

THE EFFECT OF LEARNING STYLES AND GAMES ON SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY AT MTSS. PP. AMIRUDDINIYAH ACADEMIC YEAR 2018/2019

Sahkholid Nasution¹; Yuni Ansari Rambe²

¹ and ² Faculty of Tarbiyah Science and Teacher Training, State Islamic University of North Sumatra, Medan - Indonesia

e-mail: 1sahkholidnasution@uinsu.ac.id, 2yz.ansari.rambe@gmail.com

Abstract: The objectives of the study are (1) to investigate whether the students' achievement in mastering vocabulary with high learning styles significantly is higher than low learning styles and (2) to determine whether there is any significant interaction between learning styles and games on students' achievement in mastering vocabulary. The research method for this study was a quantitative method including an experimental group and a control group. Both groups were given pre-test and post-test. A vocabulary test was used as the research instrument. The determined subject of the research was 56 students in the seventh grade of MTs. PP. Amiruddiniyah, with 28 students decided as the experimental group and 28 others as a controlled group. The research data were taken by distributing a vocabulary test to the students as the research subjects. Then, the data analysis was conducted by comparing the pre-test result and post-test results. Based on the findings of the experimental class in pre-test and post-test, 38 was the lowest score of pre-test and 76 was the highest score. Other than that, 65 was the lowest score of the post-test and 90 was the highest score on that test. The average gained score that the teacher got was 19.57. This could be said that students' average score who got treatment using high learning styles were higher than their average pre-test.

Keyword: Experimental, Games, Learning Styles, Students, Vocabulary Mastery.

INTRODUCTION

The ability to communicate in English is very essential nowadays since English has been recognized as an international language and spoken by millions of people in the world. People of all ages are motivated to learn and master it as soon as possible to allow them to make good communication with foreigners from other countries. The need for mastery English has been a serious concern in Indonesian education since a very long time ago so that the notion that English should be taught at all levels of school and included at school curriculums has been spread out through nation. To support this, English supposed to be taught at all levels including in Elementary School to ensure the young learners have had exposure and familiarized themselves with English at a very early age. The inclusion of English subjects at this level has been supported by many experts and has been implemented in many countries since a very long time ago.

In English learning, vocabulary is a very vital language element which the students should own. The vocabulary has higher roles than other language aspects because if the students have less vocabulary then consequently they will have more barriers in mastering English speaking, grammar, writing, reading, and listening. English is still regarded as a foreign language in Indonesian education.

In recent times, English has been used by millions of people in various sectors and regarded as the first language used by humans in an international scope, consequently, Indonesian students have to able to master the vocabulary in order to master English easily. In reality, many students do not emulate to know much more vocabulary that causes the difficulty in learning English. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers creatively to find teaching methods and media to motivate students in studying English. There are various methods that can be explored by teachers in English teaching such as using pictures, songs, real objects, cartoons, movies, games, and others.

In addition, a teacher also uses learning styles in learning and teaching activity in order to not make boring students in English learning. Based on the explanation above, a teacher has used media to grow students' creativity, which is a game. According to Lewis, Games are fun and children like to play them. Playing games is a vital and natural part of growing up and learning. Through games children experiment, discover, and interact with their environment. Games add variation to a lesson and increase motivation in vocabulary mastery.¹

The game played during teaching-learning activities is expected to give the learners larger rooms to practice their English vocabularies or to attract them to recall all the vocabularies they have also to introduce them some new vocabularies. Moreover, students' mastery and comprehension of the vocabularies will be much deeper since the students and the teacher all together discuss the words used after the game is played.

From the background explained above, the researcher interested to conduct action research entitled "**The Effect of Learning Styles and Games on Seventh Grade Students' Vocabulary Mastery at MTSS.PP. Amiruddiniyah Academic Year 2018/2019**"

Research Questions

This study aimed to investigate whether the students' vocabulary mastery with high learning styles significantly is better than low learning styles and to investigate whether there was any significant interaction between the styles of learning and games toward the

¹ G. Lewis. et all. *Games for Children*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.5

students' vocabulary mastery at MTSS.PP. Amiruddiniyah Academic Year 2018/2019. More specifically, it attempted to find answers for the following two major questions:

- a. Is the students' vocabulary mastery with high learning styles significantly higher than low learning styles?
- b. Is there any significant interaction between learning styles and games on the students' vocabulary mastery?

