Designing irregular verb game as teaching tool for learning irregular verbs

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Abstract

This research aimed to validate the authenticity and usefulness of Irregular Verb Game as a teaching tool in learning past tense irregular verbs in English language class. This research involved an English teacher and students of grade eight at SMPN 3 Salatiga, Kabupaten Sambas. The research method was development which consists of three phases: analyzing, designing, and developing. For the analysis phase, the researcher used interview sheets to obtain the data that highlights teacher and students’ needs in teaching and learning. The design phase focused on designing the contents and layout of the product. The development phase generated the product, tried it out, and got teacher’s validation by using assessment rubric. The first part of the result of this research was a complete design of the product. The layout of the design had 3 main parts: intro, inside house, and outside house. The contents included a visual dictionary, pronunciation function, and simple quizzes. The second part of the result was the teacher’s validation for the product. The percentage of teachers’ validation for the product’s effectiveness was 94.44%. Based on this data, the researchers ensured that Irregular Verb Game can be used as a teaching tool to teach irregular verbs in the form of past tense for eighth grade students of Junior High School.

Keywords: irregular verb; irregular verb game; teaching media

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English is generally considered as one of the main languages in communication between nations and world associations. The development of advanced technology in all walks of life has made it quite convenient for people to travel for different purposes. Therefore, communication gains a significant importance. And, as a global language, no wonder English needs to be learned. That is one of the reasons, English is one of the core subjects taught in many schools across the globe.

The Government provides a books series for teachers and students entitled "When English Rings a Bell" as a part of implementing the Curriculum 2013 for teaching and learning English as a subject at Junior High School. The books are designed to help students to achieve English language competency required for their certain classes without investing too much time and effort in it. For the eighth grade students of Junior High School, precisely in chapter 10 of the book, students learn about sentences using simple past tense structure. The goals of this chapter require students to have a Basic Competence of 4.10. This Basic Competence level enables students to compose transactional interaction texts in oral and written forms. Students are also able to compose short and simple sentences related to events that happened in the past. In order to achieve the required proficiency, students need a certain degree of grammar knowledge and vocabulary that can enable them to make sentences in the form of simple past tense. Without the basic knowledge of grammar, students cannot form a sentence correctly.

The researcher conducted interviews with an English teacher and students of grade eight of Junior High School at SMPN 3 Salatiga, Kabupaten Sambas. The researcher asked about their problems and needs in teaching and learning English. From the interview, the researcher found out that the biggest problem faced by the students was the lack of vocabulary, especially irregular verbs in the form of past tense. From the interview with the teacher it was discovered that the vocabulary was not taught explicitly and the students mastered themselves based on their needs. This is not because the teacher did not want to teach the vocabulary explicitly; instead the problem was insufficient time factor in class.

The teacher agreed to provide teaching tools to support students in mastering vocabulary that is needed. Students had to learn vocabulary not only in class but also at their home because they had more time there. The researcher offered a solution for the vocabulary related problems by providing an android educational game as a teaching tool for learning vocabulary.
A lot of research has been conducted on the use of educational games in English language teaching contexts and it has been proved that games can be a great tool for vocabulary development. Megawati et al. (2016), highlighted the usefulness of games in English language learning in the study entitled "Android Based Educational Game in Indonesia TEYL". The research was conducted on students in grade four of SDN Waung, Krembung, Sidoarjo. The research found out that the use of educational games from Android (App Inventor) increased students' English competence in learning vocabulary. Students gained an in-depth understanding of the identified topics from better scores on the post test. The game significantly encouraged students to actively participate in class activities. In short, the use of Android-based educational games is one of the exciting and useful teaching innovations to support creative teachers.

A research was conducted by Puspitaloka et al. (2017) entitled “English Vocabularies Enrichment Through “Hello English” Android Based Education Game for Young Learners Classroom”. The writing samples were collected at an elementary school in Kerawang from grade five students. The results showed that the use of educational games from Android improved students' English competence in learning vocabulary. Findings also showed that an android-based educational game was one of the fun teaching alternatives to support creative young teachers. The study recommended that English teachers should use android based educational games as an alternative to improve the quality of teaching.

