

Proceeding of ICECRS, 1 (2016) 441-448

ISSN. 2548-6160

International Seminar on Generating Knowledge Through Research, UUM-UMSIDA, 25-27 October 2016, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia.

Available online: <http://ojs.umsida.ac.id/index.php/icecrs>

Article DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21070/picecrs.v1i1.513>

## **‘THE PLURAL MANIA GAME’ ENHANCING YEAR 4 PUPILS KNOWLEDGE IN FORMING PLURAL NOUNS**

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**ABSTRACT:** The title of the research is ‘The Plural Mania Game’: Enhancing Year 4 Pupils’ Knowledge in Forming Plural Nouns. The focus of the research was to enhance the knowledge of plural noun forms among Year 4 pupils by using The Plural Mania Game. This intervention helped by introducing the pupils with all regular forms of plural nouns. The intervention was focusing on the teaching and learning through game. The researcher innovated a ‘bingo’ game into a new game called ‘The Plural Mania Game’ to help the pupils of Year 4 improve their knowledge in forming plural nouns. There were 6 pupils involved with this intervention from Year 4 of Sekolah Kebangsaan A who got the lowest marks from the diagnostic test. The data for this study was collected by using the observation, the result of Pre-Test and Post-Test and interview sessions. Based on the findings of data, it was noted that the participants improved their knowledge in forming plural nouns. The result showed that by using The Plural Mania Game helped the pupils in enhancing their knowledge in forming plural nouns. The researcher would like to suggest for the intervention to be implemented in various language skills in the future.

**KEYWORDS:** Grammar, Plural noun forms, Game, Improve, knowledge

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### **INTRODUCTION**

English language can be divided into different skills such as listening skill, reading skill, writing skill, and grammar. However, among these skills, grammar plays a crucial role in language because grammar governs the language. According to Subasini and Kokilavani (2013), grammar is the sound, structure, and meaning system of language and all languages have grammar, and each language has its own grammar structure. Without grammar, the language will lost its meaning. Meanwhile, the education system of Malaysia is focusing more on examination. If the pupils fail to use grammar correctly during their examination, they may lose their marks. Therefore, it is very important for every pupil to master grammar during the teaching and learning sessions. Hence, this full research analysed the pupils’ proficiency in using grammar items correctly and appropriately.

The researcher was assigned to teach the English subject to Year 4 Ibnu Sina (not the real name). The researcher taught them for the whole 12 weeks of practicum in SK A. From the data collected through reflection of teaching and learning, and the preliminary data conducted through interview with the teacher, observation and diagnostic test, showed that the pupils of Year 4 could not understand the formation of regular plural nouns. Researcher realised that the pupils were exposed more on the addition of “s” for plural nouns and they were less exposed with other plural nouns rules such as addition of “es”, “ies” and “ves”.

The researcher had to help the pupils to learn how to form the plural nouns correctly. The pupils should be guided properly to enhance their proficiency in the English language. The researcher had to prepare a plan on how to generate the pupils’ mind to think critically while forming plural nouns because each singular noun

may have different form of plural form. The pupils must first acquire the rules in forming singular nouns by adding their respective suffixes. Hopefully, with the integration of language game and cooperative learning could help the pupils to acquire the knowledge of plural noun forms.

## **RESEARCH FOCUS**

This research is focusing on the grammar component of the English language which is regular Plural Noun Forms of Year 4. Nesamalar, Saratha and Teh Soo Choon (2005) have quoted from Harmer (1991) who says that students learning English grammar often find it complicated and confusing. Three reasons for this are the mismatch between form and function, exceptions to the rule and interference from the native language. In this research, the researcher is discussing on how pupils of Year 4 Ibnu Sina encounter problem when changing singular nouns into their respective plural forms. It has been identified that several pupils from 4 Ibnu Sina are not able to form correct plural noun because they tend to use "s" for all plural nouns. This may result from the interference of native language too. Brown (2007) claimed that the second language learners tend to overgeneralize a particular rule or grammar item of the second language with their first language. Thus, to solve the problem of over generalisation of rules, the researcher has invented a solution that will help the research participants to strengthen their knowledge in forming plural nouns. The research was based on Kurt Lewin's Action Research Model which is Plan, Action, Observe and Reflect (Creswell, 2012).

The research was workable to be carried out by the researcher as he knows the pupils very well and have built rapport with them for three months. In terms of relevance to school, this research also will bring advantage to the school especially the school's English language panel as they could use this intervention in the future. Besides, there is a positive collaboration given by the school administrators and teachers which really help the researcher in collecting intended information from the pupils, English language panel and school's administration.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The objective of this action research is:

To describe the extent "The Plurals Mania Game" is able to improve pupils' knowledge in forming plural nouns.

