students who have not reached the minimum criteria established, or *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal* (KKM). On the other hand, it can be said that there are still 10 students who experience problems in learning. The problem experienced by students who do not score above the KKM is that students find it very difficult to find new words in the dictionary. Students are also too lazy to use the dictionary to find new words. There are also students who do not want to participate in playing games because they are embarrassed to speak or say words they know. From the several meetings and problems found with the students above, there should be more efforts to enrich students' understanding by applying the Taboo Game in a way that is more interesting for students to be able to understand and enrich students' vocabulary on singular and plural nouns. So, they still need treatment to enrich their words so that they are better in the second cycle.

Since the result of students' pre-test, post-test and the observation checklist in cycle one did not show significant improvement and the researcher and the teacher decided to conduct the second cycle. In this second cycle, the researcher still applied the four stages done in cycle one. After reflecting on the weaknesses in cycle one, the researcher and teacher re-planned the lesson plans and materials used in cycle two. Based on the problems that the researcher found in cycle one, the researcher and teachers tried

to find other ways to use this cycle. The ways that the researcher used in the second cycle were the researcher play the taboo game used nouns that have in around the students in the school and nouns at home.

Researcher carried out the teaching and learning process in the second cycle with the aim of getting better result, which significantly increased students' vocabulary by using the Taboo Game. Cycle II actions were carried out on August 7, 2023. At the first meeting, the researcher explained to students how to create and search for singular nouns and plural nouns. At the second meeting, the researcher asked students about the singular and plural nouns they learned at the first meeting, and the researcher played the taboo game together with the students. The nouns used in this Taboo game are nouns that they often encounter around the school environment at home, giving students time to do assignments about nouns. Then, at the third meeting, the students learned the vocabulary written as an assignment at the second meeting. The post-test was carried out on August 9, 2023, by giving them a test in the form of pictures of objects in the house. Students are given time to answer the test.

After having the result of post-test cycle 2 then the researcher and the teacher evaluated the students score to see the improvement in their vocabulary. The students' achievement increased from pre-test to post-test in cycle 2.

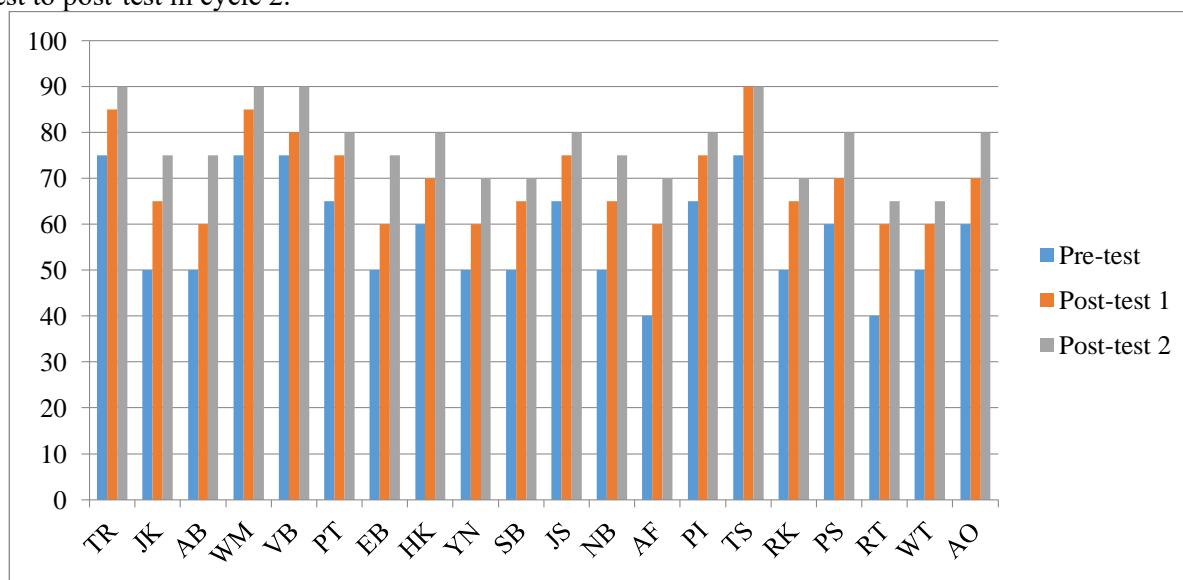


Figure 3. The percentage of student's improvement from the pre-test, post-test 1 and the post-test cycle 2

The result of post-test in cycle two showed that there was a significant improvement of students' achievement in vocabulary. The students understood the material given by the researcher and have enough confident when the students pronoun the words. The focus of this stage was to observe students' weaknesses happened in cycle one the weakness was students' pronunciations, lack of confidents and less of vocabulary when learning process in the class. The result of the observation checklist in this second cycle showed that the students' vocabulary in teaching and learning process was better compared to the result in cycle one. So, the researcher did the result of observation checklist and the students focus and participated when teaching and learning process and it make students easy to understand the material that the researcher gave to them.



**DISCUSSION**

In this research, a qualitative method with Classroom Action Research (CAR) design was implemented. The researcher did this research in two cycles. Each cycle had four meeting, one meeting for pre-test, two meeting for treatments and one meeting for post-test. In this research, the researcher uses Taboo game in singular and plural nouns to enrich students' vocabulary. From the observation result, the students faced the problems from students learning activity. The problem is the students did not participate actively in doing the game. The students could not express their idea when following the learning activity in the class. The students could not put enough attention and focus on the material that the teacher explains. The students could not do interaction with the teacher because they are afraid. Here in the result of the students' mean score of vocabulary from pre-test, post-test 1 to post-test 2.