In a study conducted by Niarti et al. (2016) entitled “Improving Student’s Vocabulary through Guessing Games Technique in Descriptive Text in Speaking” focused on the importance of educational games in English language classes. The participants of this research were the students of third grade of SD Islam Terpadu Haruniyah Pontianak Timur in academic year 2015/2016. The result from the research indicated that the game improved student’s vocabulary in descriptive text.

A research conducted by Mulyono et al. (2016) entitled “Designing English and Science Game in Android as Teaching Material to Support CLIL Approach”, highlighted the importance of using games as and English language learning tool. The subjects were fifth grade students of Cerdas Istimewa class on SD Muhammadiyah 2 Pontianak. The result of this research stated that the games can help students to learn the specific scientific terms or basic vocabulary related to the human lifecycle as a part of science subjects.

Similarly, the participants of the current study are grade eight students of Junior High School at SMPN 3 Salatiga, Kabupaten Sambas. An Android educational game was designed by using RPG Maker MV and was used exclusively in this study to determine its effectiveness for English language learners. The name of the game is Irregular Verb Game. The contents of curriculum 2013 were specifically kept under consideration for reference when designing this game. The above-mentioned book series entitled "When English
Rings a Bell" is the official book series for learning English endorsed in the curriculum 2013. Therefore, the main functions of the games are based on the contents of the book. The main function of the game is to focus on vocabulary related material in Chapter 10. There is a list of vocabulary in this chapter. Only 30 words of irregular verbs have been taken in the form of past tense from the list. The Development Research method has been adopted to analyze the data in this study.

**METHOD**

Considering the purposes of the research, the development research method is used as the method to collect and analyze data in this research. According to Richey and Klein (2007) “Development research is the systematic study of design, development, and evaluation processes with the aim of establishing an empirical basis for the creation of instructional products, tools and new or enhanced models that govern their development”. The purpose of development research is to develop new or improved interventions or strategies to achieve well-specified learning goals and objectives. The ADDIE model that was developed by Branch (2009) was used for this study as an instructional systems design. According to Branch (2009), ADDIE is an acronym for analyze, design, develop, implement, and evaluate where it is appropriately used as a process of developing educational products and other learning resources. However, in this research the researcher only focused on the first three phases of ADDIE, analyze, design, and develop to shorten the time.

The objective of this research is to validate the android game as a learning tool ‘Irregular Verb Game’. This product is used as a teaching and learning tool to enhance learners’ understanding and capability to use irregular verbs in past tense form. In this research, a convenience sample is used to determine the sample as the respondent. According to Given (2008, p. 124) "A convenience sample can be defined as a sample in which research participants are selected based on their ease of availability. Essentially, individuals who are the most ready, willing, and able to participate in the study are the ones who are selected to participate." The researcher decided to choose the class 8C of SMP Negeri 3 Salatiga, Kabupaten Sambas in the academic year 2020/2021. There are 20 students in this class. Therefore, the respondents in this research are an English teacher and 20 students of the class 8C of SMP Negeri 3 Salatiga, Kabupaten Sambas.

Interview and assessment rubrics were used to analyze the data. Interviews were used in the analysis phase to get the information about the issue and needs of the teacher and students during the teaching and learning process. Meanwhile, an assessment rubric was provided to get validation of Irregular Verb Game from the teacher.

The data was analyzed through quantitative analysis. The quantitative data was collected from the teacher’s validation score through assessment rubric.
The assessment rubric was adapted from Educational Electronic Games Rubric by Matthew Kay (2007).

FINDINGS

The purpose of this research is to validate an exclusively designed android game application named ‘Irregular Verb Game’ as an English teaching tool for teaching irregular verbs in the form of past tense for the eighth grade students of Junior High School at SMPN 3 Salatiga, Kabupaten Sambas in the academic year 2020/2021. The design of analysis is determined based on the nature of data collected. The description of each phase of the process is discussed below.