Research Question is:

To what extent the use of "The Plural Mania Game" help to improve pupils' knowledge in forming plural nouns?

## **RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

The researcher is a part of the participants. He is a final year student from Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Darulaman. He has undergone three phases of practicum and an internship. He played many roles in the action research. First, he acted as the participants' observer where he observed the problem faced by the participants and tried to think of a better solution. Next, he played his role as the intervention innovator. He invented "The Plural Mania Game" with hope that this intervention would help him enhance the knowledge of plural nouns among the participants. The third role was as facilitator. He facilitated the participant from the beginning of the intervention until the end of the intervention. Finally, he played his role as a data analyser. He gathered data by using various methods and instruments. Then, he analysed each data to see the result of the intervention. Next, he triangulated all the methods and data to check whether the data is converging with each other or diverging to each other.

The participants of the research were generally those who have difficulty in using the knowledge of plural nouns form. They share the same cognitive disequilibrium where they seldom interact with peers and prefer

to stay out of crowd. Thus, it weakens the ability of pupils to learn. Lev Vygotsky in Woolfolk (2013), suggested that children’s cognitive development is fostered by interactions with people who are more capable or advanced in their thinking such as parents, adults, peers and teachers. Hence, to help them improve their knowledge in forming plural nouns, they have to learn to communicate and share knowledge about plural nouns forms while playing The Plural Mania Game.

The researcher has selected six pupils from Year 4, four boys and two girls. The first boy was very naughty and his result was 27% for his diagnostic test. The second boy was very quiet and his score was 36%. The third boy was very active but needed assistance in the lesson. He scored 30% for his diagnostic test. The fourth boy was a bit lazy on doing any tasks given to him and he scored 20% on the test. The first girl has low proficiency in English but she showed that she wanted to learn. She scored 42% for her diagnostic test. The second girl was very shy. She managed to score 33% on the test.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION**

Firstly, the researcher carried out pre-test to all participants and gathered the data. The intervention was carried out in three lessons. The lessons can be divided into the formation of singular nouns into plural nouns with addition of -s and -es, the formation of singular nouns into plural nouns with addition of -ves and -ies and for the last lesson, the combination of all formation of plural nouns. Then, the researcher carried out post-test to the participants and gathered the data. First, the researcher explained to the participants on the formation of singular nouns into plural nouns. Second, the researcher distributed to each participant a paper with 25 blank tables. The researcher wrote 25 plural nouns with respected formation of plural nouns on the board. The researcher asked the participants to randomly fill up the blanks with all 25 plural nouns.

|                |                |                 |               |                |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| <b>Books</b>   | <b>Apples</b>  | <b>Gardens</b>  | <b>Cars</b>   | <b>Bottles</b> |
| <b>Cats</b>    | <b>Caps</b>    | <b>Bags</b>     | <b>Buses</b>  | <b>Boxes</b>   |
| <b>Brushes</b> | <b>Pencils</b> | <b>Foxes</b>    | <b>Birds</b>  | <b>Cousins</b> |
| <b>Dresses</b> | <b>Matches</b> | <b>Brothers</b> | <b>Books</b>  | <b>Hangers</b> |
| <b>Fruits</b>  | <b>Flowers</b> | <b>Markets</b>  | <b>Fishes</b> | <b>Things</b>  |

*Figure 1: 25 tables with 25 plural nouns*

Then, the researcher took out a box containing 25 cards. On the cards were the singular nouns of all the 25 plural nouns that the participants had wrote on their 25 blank tables. Next, the researcher told the participants that they would be playing a game entitled “The Plural Mania Game”. The researcher explained to the participants the rules of the game. They continued playing the game until they won the game. The first three participants who managed to say “BINGO” were announced as the winners of the game.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

From the analysis of observation, 'The Plural Mania Game' really helped the participants in improving their knowledge to form plural nouns. The data collected at the end of the intervention shows rapid changes of participants' performance in forming all forms of plural nouns that they have learnt during the intervention by playing the game. Thus, the intervention's result reflects that it has helped the participants understand the formation of singular nouns into plural nouns. Besides that, the intervention has combined two concept which are cooperative learning and learning through game. According to Wickens (2005) "The best answer to the question 'what is the most effective method of teaching?' is that depends on the goal, the students, the content, and the teacher. But the next best answer is students teaching other students'."

