

Improving the Seventh A Grade Students' Active Participation and Vocabulary Achievement by Using Word Cards at SMPN SUMBERKALONG JEMBER

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Abstract

Vocabulary is one of English language component that should be mastered by the foreign learner in Indonesia, especially the students in Junior High School. The aim of this research was to solve the problems related to the active participation and vocabulary achievement. The research subject was chosen by using purposive method. The research design used was Classroom Action Research. The research subject of this research was the students of the seventh A grade of SMPN SUMBERKALONG JEMBER which was consisted of 31 students. The data of this research was taken from test, observation, documentation and interview. The result showed some improvements in each cycle. The improvement of the students' active participation from Pra-Cycle to Cycle 1 was 29.03%. Meanwhile, the improvement of the students' active participation from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2 was 3.22%. In addition, there were 77,41% who could achieve the target score in each Cycle. It indicated that the use of word cards could improve the active participation and the vocabulary achievement of the students.

Keywords: *Active Participation, Vocabulary Achievement, Word Cards, Classroom Action Research.*

Introduction

English is the first foreign language that is taught in Indonesia. It is one of compulsory subjects, especially for Junior high school students. The objective of teaching English in Indonesia, as stated in the School Based Curriculum (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan/KTSP*) 2006 for Junior High School (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama/SMP*) and (*Madrasah Tsanawiyah/MTs*), is developing the ability to communicate the target language (English) in the spoken and written forms. In addition, based on the 2006 School Based Curriculum (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan/KTSP*), the aim of English teaching at junior high school is to achieve four language skills. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Besides, there are three language components which should be studied by the students, namely vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

Vocabulary plays an important role in language learning. It is needed to express the meaning, in receptive skills (listening and reading), and in productive skills (speaking and writing) (Igbaria, 2010:1). It is in line with Wilkins' statement, in Thornbury (2005:13) that without grammar, very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed. Thornbury (2005) states that all languages have words and they come out first as words both historically and in terms of the way each people learned their first and any subsequent languages.

In fact, learning is remembering. Thornbury (2005:23) states that the learner needs not only to learn a lot of words, but also to remember them. The problem is that many

students of Junior High School students have difficulties in memorizing the new vocabularies taught. They may be able to understand the teachers' explanation, but it cannot stand longer in their mind. Besides, students may feel bored with the way the teacher explains the lesson. According to Harmer's (2004:5) statement, one of the greatest enemies of successful teaching is the students' boredom. This is often caused by the lack of variation of teaching techniques done by the teacher. Therefore, the teacher needs to vary his or her own behavior pattern. He or she needs to make the teaching and learning process encouraging to students to give more attention, so the teaching and learning process will run more effectively. Further, Harmer (2004:1) states that one of the characteristics of a good teacher is that the teacher should make his or her lessons interesting in order that the students do not fall asleep in the classroom.

One of the solutions to make teaching and learning process more various and interesting is by using teaching media. Arsyad (2006:5) writes that media are the components of learning source or physical modes which contain instructional material in learners' environment which can motivate the students to study. There are several advantages of using teaching media in teaching and learning process. As written by Gairns and Redman (1998:103), media can be used for presentation, practice,

revision, and testing. Furthermore, it is very useful to help the effectiveness of learning process and deliver the message of the lesson done by the teacher.

Concerning the students' difficulties in mastering vocabulary, the researcher tried to use word cards as an alternative media in teaching vocabulary. Teaching vocabulary by using word cards is believed to be useful and suitable for the students because word cards have some benefits as follows, (1) Word cards can be used by the students of all ages, (2) Word cards are cheap, (3) Word cards can be used anywhere, (4) Word cards can be used for self or group study, (5) Word cards do not break down and they never go out of date, and (6) Word cards can be used for various activities of teaching and learning (Blanco and Villaneda, 2008:4).

Based on the previous research, Sari (2011) conducted a research about the use of word cards in teaching vocabulary. The result of her research shows that all the students gave positive responses about the use of word card in learning vocabulary. The students were active and interested in vocabulary teaching and learning. Meanwhile, the previous research results conducted by Oktaviana (2012) at SMPN 5 Tanggul in the 2011/2012 Academic year showed that word cards could help the students improve their vocabulary achievement. The results showed that there was significant effect of using word cards on the seventh grade students' vocabulary achievement in that school. Moreover, the degree of relative effectiveness of using word cards on the students' vocabulary achievement was more effective than teaching vocabulary by using lecturing method and giving vocabulary exercises.

Based on the preliminary study done previously at SMPN SUMBERKALONG JEMBER in October 2013/2014 academic year, the researcher got the information from the English teacher that she integrated the teaching of vocabulary with the teaching of four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Dealing with the use of media, she had never used any media in teaching vocabulary. She only used the students' works sheet *Lembar Kerja Siswa/* LKS and handbook to do the vocabulary exercises. Besides, the teacher explained that most of the seventh grade students experienced difficulties in memorizing new vocabularies that they had learnt and they had passive participation in English teaching learning process. There were only 50% of the students who were active in vocabulary teaching and learning. The teacher of the seventh A grade students said that this class had the lowest score of vocabulary with the mean score of 66,77. It showed that the seventh A grade students score list that only 17 students of 31 students got good score category (≥ 70).