Analysis Phase

The analysis phase was used to find out the basic background of the students’ and the teacher’s needs. It is important to determine whether the product is appropriate or not. In this phase, interviews with the teacher and students were conducted to gain some information. The information contained analysis of the condition of the students, teacher, and also the school regarding the teaching tools that are being used for English language instructions. It is really important to consider the design of the product because it is a base for making the android game application.

Analysis of the Students’ Requirement

This research is conducted at SMPN 3 Salatiga, Kabupaten Sambas. The English class takes place only once a week, starting at 07.30 a.m. and ends at 09.30 a.m. on Thursdays. The interviews were conducted with the students to determine their needs in learning English. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews were conducted online via WhatsApp and Google Forms.

Based on the interview responses with the students, it was found that the most important factor that makes English difficult for students was vocabulary. Vocabulary seemed to be difficult for them because they did not know the meaning of words. They learned the meaning of words by using a dictionary then memorized it. This conventional method of learning vocabulary is still the mainstream way of learning English vocabulary. That is why an educational android mobile phone game was designed to provide an alternative to learn vocabulary where the students could learn and play at the same time on their android devices.

The vocabulary element which is the main focus in this research is the use of irregular verbs in past tense form. Based on the interviews, most students responded that irregular verbs in past tense form are quite unfamiliar to them. A pre-test consisting of 30 irregular verbs was given to analyze learners’ understanding toward irregular verbs in past tense form. The result showed that most students’ answers were incorrect. It indicated that they did not know the meaning of the words. Considering the context, thankfully, all the students
possess an android device. This fact of availability of android devices is a positive sign since this study’s main component is an android product, a smartphone game “The Irregular Verb Game”.

Analysis of the Teacher’s Condition

The interview with the English teacher was conducted to determine the feelings and response of the teacher who particularly teaches English to the eighth-grade students in class 8C of SMP Negeri 3 Salatiga, Kabupaten Sambas. During the interview, the teacher described the problems that she faces in teaching English to the students. Based on the interview, the teacher agreed that vocabulary is one of the problems that makes students feel it difficult when learning English. She reported that her students were not confident when she asked them to come in front of the class to do a task because of the students’ lack of vocabulary.

The teaching and learning process is affected because of Covid-19 pandemic. The teacher reported that the time to teach English in class was not enough. They had only one hour of class per week. The teacher also stated that she asked the students to increase their English skills, especially vocabulary by using a dictionary, watching movies, and listening to English songs. Students had to take initiative to learn English outside of class independently.

The teacher used the textbook series “When English Rings a Bell”, and LKS (student worksheet). The teacher frequently used pictures, real life objects, and PowerPoint slides as teaching tools. She never used a mobile game as a teaching tool. In order to find out the effects of learners' vocabulary development through using an android game application, the teacher allowed her students to use the game at home.

Context of the School

SMP Negeri 3 Salatiga is one of Junior High Schools in Kabupaten Sambas. This school uses curriculum 2013. The English teachers and students use the official textbook series for curriculum 2013 titled "When English Rings a Bell" that was provided by the Government in order to implement the Curriculum 2013 for teaching and learning English as a subject at Junior High School. The book series helped students gain the bare minimum English level proficiency that is required by the education ministry.

Conclusion of Analysis

The description of the analysis phase provided above involves some important factors to be considered. The analysis phase played an important role to determine whether the product was appropriately designed or not.
Design Phase

a. The design for the material of the ‘Irregular Verb Game’ containing Visual Dictionary, Pronunciation, and Questions for the test

b. The design for Icon App and Title Screen of the ‘Irregular Verb Game’ containing Icon App and Title Screen of the game.

c. The design for the layout of the “Irregular Verb Game” containing Intro, Inside House, Outside House, Inside Mid Test 1 as similar as inside Mid Test 2

d. The contents of the ‘Irregular Verb Game’ containing Intro, Inside House, and Outside House.