LITERATURE REVIEW

To be a good English speaker, one should have mastered more vocabulary. The more vocabulary someone has, then the easier for him to understand English and to communicate in it. Hence, teachers are always required to find out the best ways in order to improve learners' vocabulary and their motivation or interest in learning this foreign language.

The Definitions of Vocabulary

There are some definitions of vocabulary proposed by some experts. It is very important for one to know what vocabulary is before discussing vocabulary mastery. Mastering a large number of vocabulary is very important for foreign language learners. Without mastering it, of course, foreign language learners will get some difficulties in learning.

According to Hatch and Brown, vocabulary is a list of words or phrases from a particular language that a speaker has or uses in communication. Because the term of vocabulary refers to a list of words then the system used in alphabetical order. The word choices or dictions for teaching vocabulary to students are determined factors to improve their English skills. Those vocabularies are the basic tools for them to construct sentences in order to convey particular messages.² Allen French Further says that in second and foreign language proficiency, the fundamental component of language is vocabulary because it is the way to understand any language used in society. Vocabulary is always needed in constructing a successful communication in a second and foreign language.³ Hornby adds that in making up the language, then vocabulary has an important role there since vocabulary is about the number of words (their rules in grammar and meaning) are the basis for making up the language itself.

² Evelyn Hatch and Brown Cheryl. *Vocabulary, Semantics, and Language Education*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 1.

³ Allen French Virginia, *A Technique in Teaching Vocabulary*,. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983). p. 4.

The next definition of vocabulary was given by two language researchers. Burns and Broman define vocabulary as words stock owned an individual, speakers or professionals, in which their vocabularies look similar and common, yet each was distinctly different. Acquisition of vocabulary can be categorized as the most vital thing in learning a language including English. In that sense, learning English success is always determined by the vocabulary acquisition in a language context. Even though someone's competence of English cannot be guaranteed by a number of vocabularies he/she has, but a large number of vocabularies ensure him to easily make a daily communication in English. Moreover, having more vocabularies, the speaker will have fewer difficulties to express ideas, opinions, even logic statements to the listeners in any given time and situation. Not to mention, a robust vocabulary develops all areas of communication including listening, speaking, reading and writing. Learners have a chance to think and learn about the world as well as expanding their knowledge and information about the world due to the vocabulary they have.⁴

From the definitions above, it can be concluded that vocabulary is the total number of words that are needed to communicate ideas and express the speakers' meaning. That is the reason why it is important to learn vocabulary.

Kinds of Vocabulary

Celca-Murcia divides vocabulary into two, as follows:

a. Productive vocabulary and Receptive Vocabulary.

Productive vocabulary can be defined as a process in which students actively remember English vocabularies and appropriately use them in language production such as speaking and listening. While receptive vocabulary means a process in which students easily comprehend the English vocabularies found in reading or listening contexts.

Thus, it can be said that using vocabularies in speaking or writing contexts as productive vocabulary should be more encouraged by teachers during a learning activity. However, receptive vocabularies should be more displayed to the students in various contexts to develop their understanding of English reading and listening.

b. Content Words and Function Words.

Both content words and function words are essential in constructing sentences in English. Content words are described as those vocabularies that have the meaning

⁴ Paul C. Burn and Broman Betty L. *The Language Arts in Childhood Education. A Rationale for Pedagogy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 295.

which can be looked up in a dictionary such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and some adverbs as parts of speech. New content words are constantly added into the English language, conversely, the old content words frequently are left as they become obsolete. Therefore, content words are referred to as “open” class words.

On the other side, function words are those vocabularies to explain or create grammatical or structural relationships into which the content words may fit. They are much fewer and always do not change as English adds and reduces the content words. The example of these function words is auxiliary verbs, pronouns, prepositions, determiners, and some adverbs. Therefore, the function words were included as “closed” class words.

