The Application of Simon Says-Based Game for Vocabulary Teaching to Fifth Grade Students' in SDN Sumodikaran 2

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abstrak—Mengajarkan kosakata merupakan bagian penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa, terutama bagi anak-anak, karena kosakata menjadi dasar dalam berkomunikasi. Namun, proses ini memiliki tantangan tersendiri ketika diterapkan pada siswa sekolah dasar, seperti keterbatasan dalam rentang perhatian dan kecenderungan mudah melupakan kata-kata yang telah dipelajari. Dengan demikian, dibutuhkan metode pengajaran yang menggugah minat serta mendorong keterlibatan agar peserta didik dapat memahami serta mengingat kosa kata dengan lebih baik. Salah satu metode yang dapat diterapkan adalah pembelajaran berbasis permainan, seperti permainan Simon Says. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana permainan simon says digunakan dalam pengajaran kosakata dan bagaimana respon siswa terhadap penerapannya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui pembagian angket, wawancara dengan siswa, dan observasi di kelas. Analisis data dilakukan dengan menerapkan teknik seleksi data, pemaparan data, serta penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi permainan Simon Says dalam pengajaran kosakata dilakukan melalui beberapa tahap, yaitu penjelasan, demonstrasi, dan praktik dengan partisipasi aktif siswa. Siswa memberikan respon positif terhadap penggunaan permainan ini, dengan menunjukkan antusiasme, peningkatan partisipasi, dan daya ingat kosakata yang lebih baik. Permainan Simon Says juga berperan dalam membentuk suasana belajar yang menyenangkan dan menarik perhatian siswa yang mendukung proses pembelajaran.
Kata kunci— permainan simon mengatakan, pengajaran kosakata.

 Abstract—Teaching vocabulary is an important part of language learning, especially for children, as it forms the basis of communication. However, this process has its own challenges when applied to elementary school students, such as limited attention span and the tendency to easily forget the words that have been learnt. Therefore, interesting and interactive teaching methods are needed so that students can understand and remember vocabulary better. One of the methods that can be applied is game-based learning, such as the Simon Says game. This research is conducted to explain the application of Simon Says game in vocabulary teaching and how students respond to its application. A kind of research is descriptive qualitative. Data collection was conducted using questionnaires, interview with students, and classroom observations. This study was analysed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification techniques. The results of the study show that the implementation of the Simon Says game in teaching

vocabulary was carried out through several stages, including explanation, demonstration, and practice with active student participation. Students responded positively to the use of the game, showing enthusiasm, increased participation, and better vocabulary recall. The Simon Says game also helped create a fun and engaging classroom atmosphere that supported the learning process.
Keywords— Simon says game, teaching vocabulary.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English in elementary schools has become an essential part of language education in Indonesia. At this early stage, vocabulary plays a crucial role because it forms the foundation for students to understand and use the language in a meaningful way. Vocabulary encompasses the words a person is familiar with and uses in a given language. Vocabulary plays a key role in helping learn English more easily (Rochmadhoni et al., 2022). Without sufficient vocabulary, students may struggle to comprehend reading materials, express their thoughts, or follow spoken instructions (Nurpratama, 2020). Therefore, teachers are constantly seeking creative and engaging ways to help young learners acquire and remember new vocabulary. One of the biggest challenges in teaching vocabulary to fifth-grade students is maintaining their attention and interest during the lesson. Children at this age are generally active, curious, and enjoy movement-based learning (Anggrarini, 2019). Traditional methods such as rote memorization, repetition drills, or reading lists of words may not always suit their learning preferences. The selection of appropriate teaching methods plays a crucial role in achieving learning objectives effectively and meaningfully (Hariyadi et al., 2021). This highlights the importance of exploring interactive methods that align with students' developmental stages and characteristics. One such method is the use of games, which create an enjoyable and interactive learning environment (Baimbetova, 2020). So, games are widely recognized as one of the method that support young learners' needs. Games provide a relaxed atmosphere where children can learn through fun, interaction, and physical activity. In this context, movement-based games such as Simon Says have gained attention as a strategy that combines vocabulary practice with physical response, encouraging both comprehension and participation in a dynamic setting.

