



## Improving Young Learners' Vocabulary Mastery Through Game-Based Learning Using "MOFIN Mystery Box"

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### Keywords

Young Learners,  
Vocabulary,  
English, Games

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### Abstract

Teaching English as a foreign language is a challenge for all teachers, especially teachers who teach English for young learners. Despite so many challenges, English is highly recommended to be taught to children in primary schools. Teaching English to young learners must begin with an introduction to vocabulary. Vocabulary is the foundation and most important aspect of learning any language. The challenge of teaching English to young learners is the level of English proficiency of the teachers, as well as some new obstacles, particularly in terms of techniques policy, teaching English for young learners also requires creativity to make learning fun, because children enjoy having fun and playing and they also easily side-tracked, so teachers should choose teaching methods that are appropriate for their age group, game-based learning can improve students' vocabulary mastery, motivation, and interest in learning. Children employ their senses of smell, touch, taste, sight, and hearing to investigate the physical world holistically. Therefore, it would be better if children learn to use touchable games like "MOFIN Mystery Box". The purpose of this study is to find out whether the "MOFIN Mystery Box" media can improve students' vocabulary mastery at Sukamanunggal State Elementary School. This research is qualitative research. Data collection techniques using observation. The data analysis techniques used in this study are identification, classification, and description. The result of this study is "MOFIN Mystery Box" can increase students' vocabulary mastery at Sukomanunggal State Elementary School.

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### Kata Kunci

Pelajar tingkat  
sekolah dasar,  
Kosakata, Bahasa  
Inggris, Permainan

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### Abstrak

Pengajaran bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing merupakan tantangan bagi semua guru, terutama guru yang mengajar bahasa Inggris untuk pelajar muda. Meskipun begitu banyak tantangan, bahasa Inggris sangat dianjurkan untuk diajarkan kepada anak-anak di sekolah dasar. Pengajaran bahasa Inggris untuk pelajar muda harus dimulai dengan pengenalan kosakata. Kosakata adalah dasar dan aspek terpenting dalam mempelajari bahasa apa pun. Tantangan pengajaran bahasa Inggris untuk pelajar muda adalah tingkat kemahiran bahasa Inggris para guru, serta beberapa kendala baru, terutama dalam hal kebijakan teknik, pengajaran bahasa Inggris untuk pelajar muda juga membutuhkan kreativitas untuk membuat belajar menjadi menyenangkan, karena anak-anak senang bersenang-senang. dan bermain serta mudah teralihkan, sehingga guru harus memilih metode pengajaran yang sesuai

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dengan kelompok usianya, pembelajaran berbasis permainan dapat meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata, motivasi, dan minat belajar siswa. Anak-anak menggunakan indera penciuman, sentuhan, rasa, penglihatan, dan pendengaran mereka untuk menyelidiki dunia fisik secara holistik. Oleh karena itu, akan lebih baik jika anak-anak belajar menggunakan permainan yang dapat disentuh seperti "MOFIN Mystery Box". Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui apakah media "MOFIN Mystery Box" dapat meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa di SDN Sukamanunggal. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan observasi. Teknik analisis data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah identifikasi, klasifikasi, dan deskripsi. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah "MOFIN Mystery Box" dapat meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa di SDN Sukomanunggal.

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## A. Introduction

Teaching English as a foreign language is a challenge for all teachers, especially teachers who teach English for young learners. Despite so many challenges, English is highly recommended to be taught to children in primary schools, as stated by Johnstone in Copland et.al (2014), that Education is possibly the most significant policy development in the world, English is the most often taught language, particularly to young learners or primary school students. Copland (2014) also stated that there are several reason why young learners should learn about English to begin with, it is commonly considered that studying languages at a young age is preferable. Second, as a result of economic globalisation, English has become widely used, and many governments consider that having an English-speaking workforce is necessary to compete. Third, parents want their children to learn English so that they may benefit from new world rules, and they are pressuring governments to start teaching English to younger children.

Other experts also agree with the statement that young learners should already be given English material. For example, Bakhsh (2016) argues that teaching English has become a phenomenon in Saudi Arabia during the previous few decades, particularly among young students, for instances in kindergarten and elementary schools, English is a required subject. There is also Damar et.al (2013) who argue since the second half of the twentieth century, an early start to English language teaching/learning has become a phenomenon. This is because The ASEAN Economic Community has been established, in which all ASEAN countries must compete with one another in order to avoid isolation, and in order to meet this challenge, the countries must address a number of issues, one of which is how to ensure that students have a good command of the English language (Choomthong, 2014). Learning English for young learners also has various benefits, for example, as stated by Oktafiani and Fauzan (2017) that learning English early has the several advantages as follows: 1) English mastery will be better if young learners learn English early, 2) English will be useful for young learners to find a job in the future, and 3) mastering English will provide social and economic benefits to young learners in the future. Teaching English to young learners must begin with an introduction to vocabulary.