Based on the condition above, a classroom action research entitled "Improving the Seventh A Grade Students' Active Participation and Vocabulary Achievement by Using Word

Cards at SMPN SUMBERKALONG JEMBER" was conducted.

Research Method

The reserach design that was used in this research was Classroom Action Research. This research focused on the seventh A grade students' active participation and their recount text writing achievement of SMPN SUMBERKALONG JEMBER. This reserach ran in cycle model. Each cycle consisted of planning the action, implementing the action, class observation and evaluation, and reflection of the action

The area of this research was SMPN SUMBERKALONG JEMBER. The subejcts was chosen by using purposive method. The reason why SMPN SUMBERKALONG JEMBER was chosen was the headmaster's permission and the interviewing with the English teacher of SMPN SUMBERKALONG JEMBER showed that the seventh A grade students still had some difficulties and problems in learning vocabulary.

The subjects of this research were the seventh A grade class of SMPN SUMBERKALONG JEMBER in the 2013/2014 academic year. This class consisted of 31 students. Based on the interview, the teacher suggested the researcher to use the seventh A grade as the research subjects. This class still had a problem in learning vocabulary. Based on the preliminary study, the mean score was 66,77. It was still below the score minimum requirement (75). In addition, the vocabulary core of this class was the lowest. It meant the seventh A grade of SMPN SUMBERKALONG JEMBER still needed improvement. Hence, they were selected as the research subject using word cards.

There were two kind of data in this research. They were the primary data and the supporting data. The primary data was collected from the result vocabulary test and the observation. The observation was used to get the result of students' active participation. The vocabulary test was used to measure the students' vocabulary achievement after getting treatment. In addition, the interview was used to get the data in preliminary study. Besides, the documentation was used to get the names of the subjects and the previous vocabulary score in 7th grade students.

Discussion

Based on the results of classroom observation and the test of vocabulary in Cycle I and Cycle II, it could be said that the students improved their active participation and vocabulary achievement after being taught by using word cards. Although the objectives of this research were reached, the action was continued to the second Cycle in order to see the consistency of the success achieved in Cycle I.

The result of vocabulary test in Cycle I showed that 77.41% of the students reached the target of the research. In other words, the action given to the students in Cycle I was successful. The success criterion of the research was at least 75% of the students reached score 70. Then, Cycle II was given to see the consistency of the successful achieved in Cycle I.

The results of vocabulary test in Cycle II showed that 77.41% of the students reached score at least 70. It means that Cycle II also improved the students' vocabulary achievement compared to the results of Cycle I. It showed the consistency of the result in both cycles. Also, the average of students' participation increased from 50% before the implementation of the action in Cycle II into 79.03%.

In summary, it could be concluded that the use of word cards for teaching vocabulary was able to help the students to improve their active participation as well as their vocabulary achievement in the vocabulary teaching and learning process. Word cards can be used as an alternative teaching media in teaching vocabulary by the English teacher, due to the fact that word cards can improve the students' vocabulary achievement and active participation.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the data analysis and the discussion in the previous chapter, the following points can be drawn.

The use of word cards can improve the seventh A grade students' active participation in the vocabulary teaching learning process at SMPN Sumberkalong Jember. The students were more active in the vocabulary teaching and learning process by using word cards. The improvement of the students' active participation could be seen from 50% before the actions given in Cycle I to 79.03% and in Cycle II to 82.25%. It means that the result of Cycle I and Cycle II was consistent. They actively participated in the vocabulary learning activities by using word cards. The results had successfully fulfilled the criterion of success that was at least 75% of the students did at least four or three indicators being observed. In other words, the students actively participated in the teaching learning process of vocabulary by using word cards.

The use of word cards can improve the seventh A grade students' vocabulary achievement at SMPN Sumberkalong Jember. The improvement of the students' vocabulary achievement was shown from the results of the students' vocabulary test. In Cycle I, the percentage of the students who got score at least ≥ 70 was 77.41% in which the mean score was 72.98, while in Cycle II, the percentage of the students who got score at least ≥ 70 was 77.41% in which the mean score was 73.62. It could be seen that the percentage of the students who got scores at least ≥ 70 in

each Cycle was 77.41% of the students. Therefore, the criterion percentage required, 75% the research subjects who got scores at least ≥ 70 was fulfilled in both Cycles. It means that the result of Cycle I and Cycle II was consistent.

In relation to the findings that the use of word cards could improve the students' vocabulary achievement, some suggestion are proposed to the English teacher, the students, and the other researchers.

a. The English Teacher

The English teacher is suggested to use word cards as alternative teaching media to improve the students' vocabulary achievement and the students' active participation in the teaching and learning process of vocabulary. Since it is interesting and could attract the students' interest in learning of vocabulary, she is suggested to browse the material of word cards in the internet or textbooks.

b. The Students

The students are suggested to be active involved in the teaching and learning process of vocabulary by using word cards since the use of word cards could improve their active participation, resulting in the improvement of their vocabulary achievement.

c. The Future Researchers

The future researchers are suggested to conduct a further research dealing with the use of word cards by using different or the same research design at different schools or different level of the research subjects.

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