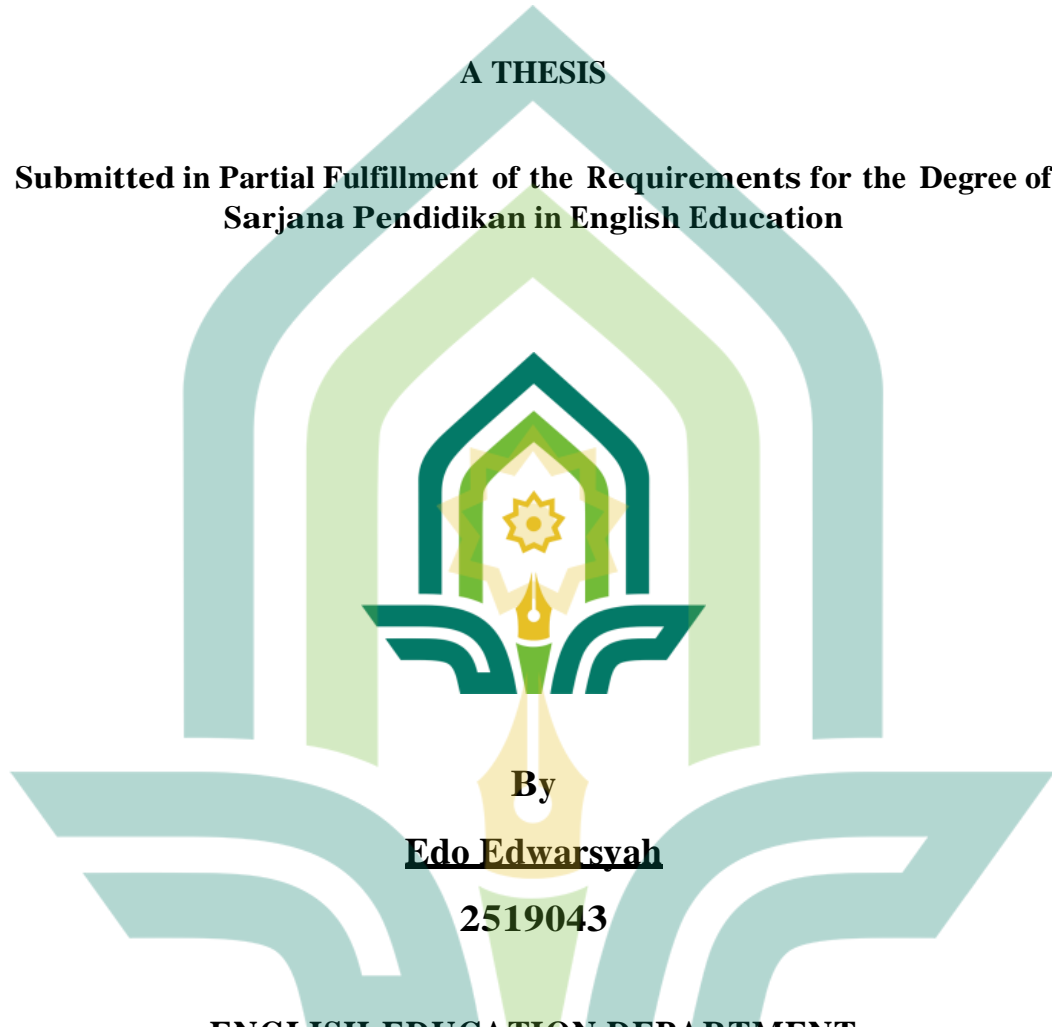


**TEACHERS EXPERIENCE IN APPLYING A TABOO GAME  
FOR INTRODUCING VOCABULARIES TO YOUNG EFL  
LEARNERS**

**A THESIS**

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Sarjana Pendidikan in English Education**



**By**

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**2026**

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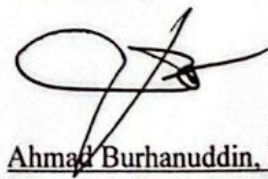
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Wassalamu'alaikum Wr.Wb.

