

JOURNAL ARTICLE

IMPROVING THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS' ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AND THEIR VOCABULARY ACHIEVEMENT BY USING RIDDLES AT SMPN 1 PADANG LUMAJANG IN THE 2013/2014 ACADEMIC YEAR”

Agus Fahmi Khaqiqi, Siti Sundari, Sugeng Ariyanto
English Language Education Study Program
The Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
Jember University

Abstract

This Classroom Action Research was intended to improve the eighth grade students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement by using riddles at SMPN 1 Padang Lumajang in the 2013/2014 academic year. Therefore, the classroom action research in two cycles was conducted. There were two kinds of data in this research; they were primary data and supporting data. The primary data were taken from observation and vocabulary test, while the supporting data were taken from interview and documentation. The primary data were analyzed quantitatively by using the percentage formula. Based on the result of the data analysis, it could be reported that the percentage of the students' active participation increased from 58.33% in Cycle 1 to 83.33% in Cycle 2. Then, the results of the vocabulary test showed that the percentage of the students who got score ≥ 75 increased from 62.5% in Cycle 1 to 79.17% in Cycle. It could be concluded that the use of riddles could improve the students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement in the vocabulary teaching learning process at SMPN 1 Padang Lumajang.

Key words: riddles, active participation, vocabulary achievement

Introduction

According to Little (1990:2), communication is “vital to human existence” in the sense that people can express feelings, share knowledge and tell their experiences. English is one of the most important languages in the world. It is very important for education, knowledge, communication, and it has a relation that is caused by rapid development of knowledge and technology in the global area. Therefore, people should master English because it is used to communicate with other people around the world. The communication itself grows and develops rapidly in the modern world, so it needs the English mastery. Remembering the importance of English in Indonesia, it is necessary to learn English as early as possible.

Learning English as a foreign language is learning how to communicate both in spoken and written language. Learning to communicate should be supported by the skills and components of language. Hatch and Brown (1995: 328) say that communication requires the use of words. Learners cannot communicate with the language if they do not master the words or vocabulary of the language sufficiently. Related to this Thornbury (2005: 2) states that speaking or writing is difficult if the speaker or writer lacks of vocabulary. It implies that the learners should have sufficient vocabulary in order to achieve the language skills and to use the language in real communication. So, it is very important to master vocabulary well since vocabulary mastery can help all people to communicate in English.

From the result of preliminary study by interviewing the English teacher and observing the class of the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Padang Lumajang, it was known that vocabulary was taught in integrated way with reading skill by the English teacher. The English teacher said that most of the eighth grade students still have difficulties in mastering vocabulary, especially in class VIII C. They still have problems in memorizing words and understanding the texts given. Based on the vocabulary test, it was known that there was only 37, 5% of the students who achieved minimum requirement score. The minimum requirement score of English was 75. Besides, the English teacher said that the students who were actively participated in the teaching learning process were 41, 6% students. It could be seen from the activity of some students in the classroom, in which some students were just silent when the teacher asked them to answer the teacher's questions, then they never asked questions to the teacher when they had difficulties in learning vocabulary.

The English teacher rarely used media in teaching vocabulary, she just explained some difficult words of the text used then gave the word list to be memorized, then asked them to do the exercises in the work sheets, last discussed it with the class together. Therefore, the efforts are still needed to improve the students' vocabulary achievement.

Knowing the importance of vocabulary, the students need something new that can improve their ability in mastering vocabulary, since the learning process of vocabulary has not run effectively. According to Hamalik (1980:23), media as instruments, methods and technique should be used by the teacher to make an

effective communication between the teacher and the students in teaching learning process in class. One of the media in teaching vocabulary that can improve students' vocabulary achievement and participation is the use of riddles.

Considering the explanations above, a research entitled "Improving the Eighth Grade Students' Active Participation and Their Vocabulary Achievement by Using Riddles at SMPN 1 Padang Lumajang in the 2013/2014 Academic Year" was conducted. The objectives of this research were to know whether or not the use of riddles can improve the eighth grade students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement at SMPN 1 Padang Lumajang. Based on the research problems and the review of related literature, the research hypotheses can be formulated as follows.

1. The use of riddles can improve the eighth grade students' active participation in the vocabulary teaching learning process at SMPN 1 Padang Lumajang in the 2013/2014 academic year.
2. The use of riddles can improve the eighth grade students' vocabulary achievement at SMPN 1 Padang Lumajang in the 2013/2014 academic year.

Research Methods

The purpose of this research was to improve the eighth grade students' vocabulary achievement by using riddles as media. To achieve the objective of the research, the classroom action research with Cycle model was applied. Each Cycle was done in two meetings and the vocabulary test was given to the subjects after the action in the first Cycle. The researcher and the teacher taught vocabulary by using riddles to the students in turn. It was used to help each other to conduct the classroom action research, especially in solving the problem in the teaching learning process. The number of the subjects of this research was 24 students of class VIII C at SMP Negeri 1 Padang Lumajang in the 2013/2014 Academic Year.