Simon Says, a widely recognized game, is particularly effective in reinforcing vocabulary learning through physical movement and engagement (Dalimunte et al., 2018). Simon says-based game commonly played by kids, involving responses to specific instructions, that start with the phrase "Simon says." If the command is not preceded by this phrase, players are expected not to move. In language education, this game may be adapted by incorporating vocabulary items into the commands, allowing students to associate words with actions. For example, the teacher could say 'Simon says touch your nose,' which directly introduces the word 'nose' through meaningful physical movement. This type of game not only introduces a new word,

but also reinforces word recognition and comprehension through repetition and physical demonstration. Students have to listen carefully, understand the command, and respond accordingly, which activates their cognitive and physical engagement simultaneously. By playing this game repeatedly, students become more familiar with the vocabulary and remember it more easily. This interactive and fun learning atmosphere also reduces students' anxiety, especially for those who are shy or lack the confidence to speak in front of their peers. The game encourages togetherness in the classroom, fosters co-operation, and supports the development of English listening and comprehension skills.

At SDN Sumodikaran 2, teaching English to the fifth grade students brings its own set of opportunities and challenges. Most of the students come from diverse backgrounds, which means their level of exposure to English also varies. This diversity affects their vocabulary development as well as their level of participation in class. Teachers should be flexible in their teaching method to effectively address the varying needs of students, including those who need more support in understanding and using new words. From the data gathered through observations and informal interviews held with English language teacher at the school, it is known that students often have difficulty remembering vocabulary taught through conventional textbook-based methods. Some students seemed less interested, some even seemed confused or bored. To overcome this, the teacher tried to introduce the Simon Says game as part of the vocabulary learning activity. The choice of this game was motivated by the idea that the integration of movement and games can help increase students' engagement and strengthen their memory of vocabulary. The game is applied regularly, especially when introducing or repeating vocabulary about body parts, actions, or objects in the classroom. The teacher observed a change in the students' attitude towards learning, where many of them became more enthusiastic and eager to participate. This led to an interest in further researching how the game was used and how students responded during the learning process.

Based on these considerations, this study explores the application of the Simon Says game as an instructional tool for teaching vocabulary to fifth-grade students at SDN Sumodikaran 2. The research focuses on two main points: (1) the application of Simon Says game in teaching vocabulary to the fifth-grade students at SDN Sumodikaran 2, and (2) the students' responses to the use of Simon Says game in teaching vocabulary. By integrating an interactive game into the classroom, this study seeks to contribute to the development of language teaching methods for young learners. The purpose of this article is not to quantitatively measure learning outcomes, but rather to describe the learning process and explore how a familiar game can be made into a meaningful learning experience.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a qualitative design to explain the application of simon says-based game for vocabulary teaching and students' feedback to the application of simon says game for vocabulary teaching. Qualitative research design focuses on data processing without relying on numerical or statistical analysis. According to (Iswari, 2024), as a scientific approach, qualitative research focuses on understanding phenomena within real-life social settings, primarily through meaningful interaction and communication with research subjects. The study was conducted at SDN Sumodikaran 2 with fifth-grade students as participants. The participants included a class of fifth-grade, it consisted of 14 students and their English teacher. The study was conducted in a natural classroom setting where the Simon Says game was integrated into regular vocabulary lessons.

To collect the necessary data, three primary instruments were employed. First, the students received questionnaires to obtain insights into their feedback and involvement during the application of the game. Second, to explore the method further, interviews were conducted with a group of selected students. Third, classroom observations were carried out by the researcher to observer students' participation, engagement, and overall response to the game-based learning. After the data was obtained, data was analyzed by employing reduction techniques, presenting the findings, and confirming or drawing conclusions. In data reduction technique, the results of observations, questionnaire and interviews were selected, summarised, and transformed into the main information to make the data picture clearer. Furthermore, the selected information was presented qualitatively to describe the research results. Finally, the data was further analysed to produce research conclusions.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In the current section, the researcher will explain how the simon says game was applicated for vocabulary teaching, along with students' feedback to the application of this game for vocabulary learning. Data were obtained through observation checklists, interviews and questionnaires, which provided a comprehensive insight into how the game influenced students' engagement, motivation and made a significant impact on their vocabulary comprehension. The findings show that the game was well received by students and effectively enhanced their vocabulary learning experience.