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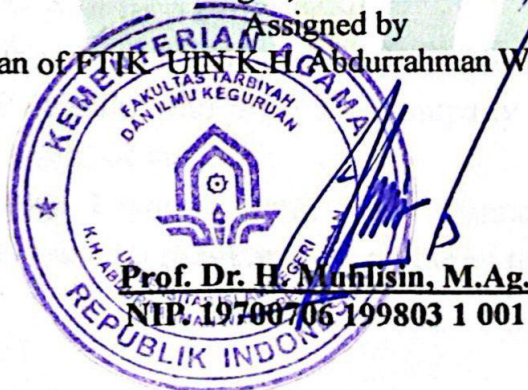
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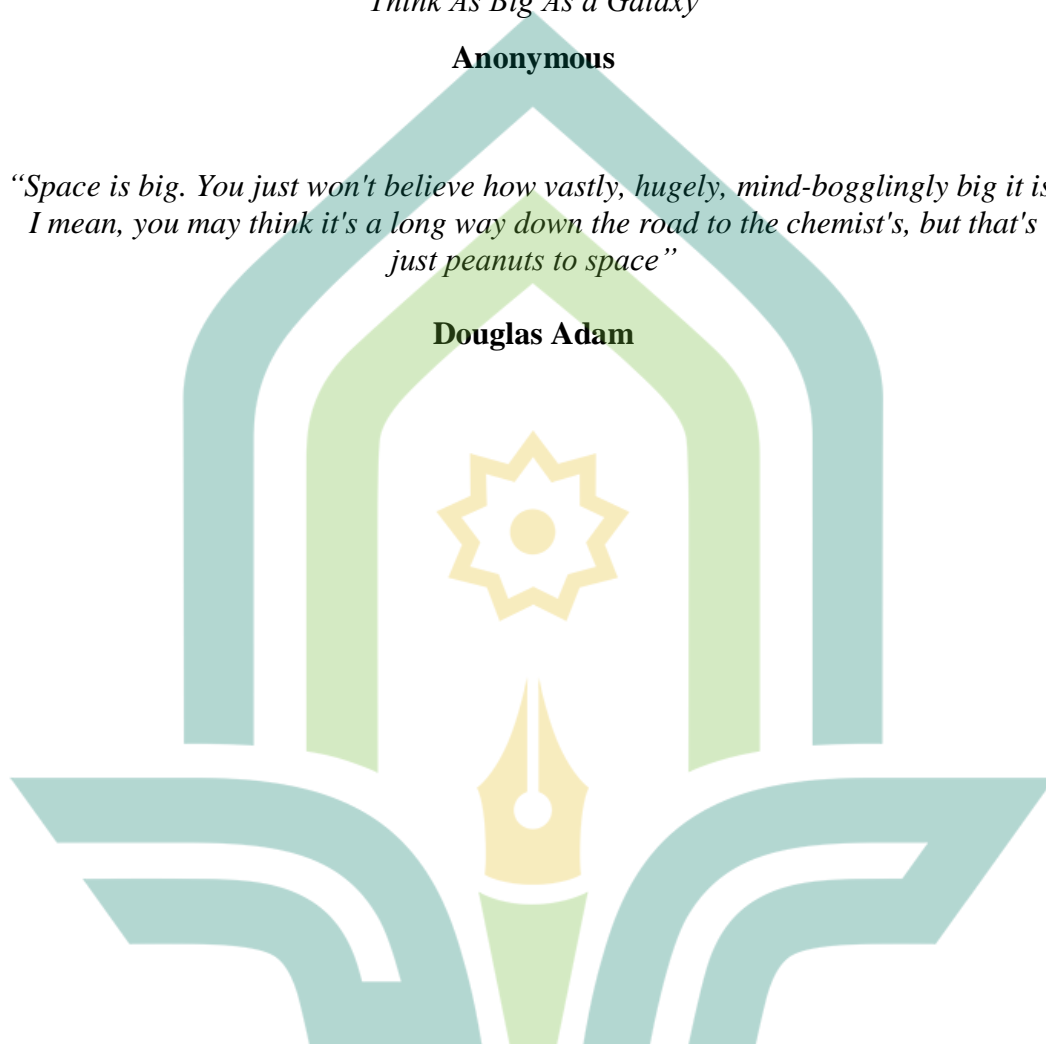
## **MOTTO**