From the above statement, it can be said that learning will be more meaningful and effective if the students teach each other to acquire knowledge. The cooperative learning among students with guidance by the teacher will help students see and identify themselves their mistakes during learning. They will cooperate with other students to learn to do well. This was what has been implemented while doing the intervention with the participants.

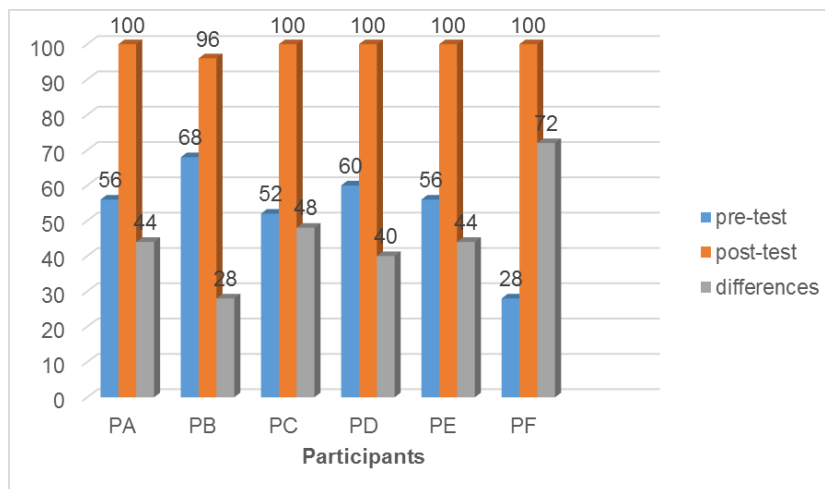
**Table 1**  
***The comparison of observation from the beginning of intervention and after the intervention***

| <b>Items</b>   | <b>Beginning of intervention</b> | <b>After the intervention</b> |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. The participant knows what is noun.   | 3P                               | 6P                            |
| 2. The participant knows when to add -s to a singular noun to make it plural.  | 4P                               | 6P                            |
| 3. The participant knows when to add -es to a singular noun that ends with -s, -ss, -sh, -ch, -o and -x to make it plural. | 0P                               | 6P                            |
| 4. The participant knows when to change -y to -ies to a singular noun to make it plural.                                   | 0P                               | 6P                            |
| 5. The participant knows when to change -f and -fe to -ves to a singular noun to make it plural.                           | 0P                               | 6P                            |
| 6. The participant is interacting with others while playing the game.  | 0P                               | 6P                            |
| 7. The participant enjoys playing the game together.   | 0P                               | 6P                            |

From the results of observation in Table 1 above, it shows that all six participants enjoyed playing the game from the beginning until the end of intervention. Initially, none of them knew how and when to change the nouns into their respective plural nouns, but at the end, they managed to explain the formation of all plural nouns. Only three participants knew what plural nouns were at the beginning. After the intervention, all of them succeeded in explaining plural nouns. The findings of the observation show that the intervention has helped the participants in improving their knowledge of plural noun forms.

Through the game-type intervention, the researcher found that it helped the participants better to learn singular and plural nouns' forms in a fun way. For example, participant F only scored 28% in her pre-test, but after she played the game, she scored 100% in her post-test. Moreover, the game is an effective way in learning, and helps the participants to achieve the intended objective. It is supported with the average score of pre-test and post-test in figure 2 that shows the increase of an average score of 46% for all participants. The findings of both tests also show that the participants have successfully understood the plural nouns forms. Almost all of them have achieved advanced scores of 100% marks. Only participant B scored 96% due

to a spelling mistake he made on one plural noun. Overall, the data shows that “The Plural Mania Game” intervention has captured their attention to learn plural noun’s forms correctly.



**Figure 2: comparison between pre-test and post-test scores**

From the data gathered during the interview, all participants have showed positive remarks regarding the game. All of them agreed that the game was exciting and fun. They loved playing the game with their friends. Besides that, when they were asked to play the game again, all of them insisted on it. Below are the extract of all participants for interview question 6.

[PA/Q6]

Researcher : how many plural nouns?  
Participant A : -es, -s, -ies, -ves.

[PB/Q6]

Researcher : how many plural nouns you know? *Berapa plural nouns kita belajar?*  
Participant B : -s,-es -ies, -ves.

