ABSTRACT

Hibali, Sosilawati H (2025). Investigating Teacher's Perception of Game-based Learning Media for Young Learners' English Vocabulary Development in the Context of Differentiated Curriculum *(Kurikulum Merdeka)*

Game-based learning media presents opportunities and challenges in developing young learners' English vocabulary, especially in the differentiated curriculum *(Kurikulum Merdeka)*. Teacher's perception are an important factor influencing the implementation of this media in the classroom. This study aims to explore teachers' views on the implementation and obstacles of using game-based learning media in helping students develop their vocabulary.

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method to gain an in-depth understanding of teacher's experiences. Data were collected through classroom observations and interviews with teachers who actively use game-based learning media. The focus of this study is to identify patterns of implementation of the media and their relevance to the principles of the differentiated curriculum *(Kurikulum Merdeka)*.

The results of the study showed that teacher considered game-based learning media to be one of the very helpful ways to create a fun, interactive learning atmosphere that can actively involve students. Teachers also considered that the use of this media supports the principles of the differentiated curriculum *(Kurikulum Merdeka)*, so that it can provide flexibility in meeting the diverse needs of students. However, some of the obstacles faced include time constraints and minimal available resources.

The conclusion of this study is that teachers are aware of the benefits of game-based learning media in supporting students' English vocabulary mastery and increasing learning motivation, as long as it is applied appropriately in the context of the differentiated curriculum *(Kurikulum Merdeka)*. This study also provides practical recommendations for educators, policy makers, and curriculum developers to encourage more effective integration of this media in English language learning.

Keywords: Game-based learning, English vocabulary, young learners, teacher perception, differentiated curriculum *(Kurikulum Merdeka)*.