*“Think As Big As a Galaxy”*

**Anonymous**

*“Space is big. You just won't believe how vastly, hugely, mind-bogglingly big it is. I mean, you may think it's a long way down the road to the chemist's, but that's just peanuts to space”*

**Douglas Adam**



## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman guru dalam menerapkan Permainan Taboo untuk memperkenalkan kosakata kepada pembelajar EFL muda. Kosakata memainkan peran penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa karena mendukung pengembangan empat keterampilan bahasa: mendengarkan, berbicara, membaca, dan menulis. Namun, pembelajar muda sering menghadapi kesulitan dalam mempelajari kosakata karena rentang perhatian mereka yang terbatas dan kebutuhan akan aktivitas pembelajaran yang menarik. Oleh karena itu, penggunaan strategi pembelajaran interaktif seperti permainan bahasa dianggap penting. Salah satu permainan yang dapat digunakan dalam pembelajaran kosakata adalah Permainan Taboo, yang mendorong siswa untuk mendeskripsikan dan menebak kata tanpa menyebutkan kata-kata terkait tertentu. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan desain penyelidikan naratif. Penelitian ini dilakukan di sebuah sekolah dasar di Batang, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia. Partisipan penelitian ini adalah dua guru bahasa Inggris yang memiliki pengalaman menggunakan Permainan Taboo di kelas mereka. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dan observasi, dan data dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik mengikuti kerangka kerja Braun dan Clarke (2006). Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pengalaman guru dalam menerapkan Permainan Taboo (Taboo Game) memberikan kontribusi positif terhadap proses pembelajaran kosakata. Permainan ini menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang interaktif dan menyenangkan, mendorong siswa untuk berpartisipasi aktif, dan meningkatkan kepercayaan diri mereka dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris. Selain itu, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Permainan Taboo membantu siswa mengingat kosakata dengan lebih mudah dan memotivasi mereka untuk menggunakan kata-kata baru dalam konteks. Guru juga melaporkan bahwa permainan ini meningkatkan interaksi di kelas dan merangsang kreativitas siswa dalam mendeskripsikan kata-kata. Kesimpulannya, Permainan Taboo dapat dianggap sebagai strategi yang efektif untuk memperkenalkan kosakata kepada siswa usia dini. Penggunaan permainan ini tidak hanya meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa tetapi juga meningkatkan keterlibatan dan kepercayaan diri mereka dalam menggunakan bahasa Inggris di kelas.

**Kata Kunci:** *Taboo Game, Vocabulary Learning, Young Learners, Teachers' Experience*

## ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore teachers' experiences in applying the Taboo Game to introduce vocabulary to young EFL learners. Vocabulary plays an essential role in language learning because it supports the development of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, young learners often face difficulties in learning vocabulary due to their limited attention span and the need for engaging learning activities. Therefore, the use of interactive learning strategies such as language games is considered important. One of the games that can be used in vocabulary learning is the Taboo Game, which encourages students to describe and guess words without mentioning certain related words. This research employed a qualitative method using a narrative inquiry design. The study was conducted in an elementary school in Batang, Central Java, Indonesia. The participants of this research were two English teachers who had experience using the Taboo Game in their classroom. Data were collected through interviews and observations, and the data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the framework of Braun and Clarke (2006). The findings of this study show that teachers' experiences in implementing the Taboo Game contribute positively to the vocabulary learning process. The game creates an interactive and enjoyable learning environment, encourages students to actively participate, and increases their confidence in speaking English. In addition, the results indicate that the Taboo Game helps students remember vocabulary more easily and motivates them to use new words in context. Teachers also reported that the game improves classroom interaction and stimulates students' creativity in describing words. In conclusion, the Taboo Game can be considered an effective strategy for introducing vocabulary to young learners. The use of this game not only improves students' vocabulary mastery but also enhances their engagement and confidence in using English in the classroom.