Vocabulary is the foundation and most important aspect of learning any language (Bakhsh, 2016). Let alone to learn a foreign language when we learn our own language vocabulary is the first part of the language we learn. Like a toddler, his parents taught him a lot to say a word one by one, instead of being immediately given a lesson in composing sentences. Therefore, vocabulary is said to be the most important and fundamental thing in learning a language. Learning english vocabulary is not easy especially for young learners, because this is

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frequently an impediment to anyone. A memory strategy is used by some children to expand their vocabulary (Copland et al., 2014). Learners frequently reach their full potential and are discouraged from using available language learning resources such as listening to the radio, speaking with native speakers, using language in a variety of contexts, blogging, or watching television because they lack a broad vocabulary and techniques for learning new words (Rohmatillah, 2014). Active and passive vocabulary are the two types of vocabulary (Noroozi & Siyyari, 2019). When learning new words, people require a lot of practice and meaning ties in order to fully comprehend them, store the vocabulary in memory, and maintain it while speaking or writing. As a result, people's language is divided into two categories: active and passive. Active vocabulary is made up of words that come to mind promptly when a person needs to produce a spoken or written sentence and is utilized in speech or writing. A person, on the other hand, understands but does not employ passive vocabulary. People understand it when they hear or read it.

Although it is important to teach English to young learners, there are also some challenges that English teachers will face as a foreign language to young learners. In general, the challenge of teaching English to young learners is the level of English proficiency of the teachers, as well as some new obstacles, particularly in terms of techniques policy (Garton, 2014). Besides that, teaching English for young learners also requires creativity to make learning fun, because children enjoy having fun and playing and they also easily side-tracked, so teachers should choose teaching methods that are appropriate for their age group (Bakhsh, 2016). Cameron concluded in Katemba & Sianipar (2020) that teaching vocabulary in primary school is challenging, and that teaching vocabulary to young learners necessitates additional effort and strategies. Teachers should put in more effort to teach kids since youngsters have distinct characteristics that require more attention (Derakhshan & Shirmohammadli, 2015; Thi To Hoa & Thi Tuyet Mai, 2016).

To make students not bored and always enthusiastic to learn English, they can use several methods, for example, which is currently a trend, namely game-based learning or teaching through games. According to Saricoban and Metin in Cam & Tran (2017), that games and problem-solving activities, are examples of the most preferred communication activities because they have a purpose other than the production of accurate speech. Which means students are more enthusiastic and inspired to participate in games than they are to complete a large number of exercises. Game-based learning is learning process that implements games in it (Li, 2021). According to Li (2021), game-based learning can improve students' vocabulary mastery, motivation, and interest in learning. Educational Games have many types, one of which is traditional games. The manipulation of physical things is a big part of traditional children's games (i.e. cards, building blocks, little toys, pencils, etc.) (Miglino et al., 2014). According to Miglino et.al (2014), children employ their senses of smell, touch, taste, sight, and hearing to investigate the physical world holistically. Therefore, it would be better if children learn to use touchable games like "MOFIN Mystery Box". The game that the research team made is entitled "Mystery Box for English Beginner" or "MOFIN Mystery Box" where the game is in the form of a box containing cards and the cards are of 2 kinds, namely: Guess card and mystery question. Guess card is a card that contains instructions that lead to an object and the object must be answered using English, Mystery question is a card that asks or mentions something such as, colors, animals, adjectives, verbs, and nouns. This game can be played by 3 or more people.

According to Iriance in Authar et.al (2021) Indonesia is one of three countries having a poor command of the English language. Therefore, it is very important to teach English from an early age. However, as the experts said above those young learners are very easily bored, so to help teachers find the latest media to teach English, the research team conducted a study using a "MOFIN Mystery Box" at Sukamanunggal State Elementary School, to find out whether the media can be used to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The purpose of this study is to find out whether the "MOFIN Mystery Box" media can improve students' vocabulary mastery at Sukamanunggal State Elementary School.

## B. Methodology

This research is qualitative research. Most researchers are fascinated by how things happen, and qualitative research focuses on participants' views and viewpoints, as well as how individuals interpret their lives (Authar & Aquariza, 2020). The researchers used a "MOFIN Mystery Box" diversion to test the children's understanding of vocabulary in Sukomanunggal State Elementary School, to be specific by put each vocabulary within the game box that has been made, at that point the children are inquired to reply the vocabulary that analyst have provided.