Further Hatch & Brown also states that there are two kinds of vocabulary in a language, namely receptive and productive vocabulary.

a. The Receptive Vocabulary

Receptive vocabulary is defined as the list of words (vocabulary) that an individual has, then he/she has the ability to recall and recognize various aspects of the word in different language contexts including in reading and listening. This kind of vocabulary can be recognized well by the learners when they find it in the context of reading or listening and not in the context of speaking and writing. The vocabulary which was adopted from language receptive is generally named as a passive process due to its way of receiving the terms, information thought, etc. from others. The receptive vocabulary is also called a passive process because the learner only receives thought-form others. In addition, the use of receptive vocabulary in a language application is considered a basic step since it is easier to recognize many words in the context of listening and reading rather than using it in the context of speaking and writing.

b. Productive Vocabulary

Productive vocabulary is a set of words (vocabularies) which the learners have, understand, use very well in the speaking and writing contexts. The learners themselves are able to use those words to send a message or express their thought appropriately via speaking and writing activities. Thus, the process of productive vocabulary can be called as an active process because the language users are using the vocabularies actively in producing sentences and expressing their thoughts to others.

The Purpose of Vocabulary Mastery

In all English skills including speaking, writing, listening and reading, mastering vocabulary is very essential. It is suggested for students to internalize more vocabulary

before they come to the reading or writing activities in the classroom. This is due to the role of vocabulary as the basic elements in learning a language. In this case, the reason to teach vocabulary is to help the learners significantly to use the language gradually in a perfect way as well as to give access for students in expressing their ideas in a targeted language.

Definition of Learning Styles

The learning styles describe how each student learns differently. The term learning style has been described as the preferential way in which the student gathers, absorbs, processes comprehends, interprets, organizes, and finally conclude the information to be used later. These learning styles are commonly into several approaches based on human sensors, such as visual, verbal, aural and kinesthetic to determine the appropriateness of learning style for learners.

According to Keefe that learning styles are relatively stable indicators of how the learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning condition and situation based on a set of cognitive and affective characteristics as well as physiological factors. In addition, Stewart and Felicetti state that learning styles are a student's most likely condition to learn something. Therefore, to get to know the students' learning styles, it is important to remember *how* they prefer to learn rather than on *what* the learners should learn.

The Seven Categories in Styles of Learning

- a. Visual (spatial): The student prefers using pictures, images, and spatial understanding.
- b. Aural (auditory-musical): The learner prefers using sound and music.
- c. Verbal (linguistic): The learner prefers using words, both writing and speech.
- d. Physical (kinesthetic): The learner prefers using his/her body, hands and sense of touch.
- e. Logical (mathematical): The learner prefers using logic, reasoning, and systems.
- f. Social (interpersonal): The learner prefers to learn with other people or in groups.
- g. Solitary (intrapersonal): The learner prefers to learn lonely and practice self-study.

Definition of Game

A game is a natural means for learners to understand the use of language in the real world. Some of the games are effective in learning languages, and some of them are not because some of them are not educated enough. Therefore it is very important to consider the kinds of games used in the learning environments. This is because not all games bring a positive impact on the learners and learning outcomes. Simply implementing a game in the

classroom and trying to integrate it into a school curriculum does not guarantee anything at all. It is vital for educators and teachers to consider and choose the games used in an educational setting, especially blending them into the main activities set by the curriculum. Some vital elements of education that should be addressed by educators or teachers in integrating the chosen games into the curriculum are the medium and alignment of the subjects, the instructional strategies, learning styles and expected educational outcomes.

To integrate games into an education setting, then the teachers have to conduct a range of approaches including allowing the learners to create their own games, integrating the games passed through scientific approaches, or critiquing the existed games to discover the drawbacks or lacking of the games. Those options will allow the learners to explore the subjected games to improve the intended educational outcomes in the future as well as allow them to determine the games designed to be relevant to the learning theory and research or not.

Salen & Zimmerman defines a game as a system in which participants are engaged in artificial conflicts and defined by rules, and this is resulting in a quantifiable outcome. During the classroom activities between the students and their teacher, games are used to enhance students' relationships among them since the games provide some challenges directed by the teacher. Therefore, games have positive benefits for the activity of teaching and learning as follows: a). Students are encouraged to build their inherent interest and work in learning. b). Teachers are helped to create relevant contexts in which the language is meaningful and useful for the students. c). Students are helped to experience a language naturally rather than passively study it.

In the other side, games also have some drawbacks as follows: a). The existency of competitiveness in games cannot be denied. Therefore, teachers are suggested to minimize the negative impacts of games regarding the arbitrary ways of grabbing the winning or experiencing the loss. But, in fact, students feel motivated and do their best in learning a language without feeling burdened because of competition in games. b). Teachers generally spend more time making and practicing games in the classroom.