**Keywords:** Taboo Game, Vocabulary Learning, Young Learners, Teachers' Experience

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**The Researcher**

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of Study

One of the most important parts of any language is its vocabulary (Nastiti, 2021). Good vocabulary mastery allows one to more easily understand texts, speak fluently, and write clearly. According to Teng (2014), the level of vocabulary mastery has a strong correlation with reading and writing skills. This is due to good language skills rely heavily on the knowledge of diverse words and their proper use. Thus, in English language learning, vocabulary mastery becomes one of the main priorities that must be developed.

The urgency of vocabulary acquisition is increasing in the context of globalization, where English is an important international communication tool. A study by Schmitt (2017) stated that learners of English as a second language often experience difficulties in developing their language skills due to vocabulary limitations. This impacts their understanding of academic material, as well as their ability to communicate in the professional world. Developing a strong vocabulary increases the capacity to read, write, listen, and communicate, all of which contribute to one's overall language competency.

Moreover, Webb and Nation (2017) stated that deep and contextualized vocabulary knowledge plays an important role in helping

English language learners understand the nuances of meaning and effective word usage. This includes the ability to recognize synonyms, antonyms, collocations, and idioms. Thus, the urgency of vocabulary mastery relates not only to the quantity of words known, but also the depth of understanding of how those words are used in various contexts (Aslamiah, 2022). A structured and sustained investment in vocabulary development can significantly improve English language proficiency, both in the academic and professional realms.

Children who are classified as young learners, usually those between the ages of six and twelve, have distinct cognitive and emotional traits that influence how they learn (Gursoy, 2012). Their short attention span is one of their main characteristics, so teachers must use engaging activities to keep students' attention. Furthermore, as young students are still developing their abstract reasoning skills, they tend to understand tangible concepts better than abstract ones (Dewi, 2019). For this reason, experiential learning is essential for improving comprehension.

Young learners have heightened interest and a willingness for learning, which is a significant skill (Shin, 2006). Their natural interest in learning can be used to help them acquire a language because they frequently succeed in engaging, interactive classroom settings. This curious preference is reached into by teachers who include games, storytelling, and visual aids, which increases student engagement and retention (Aslamiah, 2022). Furthermore, young students are better suited for early language

learning since they often possess a more flexible language capability. The problem in teaching vocabulary need a game.

There are so many games for teaching English for learners. Taboo game is one of it and is a game that can be played at all levels. According to Fitriana (2017), taboo game is a charades game that is done in pairs or in groups. Taboo as a charades game, students must be able to guess the concealed word, and students cannot mention the words written on the Taboo card. The Taboo game helps students enhance their competition, cooperation, passion, and improve in learning language (Nastiti, 2021). However, this research is aimed to know how Taboo games might introduce vocabulary for young learners.

In addition, young students are highly responsive to encouragement and support. Encouraging feedback is essential for increasing their self-confidence and motivation (Oktaviana, 2017). They do best in comfortable, organized settings that provide them with comfort. In order to maximize their learning potential, a classroom environment that encourages self-esteem, acknowledges their developmental stage, and values teamwork is necessary.

However, not many have researched the taboo game. Review that previous research has found taboo game or similar game.while previous studies has explored,them is limited research.

Hopefully, this research can influence student to be more enthusiastic about learning, children can get direct experience, can be more

active, form a sense of responsibility in children, and can train children's courage.

## **1.2. Formulation of the problem**

This study is guided by one research question. The researcher explores, "What are teachers' experiences in applying Taboo games to introduce vocabulary to young learners?"