Data collection techniques using observation techniques. The steps of this observation start from determining the object of research. The target of this research is elementary school students aged 6-12 years. After determining the target, the next step is to determine the place and time of conducting the research. Because the object of research is elementary school students, the place of research is carried out at the Sukamanunggal State Elementary School, Sukamanunggal District, Surabaya City. The research was carried out for 14 days starting on August 5, 2020.

The next step is the preparation carried out by the researcher. Things that need to be prepared include pre-test questions to determine students' abilities, then prepare mystery box learning media which is a learning media that helps researchers improve memory skills and increase vocabulary. Then the last one prepares post-test questions to find out the progress of learning outcomes.

Next is the implementation stage, at this stage the researcher collects and manages data. The data collection stage is through pre-test and post-test, while at the data management stage, researchers compare the results of the pre-test in which students have not been given learning using mystery box learning media with post-test results where students have been given learning using learning media. mystery box. After the data has been collected and managed, the last step is to draw conclusions.

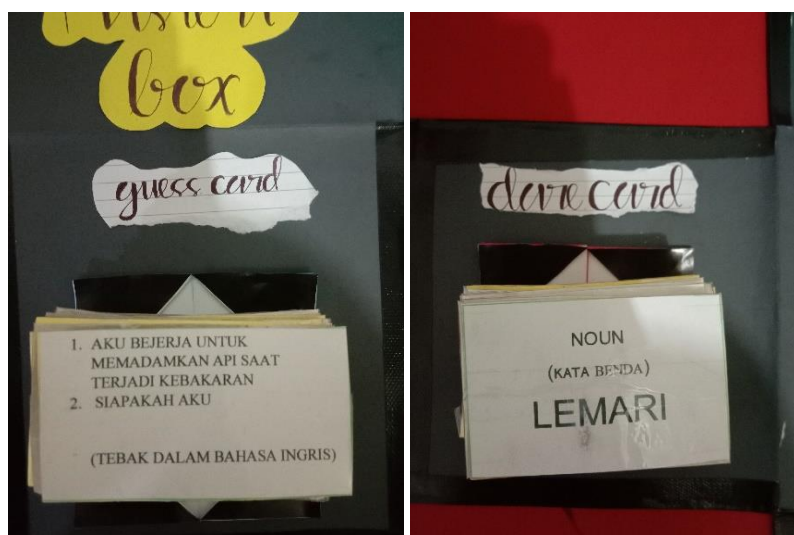


Figure 1. The Design of flashcards

Observation is the process of acquiring information on a strategy's success in improving of students' abilities o (Mualimin & Cahyadi, 2014). The data relevant to the established success criteria are the subject of the observation. Which means that the data taken is the result of the

vocabulary mastery of the children at Sukomanunggal State Elementary School. Data collection is done by preparing a mystery box containing two card categories, namely: Guess card and mystery question. Guess card is a card that contains instructions that lead to an object and the object must be answered using English, Mystery question is a card that asks or mentions something such as, colors, animals, adjectives, verbs, and nouns.

To determine who will play, students can do "*hompimpa*" first. After that, students will take turns to take one of the card categories that have been provided to be answered. To find out whether the mystery box learning media can help students in enriching vocabulary, we prepared a closed questionnaire with questions that were easily understood by elementary school students and with yes/no answer choices. Sources of data taken from the environment of the object under study, namely students at Sukomanunggal State Elementary School.



**Figure 2.** The Design of flashcards in the "MOFIN Mystery Box"

The members who took portion within the "MOFIN Mystery Box" amusement were 10 children in Sukomanunggal State Rudimentary School. The "MOFIN Mystery Box" amusement action is carried out for almost 30-45 minutes in bunches. Each playing gather must reply the lexicon that has been given within the "MOFIN Mystery Box". The bunch that can reply the foremost vocabulary will be compensated, so that they are excited almost playing "MOFIN Mystery Box" for vocabulary mastery.

The data analysis techniques used in this study are as follows: 1) data identification, or identifying the data that has been acquired; 2) classification, or classifying data according to the classification of the number of vocabulary mastered; 3) description, or clarification of interpretation from the data classification, or defining the data that has been categorized.

### C. Result and Discussion

"MOFIN Mystery Box" is a development game from flashcard learning media, so that flashcard learning media is not boring, it is necessary to give a little innovation to this learning media by mining boxes and card categories, so that this learning media is more interesting. The purpose of the researcher applying this learning media is to enrich the vocabulary of students at SDN Sukamanunggal. The way to play is that each student takes turns to pick and choose a flashcard category that contains Guess cards and mystery questions. The player who answers correctly and has the highest points will get a reward. With this learning media update, students at Sukomanunggal State Elementary School can learn new vocabulary and remember it.