[PC/Q6]

Researcher : how many plural nouns?  
Participant C : <silent>  
Researcher : *berapa banyak plural nouns belajar? Sebut dekat sir.*  
Participant C : *ermmm -s, -es, -ves?*  
Researcher : *lagi? What else?*  
Participant C : *ermmm<silent>*  
Researcher : *-ie?*  
Participant C : *ies!*

[PD/Q6]

Researcher : how many plural nouns?  
Participant D : <silent>  
Researcher : *berapa banyak plural nouns belajar? Sebut dekat sir.*  
Participant D : *tambah -s, -es, -ies, -ves*  
Researcher : *-ies, -ves tambah ? Add or change? Tambah atau tukar?*  
Participant D : *tukar!*  
Researcher : *how? macam mana?*  
Participant D : *-y tukar dengan -ies, -f dengan -fe tukar jadi -ves.*

[PE/Q6]

Researcher : how many plural nouns?  
Participant E : <silent>  
Researcher : *berapa banyak plural nouns belajar? Sebut dekat sir.*  
Participant E : *ermmm -s, -es, -ves, erm -ies*

[PF/Q6]

Researcher: how many plural nouns?  
Participant A: <silent>  
Researcher: *berapa banyak plural nouns belajar? Sebut dekat sir.*  
Participant A: *ermmm*  
Researcher: we have four < showing four fingers>  
Participant A: *ermmm -s, -es, ies, ves.*  
Researcher: good!  
Participant A: *hehe<grinned>*

From the result, we could see that all the participants were able to explain the formation of each plural noun form. However, some of them, especially participants C,D,E, and F, needed assistance because they could not understand the English as compared to participants A and B. Overall, the data gathered from the interview showed that all participants have acquired the knowledge of plural noun forms.

In conclusion, the data findings showed that “The Plural Mania Game” intervention has helped in answering the research question on how to improve the participants’ knowledge in forming plural nouns. The triangulation of the converged data collecting methods also showed that the use of “The Plural Mania Game” has helped to improve pupils’ knowledge in forming plural nouns.

## REFLECTION

Based on the research, the researcher managed to identify some strengths and limitation from the intervention carried out to the participants. First, the researcher found out that learning through playing games really helped the participants to be more energized, and eager to participate during the intervention because they enjoy playing with their friends. Meanwhile, the integration of game and the English subject helps the participants learn the English subject through game. Besides, learning through game is also suitable for all range of pupils regardless of their age. Mok Soon Sang (2013) explained that “Learning through game is a teaching and learning activity suitable for preschool as well as primary school children. It can also be considered a teaching technique which motivates children to learn through game. This teaching and learning activity provides overall development of children’s potentials in all aspects.”

Furthermore, from the intervention the researcher could also identify that all participants have successfully achieved the objective of the research which is to describe the extent “The Plurals Mania Game” is able to improve pupils’ knowledge in forming plural nouns. All participants were able to score well in their post-test, thus showing that the intervention has successfully improve the participants’ knowledge in forming plural nouns. The interview session showed that all participants managed to explain the formation of plural nouns. However, some of them needed assistance by the researcher to explain the rules of plural nouns as they could not speak English very well. The result of observation has also shown that all participants have successfully internalized the rules of plural nouns while playing the game. They were eager to play the game, therefore they did not want to make any mistakes when they spell the words as they did not want to losethe game.

The researcher identified a limitation. The implementation of the intervention was time consuming. The researcher had to take the participants from their classroom and do the intervention with them at another location. The intervention could notbe carried out in a normal classroom. Hence, I had to ask permission from the English Language Subject teacher to allow them to participate in the intervention. However, the intervention seemed to take a lot of time to be carried out. Each lesson mostly took about an hour to be accomplished and it disrupted the normal class hour of the participants.

## SUGGESTED FUTURE ACTION

It is recommended to those who want to utilise the game in the future to allocate more playing time for the participants. The game consists of 25 items and each of the participants has to take turn in order to play the game and to complete the 5 vertical, horizontal, diagonal pattern of five grid spaces on their cards.

Due to the universality of the intervention, it is highly recommended for all to use other language skills in order to fully utilise the intervention. The intervention could be very helpful in teaching nouns, verbs, spellings, and others. The intervention should not only be restricted to teaching plural nouns but also other skills and modules. It depends on the users themselves to be more creative and innovative to implement the game.

Moreover, to make the game more interesting and interactive, the users can add more players during the play. The game can be played by a lot of players as it consists of 25 items. By having many players, it helps to increase the motivation of the participants to win the game or to reach the goal. This is adherence to what Woolfolk (2013) has stated that the level of motivation is directly proportional to the rate of desire. The stronger the desire to achieve a certain goal, the higher will be the level of motivation.

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