## **1.3. Aim of the Study**

Students need special treatment to learn vocabulary, the researcher hopes to find out how the game is used to improve young learner's vocabulary.

## **1.4. Operational definition**

1. Taboo game is a game that requires students or players to be able to guess the hidden word and compose a sentence based on that word. (Brother Parker, 1989)
2. Vocabulary is a collection of several words that are combined, so that they have meaning or meaning. This vocabulary cannot be separated from the four skills in language, writing, writing, listening, and speaking (Hornby, 1984, 1959).
3. Teacher Experience is an interaction or transaction between organism and environment such that a state of satisfaction or equilibrium is achieved. In this sense, it is not purely formal, that is it does not deal with things that go on exclusively in the mind, and it arises out of

concrete situations. A positive quality runs through all elements of experience giving it unity and settlement. (Armitage, 2003)

4. Young learners are distinct social beings with their own set of cultural norms. 'young learner' is often used in the ELT profession to refer to any learner under the age of 18. ( Piccolo, 2010 )

### **1.5. Significance of the Research**

1. Theoretical use: This study contribute to Nicolad theory on young learners develop in vocabulary skills using word taboo games. According to Nicolad Theories act as a conceptual base for understanding and analyzing the research of any nature.
2. Empirical use: This study provide empirical insight on how young learners develop their vocabulary skills using word taboo games.
3. Practical use: This study provide information to readers about how young learners develop in vocabulary skills using word taboo games.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

#### 5.1. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the use of Taboo Game in teaching English vocabulary in elementary schools has a positive impact on the learning process of students. The application of this game is able to create a fun, interactive learning atmosphere and encourage students to be more active in using English. This is in line with the theory proposed by Enever and Moon (2009), which emphasize the importance of student-centered, meaningful, and communicative learning. The study reveals that teachers applied various strategies in implementing the Taboo Game, such as grouping students, giving clear instructions, modeling the game, and using supporting media. These strategies helped students understand the rules of the game and actively participate in the learning activities. Moreover, the teachers demonstrated adaptability and patience in handling young learners, which contributed to a more effective learning atmosphere. The results showed that teachers implemented the Taboo Game using various strategies, such as dividing students into groups, providing examples, using supporting media, and explaining the rules gradually. These strategies helped students understand the

concept of the game and encouraged them to actively participate in the learning process. In addition, the use of the Taboo Game also helped students develop critical thinking skills, enrich their vocabulary, and increase their confidence in speaking English. In terms of learning impact, Taboo Game has been proven to improve students' vocabulary and activity in class. Students become more enthusiastic, confident, and motivated to participate in learning. This activity also encourages students to use English contextually, rather than simply memorizing words. Thus, Taboo Game can be an effective alternative learning medium in English language learning in elementary schools.

Overall, the findings suggest that the Taboo Game is an effective and appropriate strategy for teaching vocabulary to young EFL learners. It aligns with the principles of student-centered and meaningful learning, making it a valuable alternative method in English language teaching at the elementary level.

## **5.2. Recommendation**

### **5.2.1. For English Teacher**

Elementary school English teachers are advised to utilize the Taboo Game as a routine and planned vocabulary learning medium. Teachers need to adjust the difficulty level of the game to the students' abilities so that all students can participate optimally. In addition, teachers are also expected

to prepare learning media well and establish clear classroom rules to maintain a conducive learning environment.