Figure 3. The Design of MOFIN Mystery Box



Figure 4. The Design of the rules' cards in MOFIN Mystery Box

This research was conducted on August 5, 2020 in Sukomanunggal State Elementary School. There were 10 children who participated in this activity, aged 6-12 years. Data collection activities were carried out for 14 days. On the first 3 days, the researcher conducted an environmental survey and conducted observations or conducted a pre-test for elementary school students at Sukomanunggal State Elementary School. After admitting the observations, the facts found were that elementary students at Sukomanunggal State Elementary School did not master English and had difficulty remembering vocabulary.



Figure 5. The Implementation of Mystery Box in Sukamanunggal State Elementary School

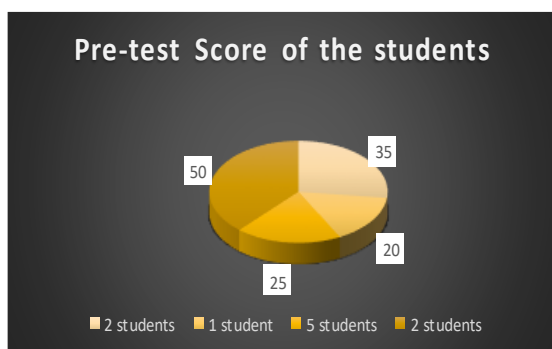
This is known after the implementation of learning English for one week. The day after the discovery of these facts, the researchers prepared the "MOFIN Mystery Box" learning media and applied it to students for 4 days. Based on the researcher's observations, students at Sukomanunggal State Elementary School seemed to enjoy learning English. On the last day, the

researcher conducted a post-test to students who had carried out the pre-test and learning assistance using the "MOFIN Mystery Box" media. From the results of the application of the "MOFIN Mystery Box" learning media, it is known that the vocabulary possessed by students increases up to 80%. This is known from the difference in income scores between the pre-test and post-test. complete data of research results can be seen in the following table:

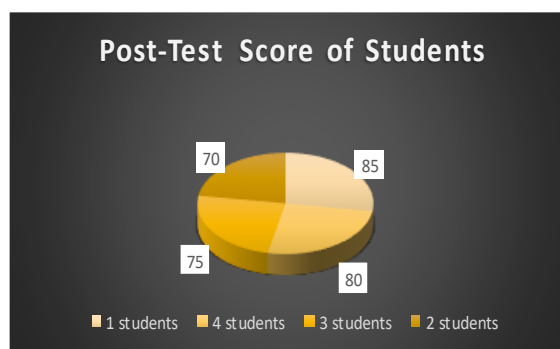
**Table 3.1** Distribution of Sukomanunggal State Elementary School students

No	Age	Frequency	Presentation
1	7-9	5	50%
2	10-12	5	50%
Total		10	100%

Based on Table 3.1, it can be seen that in that table that all children who participated in this research at Sukomanunggal State Elementary School was 10 children. Due to the corona pandemic, schools only allow a few students to take part in face-to-face activities.



**Table 3.2** Pre-Test Score



**Table 3.3** Post-test Score of Students

From the data based on table 3.2. we can find out the score of the pre-test which contains 20 questions about English vocabulary. There are 5 students who get a score of 50. 2 students get a score of 35. 2 students get a score of 35. 1 student gets a score of 20. From the data above, it can be concluded that the vocabulary skills in English of students at Sukamanunggal State Elementary School are still relatively lacking.

From the data based on table 3.3. of 20 post test questions given. There were 1 student got a score of 85, then 4 students who got a score of 80, and 3 students got a score of 75, the last, there are 2 students got a score of 70. 1 student got a score of 85. From the data above, it can be concluded that the mystery box learning media that was applied for 4 days could increase students' English vocabulary.

**D. Conclusion**

The comes about appeared that the conventional "MOFIN Mystery Box" diversion strategy can offer assistance and make it simpler for children to improve vocabulary mastery. This statement is supported by the increase in students' scores on the post-test. The following are the details of the post-test results of students 1 student got a score of 85, then 4 students who got a score of 80, and 3 students got a score of 75, the last, there are 2 students got a score of 70. Not as it were playing, but children can to get parcels of modern vocab that they do not know without having to memorize what makes them bored. So, this amusement truly ought to be connected in school or anyplace so that they can include to their vocab as well as play and can increment children's intrigued in English lessons.

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