Development Phase

Generating the ‘Irregular Verb Game’

Android Studio software was used to build the game that has been created using RPG Maker MV. It could also be built as a .apk file then it could be able to be installed and run on Android devices. In this step, the icon and the name for the ‘Irregular Verb Game’ application was picked and deployed. A user manual was provided to make the product easy to understand and use.

Experimenting the ‘Irregular Verb Game’

Both the teacher and the students were asked to try the ‘Irregular Verb Game’. The purpose of this activity was to get input from the teacher and students about the ‘Irregular Verb Game’. Then, the input helped researchers to revise the ‘Irregular Verb Game’ by adding more functions.

The ‘Irregular Verb Game’ user manual and download link were sent to the teacher and the 20 students in the class through WhatsApp messenger application.

A deadline of one week was given to complete the game. However, some students completed the ‘Irregular Verb Game’ in less than a day. As a part of feedback after using the game, the teacher validated the game and gave some recommendations that helped to revise the ‘Irregular Verb Game’.

The teachers’ evaluation

In the data collection part, the researcher used teachers’ validation to validate the ‘Irregular Verb Game’. After revising ‘Irregular Verb Game’, the researcher asked the teacher to try it again and give an assessment. The assessment rubrics are listed below. The assessment rubric is adapted from Educational Electronic Games Rubric by Matthew Kay (2007). In this part, the researcher explains the results of the assessment rubric.
Table 1. Assessment Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Levels of Achievement</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization and Design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout and Design</td>
<td>There are few or no graphic elements, no variation in layout and/or the colors interfere with the readability.</td>
<td>There are some graphic elements and limited variation in layout. Design elements sometimes assist students in understanding concepts and ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigation</td>
<td>Navigating the game is confusing and information cannot be found easily.</td>
<td>Some navigation is unclear, resulting in a few places where students can become lost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Design and Delivery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Learning objectives are unclear or non-existent.</td>
<td>Some learning objectives are identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different Learning Styles</td>
<td>The game provides few auditory, textual and/or visual activities to enhance student learning.</td>
<td>The game provides some auditory, textual and/or visual activities to enhance student learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game-Based Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules</td>
<td>Rules are not clearly stated.</td>
<td>Some rules are given, but there is missing information. Students might be confused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>The subject or topic of the game is vague or incomplete.</td>
<td>The subject or topic of the game is at least partially described.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In analyzing the data from the assessment rubric, the researcher used a rating scale, which was adapted from Walker (2013) instrument. Rating scale was scored by this formula below.
\[ P = \frac{\text{result score}}{\text{amount of point} \times \text{amount of categories}} = \frac{17}{3 \times 6} \times 100 \]

\[ P = \text{Percentage} \]

Then the result will be measured by this table:

**Table 2. Guideline for Expert’s Recommendation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 25</td>
<td>Bad (revised)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 50</td>
<td>Poor (revise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 – 75</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 – 100</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment rubric result of the teacher.

\[ P = \frac{17}{3 \times 6} \times 100 \]

\[ P = 94.44\% \]

Based on the result above, the teacher categorized the result of the ‘Irregular Verb Game’ as Very Good with a percentage of 94.44%. Findings suggested that ‘Irregular Verb Game’ can be used as a teaching tool to teach irregular verbs in past tense form for eighth grade students of Junior High School.

**DISCUSSION**

The researcher designed and developed the Irregular Verb Game in this research because the researcher tried to provide a teaching media that can help the teaching learning process due to teach irregular verb in form of past tense for eighth grade students of Junior High School in SMPN 3 Salatiga, Kabupaten Sambas.

An android smartphone game was tested at a junior high school in Indonesia and its effectiveness was validated by the teacher of the class. Teaching media according to Arsyad (2009) is a media that brings instructional purpose of messages or information of learning to the learners. The method used for this study was the development research method. The processes of this research...
consisted of several phases, including; analysis phase, design phase, and development phase.