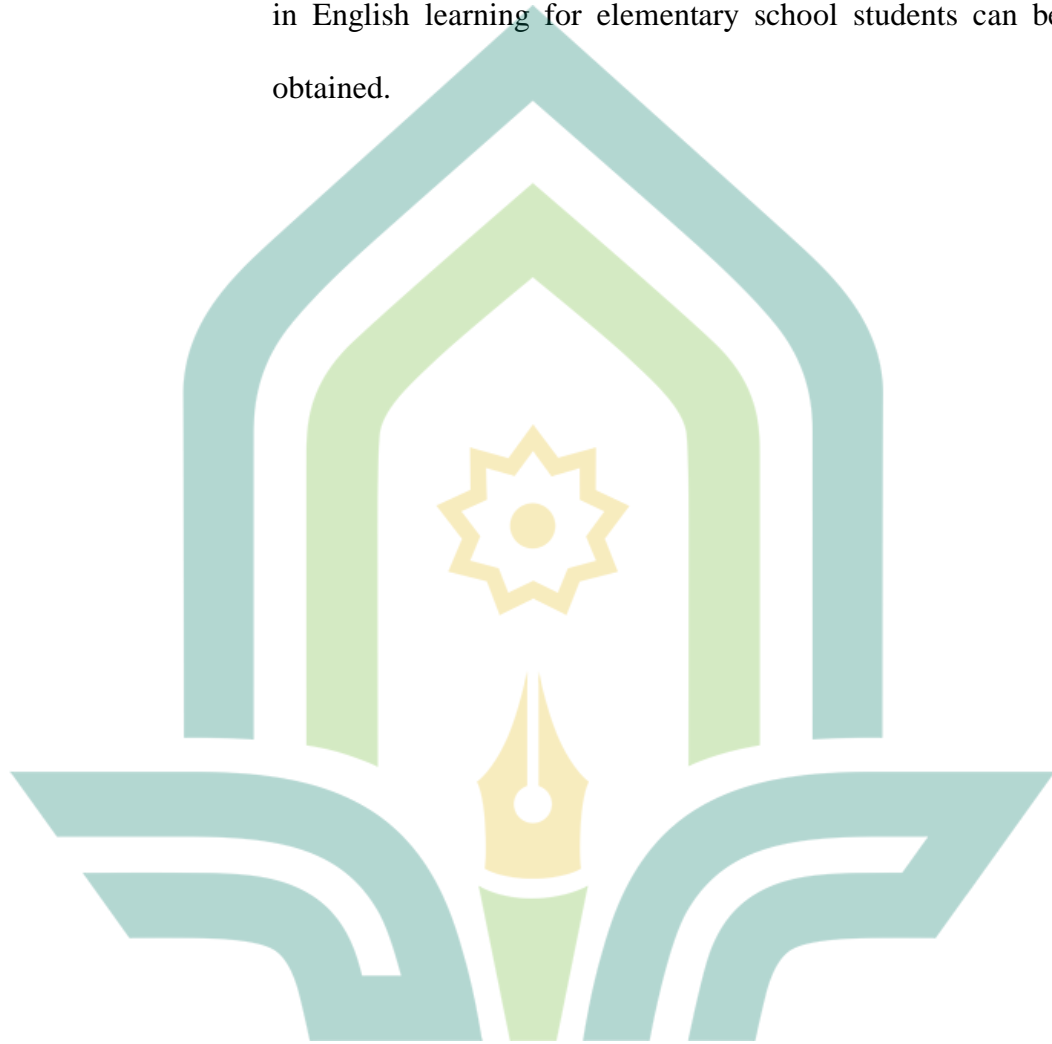
### **5.2.2. For School**

Schools are expected to support the implementation of game-based learning by providing adequate facilities and resources, such as learning media, teaching aids, and training for teachers. Schools can also encourage teachers to share their experiences and strategies in implementing innovative learning methods, including the use of Taboo Game.

### **5.2.3. For future researcher**

For future researchers interested in studying similar topics, it is recommended to use a larger number of participants so that the research results are more representative. Then combine interview methods with classroom observation and learning outcome tests to obtain more comprehensive data. Next, study the effect of using Taboo Game on other language skills, such as listening, reading, and writing. They should also compare the effectiveness of Taboo Game with other learning media, such as Pictionary, role play, or digital games. And, of course, examine the application of Taboo Game in different school contexts, both in urban and rural areas.

With further research development, it is hoped that a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of language games in English learning for elementary school students can be obtained.



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