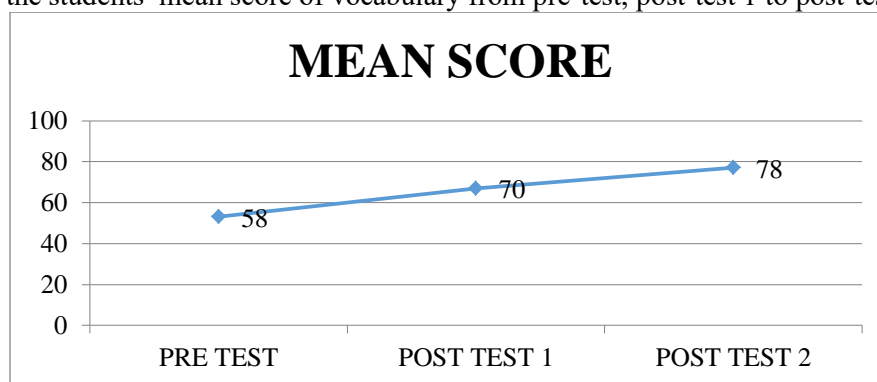


Figure 4. The result of pre-test, post-test 1 to post-test 2

The study demonstrates that students' learning achievement increased after playing the Taboo Game, a game designed to enhance their vocabulary and motivation for learning English. The average pre-test score was only 58, with only 4 students meeting the minimum criteria. However, the average post-test score was only 70, with 10 students meeting the minimum criteria. Students struggled with vocabulary and motivation, as they rarely spoke English during the teaching and learning process. The researcher implemented the taboo game as a tool to address these issues. Akdogan (2017) stated that games give advantages and effectiveness in learning vocabulary by giving relax and fun activity to the students that can help them learn and remember new words easier. The first cycle was successful, with students being well-behaved and attentive. The teacher provided a vocabulary list and rules for the game, and the students were given a post-test to measure their improvement.

The second cycle aims to improve students' vocabulary and grades. The research results showed a post-test increase of 50% in the second cycle, with 18 students meeting the minimum criteria set by the school, or Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM). This increase can also be seen in the observation checklist. The observation checklist was also used to check whether the teaching and learning process was done based on the steps provided in the lesson plan or not. From the observation, the researcher finds out the problems from students learning activity. Observation checklist in this research is talking about students participate in class, students attention when the teacher explain the material, and focus in students vocabulary ability when the teacher give the students task. In the first cycle, the problem experienced by students who do not score above the KKM is that students find it very difficult to find new words in the dictionary. Students are also too lazy to use the dictionary to find new words. There are also students who do not want to participate in playing games because they are embarrassed to speak or say words they know and students still lacked vocabulary because they rarely used English.

However, in the second cycle, there was an increase after treating nouns around the students and carrying out tests using nouns in the house. Students are able to name new nouns that they don't know yet. Students are also more confident when mentioning nouns they know and are more courageous when speaking English in class. From the several meetings and problems found with the students above, there should be more efforts to enrich students' understanding by applying the Taboo Game in a way that is more interesting for students to be able to understand and enrich students' vocabulary on singular and plural nouns.

In conclusion, Taboo Games have become a valuable tool for increasing students' vocabulary and motivation to learn English. Wright (2006) states that games help and encourage many students to maintain their interests and work. Taboo games can be a good teaching medium that can give students the opportunity to increase their vocabulary and encourage their motivation to learn a new language. However, more research is needed to determine the most effective approaches for improving students' vocabulary and overall learning experience.

### CONCLUSION

This research was conducted by the researcher to find out the implementation of taboo game in enriching student motivation, confidence and vocabulary. In this research, the researcher applied the use of taboo game to enrich students' vocabulary. This study aimed to determine the enrichment of students' vocabulary using Taboo Game in SMP N 2 Soe in grade seven. In this study the researcher used Classroom Action Research used Taboo Game to find out students' problem in vocabulary like the lack of motivation, confidence, and vocabulary. So, the research was conducted in two cycles and the cycle included pre-test and post-test to collected the data. The researcher conducted two cycles because in cycle one the researcher found some problems in per-test, post-test and observation checklist during teaching the students. The problem experienced by students who did not score above the KKM is that students found it very difficult to found new words in the dictionary. Students were also too lazy to use the dictionary to find new words. There were also students who did not want to participate in playing games because they were embarrassed to speak or say words they know. To get the better result and to solve the problems, the researcher decided to go to another cycle. The result of this research showed that using Taboo Game in singular and plural nouns significantly improved the students' vocabulary of SMP N 2 Soe grade seven in the academic year 2023/2024. The conclusion of this research is supported by the students' vocabulary achievement which could be seen from the increasing of the students mean score of vocabulary achievement from 58 in pre-test, and 70 in post-test of the first cycle, to 78 in the second cycle the improvement was shown also from the result of observation checklist. The students had been able to develop the new words and brave enough to present their task in the class and positively participated in teaching and learning process. The students also could add their vocabulary and could brave to interaction with the teacher to ask the teacher about nouns that they did not know.

Based on research findings, it can be concluded that taboo games can enrich students' vocabulary. The Taboo game for learning English vocabulary is very significant in increasing students' vocabulary. Due to their limited vocabulary, most students report that playing this game improves their memory skills and reduces their anxiety about misreading English words. Recent research suggests that Taboo games may be useful for helping students memorize and improve their English vocabulary in class. While these tactics have the potential to help students, educators must be aware of these barriers. However, the benefits outweigh the disadvantages. One of the advantages, including increasing student engagement in the learning process, suggests that implementing this method in the classroom would be useful. Students may assume that playing Taboo reduces their responsibilities. There are several advantages to adopting the Taboo game, one of which is that the learning process becomes more fun thanks to the interesting



game characters. Therefore, implementing the Taboo game can make students like their class. This can be seen from the enthusiasm of the participants during the competition.

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