In classroom activities, games are suggested to be implemented by teachers in their class during the learning and teaching activity to facilitate the students when learning. But, teachers must be very careful in choosing a game to be played in the teaching and learning activities since students' understanding levels are always different.

There are various games as options that can be used in learning and teaching activity, however, the researcher chose two interactive and fun games for this research namely hangman and treasure.

1. Hangman Game

Hangman is a game that the students played on groups. The students must memorize the word about everything. After that, the teacher divided the students into four groups, every group must repeat the words and if they guess false, the teacher will make the picture people hang on the board.

According to Ward, Hangman is a great game for English learners to practice their English spelling, pronunciation, and vocabulary, as well as to have fun at the same time.⁵

2. Treasure Hunt Game

A game of treasure hunt or sometimes referred to scavenger hunt game is a game in which the participants, students, individuals or teams attempt to seek and gather all hidden items (treasures) based on the prepared lists or defining specific items, in which teachers or the organizers had prepared them previously. This game is run under a time limit set by the teachers and the participants altogether.

In accordance with it, Marlene states that individuals or teams can be assigned to play the hunting game under a specific time. Consequently, the researcher found the hunting game was played in the defined groups/teams for this research. All groups were given a list of vocabulary (treasure) by the teacher, then later, assigned to find the correct pictures for each vocabulary. One of the members of the team read-aloud about the treasure list and the other member must find a correct picture then there's a time limit for students to find the pictures.⁶

Along with the fun of the games in teaching vocabulary. There are other positive advantages derived from this game such as to add student's vocabulary, improve their vocabulary mastery, make good communication and cooperating skills, and encourage the students' bodily movements to escape the boring situations.

METHOD

The design of this research was a quantitative research method with the inclusion of experimental and control groups and pre-test and post-test. The vocabulary test was the instrument of this study. The sample of the research was 56 students in the seventh grade of MTSS. PP. Amiruddiniyah academic year 2018/2019, namely 28 students as experimental group and 28 students as a controlled group.

⁵ Ward, M. *Scratch & solve hangman #1*. (New York: Sterling Publishing, 2005), p. 55.

⁶ Marlene, F. *Treasure Hunt*. (America: Celtic Marketing, 2007), p. 5.

To collect the data, the researcher gave the vocabulary test to the students as the source of the data. The test assigned was relevant to the material which had been taught in the process of teaching and learning through games in the classroom. This was conducted fairly to know how far the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery after getting the treatment of the game by the teachers. Finally, the data collected would be assessed and analyzed by comparing the pre-test and post-test results.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Data Analysis