The application of Simon Says game for vocabulary teaching

The teacher succeeded in building a supportive atmosphere from the beginning. Based on the observation of the teacher's implementation, all aspects of the opening activities were carried out optimally. The teacher greeted the students, conducted ice breaking activities, and ensured the students understood the vocabulary before starting the game, with a 100% implementation rate. This shows that the teacher

prepared the students well for the lesson by applicating the simon says game. In core activities, the majority of the indicators also revealed very positive results. The teacher explained the rules, gave examples, wrote new vocabulary on the board, and pronounced the words correctly. However, there were two indicators that were not fully achieved: repeating unclear instructions (85.7%) and providing opportunities for students to practice pronunciation (87.5%). This shows that although the implementation was very good, there are still some things that need to be improved. All other aspects of the core activities, such as forming a circle, giving orders, and monitoring students, were done perfectly (100%). The teacher also allowed the students to take turns being 'Simon', giving them an interesting and hands-on experience. The consistent application of rules, including student elimination, demonstrates strong classroom management during the game.

In the closing activity, all indicators reached 100% implementation. The teacher led a reflection session, encouraged students to recall the vocabulary learned, and gave positive feedback and motivation. This shows that the teacher not only focused on the game but also emphasized vocabulary reinforcement. Meanwhile, the observation of students indicated very high enthusiasm and participation. Almost all indicators showed active engagement, with only one slightly lower indicator—correct pronunciation of new vocabulary (85.7%). Overall, the students' active and positive interaction (Humairoh et al., 2023) indicates that games like Simon Says can significantly boost motivation and engagement in English learning. This aligns with kinesthetic learning theory and Total Physical Response, where physical movement enhances language acquisition.

Students' feedback to the application of simon says game for vocabulary teaching

To gather students' feedback to the application of simon says-based game for vocabulary learning, the researcher used research instruments, interviews and also distributed questionnaires. Below are the results of students interview:

Table 1. The result of students interview

No	Question	Response Summary
1	Do you like the challenge simon says ? Why?	All six students (100%)gave positive feedback. They described the game as fun, exciting, and enjoyable. Most students expressed enthusiasm and said they looked forward to the game during English class because it made learning feel like play.
2	How do you feel when playing Simon Says in class?	Most of the students (approximately 83%) said they felt happy, excited, and joyful while playing Simon Says. They explained that the game created a cheerful and energetic classroom atmosphere, which made them more motivated to participate. However, one student (17%) stated that they felt neutral and

		thought the game was just okay, without strong feelings of enjoymenting.
3	Does Simon Says help you remember new vocabulary? If yes, how?	100% of the students agreed that the game helped them remember new vocabulary more effectively. They explained that associating the words with physical movements and listening to commands helped them understand and retain the vocabulary better.
4	Do you find it easier to use vocabulary after playing Simon Says?	All students (100%) stated that they found it easier to recall and use vocabulary in sentences after playing the game. They reported that the repetition and the connection between movement and meaning reinforced their memory.
5	Do you feel more confident speaking English after playing Simon Says?	100% of students confirmed that their confidence in speaking English increased after participating in the game. They mentioned that using vocabulary in an enjoyable context helped reduce their fear of making mistakes.
6	Do you think this game makes learning vocabulary more enjoyable?	All students (100%) agreed that the game made vocabulary learning more enjoyable. They explained that the interactive nature of the game helped them stay focused and interested during the lesson.
7	What do you like most about Simon Says?	Most of the students (approximately 83%) stated that they liked the Simon Says game because it was fun and enjoyable. They emphasized the excitement and energy they felt while playing. Meanwhile, one student (17%) mentioned that their favorite part was the game's rules, finding the challenge of following instructions quickly to be the most interesting aspect.
8	Do you want this game to be used frequently in class? Why?	All students (100%) expressed a strong desire for the Simon Says game to be used more often in English lessons. They stated that the game was not only fun but also very helpful in learning and remembering vocabulary effectively.