In the analysis phase some of the issues and needs of the learners during the learning process were gathered through interviews with one of the English teachers and 20 eighth grade students of Junior High School in SMPN 3 Salatiga, Kabupaten Sambas. During the analysis phase, teacher’s and learners’ needs were analyzed regarding the use of English vocabulary, especially the use of irregular verbs in past tense form. Considering learners’ inability to use appropriate verb form for irregular verbs and inadequate vocabulary, an educational game as a solution was provided. Ismail (2009) stated that educational games can improve the quality of children's learning and provide knowledge to children through the process of learning to play while learning.

In the design phase, an android game model for smartphones named ‘Irregular Verb Game’ was built based on the analysis phase. The design phase determined the elements of the material in learning that are the objective of the product including; the role of learner, the role of the teacher, and role of the material.

The last phase in this research is the development phase. In the development phase, the researcher developed the product based on the design that had been created. The researcher designed and developed a game with the genre ‘Role Playing Game’. ‘Role Playing Game’ has a positive impact on the players. According to Adams (2013), RPG is the game that has advantages for cognitive health and it effectively teaches how to socialize, especially the ones who play online games. It means RPG is not only an interesting material in teaching learning, but also it is suitable to help them for socialization. According to Kapp (2016), fantasy games improve memory and can give positive impacts in learning. Based on the statements, RPG can help the learning process become more meaningful and it can improve skills that can help learners in learning.

The last thing to be discussed is the teachers’ validation. The teacher’s role in this phase is an evaluator. Therefore, the teacher should give the score to the ‘Irregular Verb Game’ to determine whether the product is usable for learning English vocabulary or not. The researcher provided the teacher with ‘Irregular Verb Game’ assessment through rubrics for the teacher to score the game. The researcher provided six criteria to assess; layout and design, navigation, objectives, different learning styles, rules, and subject. Those criteria helped to revise the product in order to improve its quality.

The researcher used ‘Irregular Verb Assessment’ rubrics for collecting the data. The result of the assessment showed good response from the teachers toward the Irregular Verb Game. The total score on the rubric filled by the teacher was 17 with a percentage of 94.44%. Based on the assessment provided by the teacher, it is categorized as an effective educational tool. Therefore, based
on the score, it can be concluded that ‘Irregular Verb Game’ can be used as a teaching tool to teach irregular verbs in past tense form for eighth grade students of Junior High School.

CONCLUSION
The first result of this research helped to determine the design of the product ‘Irregular Verb Game’. The product was designed with appropriate material based on the curriculum which fulfills the needs of the teachers and students. The product was designed in the form of an android game. It was an educational game similar to role playing genre games. The product could be played without internet connection on android devices for android version 4.4 KitKat as a minimum android version required. The layout design of the product had 3 main parts: intro, inside house, and outside house. The contents of the product have a visual dictionary, pronunciation, and simple quizzes. In using the ‘Irregular Verb Game’, English vocabulary based activities were more student-centered.

The second result was about the teacher's validation. Teacher’s validation was obtained by using assessment rubric. The teacher’s validation for the ‘Irregular Verb Game’ was considered as Very Good with the percentage of 94.44%. Based on this data, the researcher ensured that ‘Irregular Verb Game’ can be used as a teaching tool to teach irregular verbs in past tense form for eighth grade students of Junior High School.

SUGGESTION
This study recommends to all English teachers to apply this game as an alternative teaching tool in teaching vocabulary, especially irregular verbs in past tense form. The study also suggests to all Indonesian Junior High Students to play this game in order to improve their vocabulary, especially irregular verbs in past tense. Further research is needed, particularly for those who face similar vocabulary related issues and are interested in conducting research, and this study can be a reference. The recommendation to other researchers is to follow up the product with implementation and evaluation. The game in this research only focuses on 30 irregular verbs in past tense form. In order to make this game more useful, it is better to add more vocabulary functions and also various levels of vocabulary.

REFERENCES


Authors’ Brief CV

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