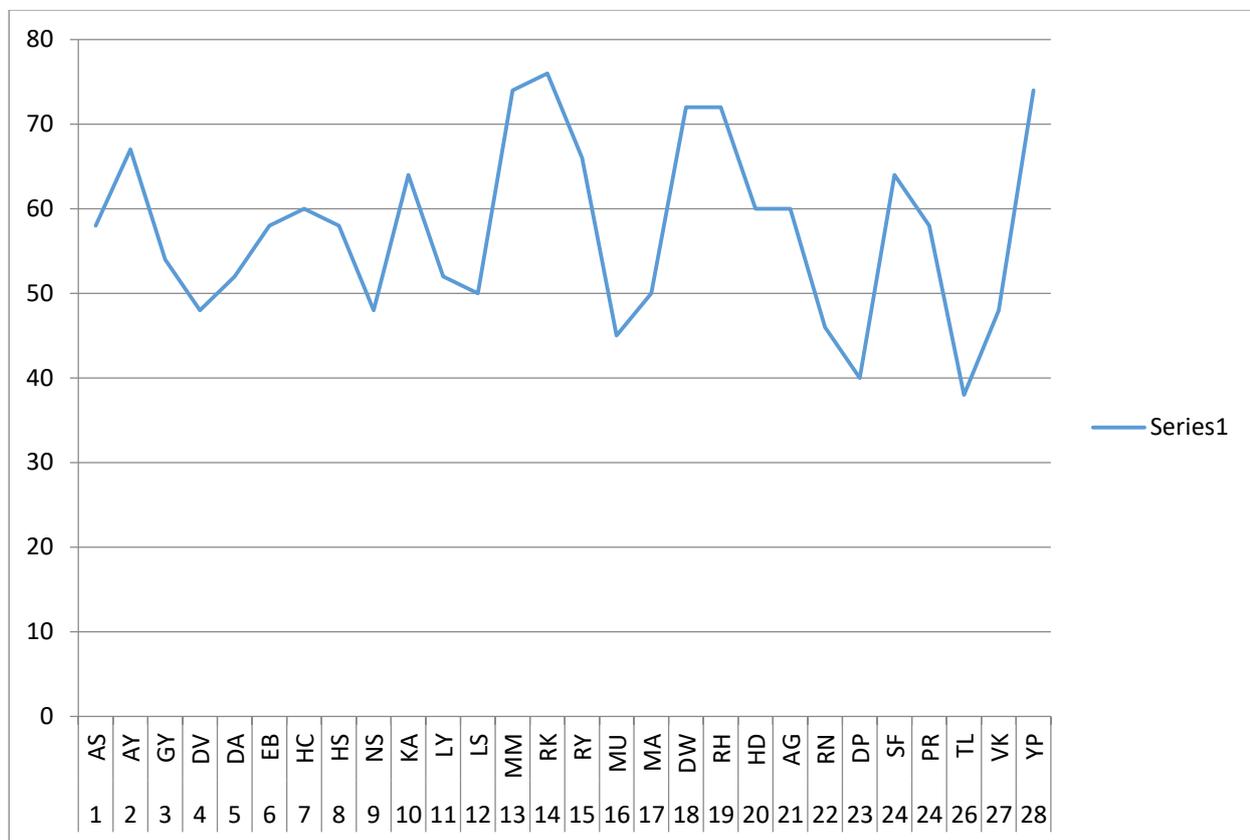
Before calculating the data, the following were the data of the score in the grade of 7A obtained from the pre-test. They were displayed in a given table as below.

Table 1. The Students' Pre-test Score without Learning styles and Games

NO.	NAME	SCORE
1.	AS	58
2.	AY	67
3.	GY	54
4.	DV	48
5.	DA	52
6.	EB	58
7.	HC	60
8.	HS	58
9.	NS	48
10.	KA	64
11.	LY	52
12.	LS	50
13.	MM	74
14.	RK	76
15.	RY	66
16.	MU	45
17.	MA	50
18.	DW	72
19.	RH	72
20.	HD	60
21.	AG	60