The results of the interview indicate that the Simon Says game has a positive influence on students' attitudes and experiences in learning English vocabulary. All students (100%) expressed their enjoyment of the game, describing it as fun, exciting, and something they looked forward to. This finding suggests that the Simon Says game can transform the learning environment into a more engaging and motivating space, aligning with the characteristics of active learning. Most students (83%) reported feeling happy, excited, and joyful while playing the game, although one student felt neutral. This shows that while the majority of learners respond positively to the game's energetic and interactive nature, individual preferences still exist. Even so, the general classroom atmosphere became more cheerful and dynamic, which may

contribute to increased student participation (Puspita et al., 2018). All students also acknowledged that the game helped them remember new vocabulary more effectively. They noted that the physical movements and listening to commands helped strengthen their memory. This aligns with the principles of Total Physical Response (TPR), which emphasizes the link between physical activity and language retention. In addition, all students found it easier to recall and use vocabulary after playing the game. They also reported increased confidence in speaking English. These outcomes suggest that the Simon Says game can contribute to developing both receptive (listening) and productive (speaking) skills by offering students a safe and enjoyable space to practice using English actively. When asked about what they liked most about the game, the majority (83%) highlighted the fun and excitement, while one student (17%) appreciated the rules and the challenge of following commands. This diversity of responses demonstrates that the game caters to different learning preferences, whether focused on enjoyment or cognitive challenge. Furthermore, all students hoped the game would be used more frequently, reinforcing the idea that enjoyable learning methods (Aisha, 2021) can enhance both motivation and language acquisition.

The questionnaire results revealed that the use of the Simon Says game in teaching English vocabulary to fifth-grade students at SDN Sumodikaran 2 was highly positively received by the students. The majority of students enjoyed learning vocabulary with this method, with 100% stating that they felt happy. Additionally, 92.86% of students reported being more interested in learning English after playing Simon Says, indicating that the game effectively increased their motivation. Most students (85.71%) found Simon Says more effective compared to other teaching methods, which was further supported by their improvement in listening skills. According to the results, 92.86% of students said they could better understand instructions and focus more when listening to English commands. Furthermore, 92.86% felt that vocabulary learned through Simon Says was easier to remember. Although a small percentage of students (21.43%) did not feel fully motivated, the majority still felt encouraged to learn English through this method. Students also experienced a boost in confidence, with 85.71% reporting feeling more confident speaking English after playing the game, and 100% feeling more confident in pronouncing new vocabulary. Lastly, 100% of students agreed that lessons using Simon Says were more enjoyable, helped them remember vocabulary longer, were preferred over traditional methods, and did not make them bored.

The questionnaire results indicate that, the application of the Simon Says game in teaching English vocabulary led to the creation of an interactive and engaging educational setting, where students felt happy and more interested in learning. This supports the theory by (Wright et al., 2006), which states that games can increase students' motivation and interest in learning. Simon Says combines kinesthetic,

auditory, and visual elements, making it more effective than traditional teaching methods. This activity not only involves students physically but also trains their listening skills in a fun way. By having to distinguish commands with and without "Simon Says," students are automatically trained to focus and think critically. This finding also supports the principles of Total Physical Response (TPR), where language learning is achieved through listening to commands and responding physically.

Affectively, the game had a positive impact on students' motivation to participate actively in classroom activities and confidence in expressing vocabulary through physical responses. Motivation plays an important role as a driving force that significantly contributes to achieving success in the learning process, as it encourages students to remain engaged, persistent, and enthusiastic in their educational journey (Rahmawati et al., 2021). In addition, the rotation of roles as 'Simon' gave students a sense of responsibility in the learning process. Finally, students' preference for game-based learning suggests that Simon Says can be an effective alternative for vocabulary teaching. This method prevents students from getting bored, helps them remember vocabulary longer, and allows them to enjoy healthy competition. Therefore, integrating games like Simon Says into English lessons in primary schools is highly recommended to optimise students' learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results elaborated in chapter discussed earlier, the simon says game proven to be a beneficial, engaging, and interactive method of teaching vocabulary. The combination of physical movement, repetition, and competition contributed to student motivation and retention. Although some students initially had difficulty in distinguishing commands, repeated practice helped to improve their auditory accuracy. Future learning could integrate more vocabulary variety and additional practice in recognising deceptive commands to further improve learning outcomes. The findings suggest that integrating games in vocabulary teaching not only increases student engagement, but also improves their language retention and listening skills. Given the very high positive response from the students, it is recommended that the simon says game be applied more frequently as a vocabulary teaching strategy, specifically for young learners who benefit from kinesthetic learning methods.

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