22.	RN	46
23.	DP	40
24.	SF	64
25.	PR	58
26.	TL	38
27.	VK	48
28.	YP	74
N= 28		Total= 1612 X= 57,57

Digram 1. The Students' Pre-test Score without Learning styles and Games



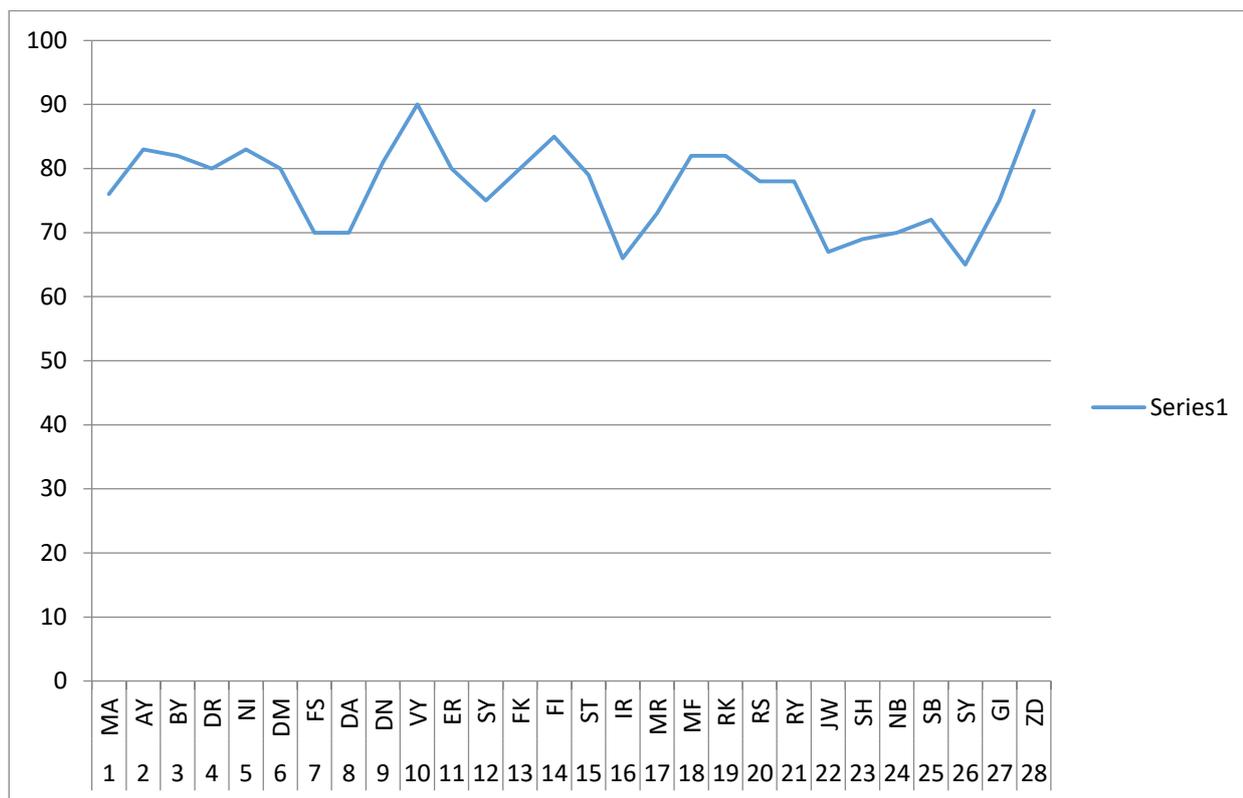
The table and diagram score above showed that the students' score was still a low score in the pretest. Meaning that the students' capability in mastering more vocabularies is still insufficient in order to master English as a whole.

Below was the table that showed the students' post-test scores in the grade of 7B. They were displayed in the following table.

Table 2. The Students' Post-test Score with Learning Styles and Games

NO.	NAME	SCORE
1.	MA	76
2.	AY	83
3.	BY	82
4.	DR	80
5.	NI	83
6.	DM	80
7.	FS	70
8.	DA	70
9.	DN	81
10.	VY	90
11.	ER	80
12.	SY	75
13.	FK	80
14.	FI	85
15.	ST	79
16.	IR	66
17.	MR	73
18.	MF	82
19.	RK	82
20.	RS	78
21.	RY	78
22.	JW	67
23.	SH	69
24.	NB	70
25.	SB	72
26.	SY	65
27.	GI	75
28.	ZD	89
N=28		Total= 2160 X= 77,14

Diagram 2. The Score of Students Post-test with Learning Styles and Games



The table and diagram of the posttest score above show that the students' achievements get increasing because the posttest score is higher than the pretest score. It means that the students are more understandable than before the treatment.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The findings of the research showed that 38 was the lowest score in the pre-test while 76 was the highest score in the pre-test. On the other side, 65 was the lowest score in the post-test while 90 was the highest score in the post-test. The teacher got the gained score with an average of 19.57, then the conclusion from this fact that the average score for students who treated by using high learning styles was higher than the average score gained in the previous pre-test.

Suggestion

Some suggestions which might be useful were given by the researcher for the English teachers who teach English in high schools. English teachers are required to think about the methods to improve the students' motivation in learning English. The researcher also suggests any English teachers be more enjoyable and creative in teaching English by

implementing creative teaching models and styles in order to create a happier learning environment for both teachers and students.

REFERENCES

- Allen, Virginia. F. (1983). *A Technique in Teaching Vocabulary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burn, Paul C and Betty L. Broman. (1975). *The Language Arts in Childhood Education. A Rationale for Pedagogy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hatch, Evelyn and Cheryl, Brown. 1995. *Vocabulary, Semantics, and Language Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- <http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles.html>
- <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/learning-styles-preferences/>
- <https://www.learning-styles-online.com/overview/>
- Lewis. G. et all. (2003). *Games for Children*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Marlene, F. (2007). *Treasure Hunt*. America: Celtic Marketing.
- Murcia Elite Olstain and Marianne Celce. (2000). *Discourse and Context in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ward, M. (2005). *Scratch & solve hangman #1*. New York: Sterling Publishing.