In conducting this research, the researcher conducted a preliminary study to get the information about the problems faced by the English teacher and the students in the vocabulary teaching learning process. Then, after identifying the research problem, the researcher and the English teacher chose the design of the classroom action research. The procedures of the classroom action research were: (1) the

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planning of the action, (2) the implementation of the action, (3) the observation and evaluation of the action, and (4) data analysis and reflection of the action (Lewin, in Elliot, 1991:75). All the activities in each step were done collaboratively with the English teacher and had been consulted to the research consultants. Each step is presented respectively below.

Planning the action

In planning the action research, the researcher constructed the lesson plans. The activities were choosing the topic, preparing the teaching material, constructing the lesson plans for each cycle, preparing the observation guide in the form of checklist containing the indicators to be observed and constructing the vocabulary test for cycle 1 and cycle 2.

Implementing the action

In this research the focus of the action was teaching vocabulary by using riddles to improve the students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement. The action was done by the researcher and the English teacher based on the lesson plans which have been prepared in advanced. In the implementation phase, the action in each Cycle was done in two meetings. In the first meeting, the researcher conducted the action by teaching vocabulary by using riddles, while the English teacher was as the observer. Then, in the second meeting, there was an exchange between the English teacher and the researcher, so the English teacher taught the students vocabulary by using riddles and the researcher became the observer. The second cycle was done, since the results of the action in the first Cycle had not achieved the research objectives or the successful criteria of the action.

Observation and Evaluation

In this research, the observation was done by the English teacher and the researcher. Observation was done to observe the activities and the implementation of the action. The observation checklist was used to observe students' activities in the teaching and learning process of vocabulary by using riddles. The observation guide was used in the form of checklist containing the indicators observed.

There were two kinds of evaluation that were done, namely process evaluation and product evaluation. The process evaluation was done by conducting the observation during teaching learning process of vocabulary by using riddles. It was intended to observe the students' participation in doing the vocabulary teaching learning process by using riddles. The process of evaluation was considered successful, if 70% of the students actively participate in the teaching and learning vocabulary process by using riddles in each cycle. Then, the product evaluation was done at the end of each Cycle to in the form of vocabulary test by using riddles to know the students' vocabulary achievement. In this research, the product evaluation was considered successful if at least 70% of the students achieved score ≥ 75 in the vocabulary test in each cycle.

Data Analysis and Reflection

The last stage of this classroom action research was data analysis and reflection of the action. The collected data were analyzed based on the type of data. The data which were obtained from the vocabulary test in each Cycle were analyzed quantitatively in the percentage. The data from observation of each meeting in each cycle were analyzed descriptively and quantitatively in the percentage.

Then, the reflection in this research was conducted to reflect the results of observation in the first and second meetings in each Cycle and the result of vocabulary test in each Cycle. The researcher and the English teacher did the reflection to see the weaknesses or problems that happened in the first Cycle. The result of the reflection was used as the basis to revise the action in the second Cycle or to produce the Lesson Plans for the second Cycle by revising some weak aspects.

Research Results and Discussion

Based on the results of the actions in two Cycles, it could be said that teaching vocabulary by using riddles was able to improve the students' vocabulary achievement as well as their active participation. As shown in the results of the observation in the teaching learning process, the percentage of the students' active participation in Cycle II was higher than that in Cycle I. In Cycle I, the percentage of the students' active participation increased from 50% of the students in meeting 1 to

58.33% of the students in meeting 2. The result of the observation in Cycle I had not achieved the criteria of success in this research. Then, the percentage of the students' active participation in Cycle II increased from 75% of the students in meeting 1 to 83.33% of the students in meeting 2. Based on the results of the observation in Cycle II, it could be said that the use of riddles was able to improve the students' active participation in the vocabulary teaching learning process.

Based on the results of the students' vocabulary test in each cycle, it could be concluded that the results of the students vocabulary achievement test in Cycle I had not achieved the criteria of success required in this research that was the percentage of the students whose score ≥ 75 was 70%. It was because the percentage of the students who got score ≥ 75 was still below the criteria required in this research that was 62.5%.

There were some factors that influenced the results of the research. Firstly, the students had a difficulty in doing the riddles in groups. Secondly, the students had a difficulty in finding the vocabulary (nouns) in the text. Thirdly, the students had a difficulty in understanding the clues and guessing the riddles. To overcome these problems, the researcher and the English teacher did some revisions in the teaching learning process of Cycle II. Firstly, the teacher and the researcher divided groups based on the students' ability in learning English (Each group consisted of 4 students). Secondly, the teacher and the researcher explained the vocabulary by using the example of sentences. Thirdly, the teacher and the researcher made the clues of riddle easier by simplifying the sentences of the clues.

After revising some factors that caused the action in Cycle I unsuccessful, the students were able to improve their scores of the vocabulary achievement test and also their active participation in Cycle II. The percentage of the students who got score ≥ 75 in Cycle II was 79.17% that was higher than that in Cycle I that was 62.5%. Besides, the students' active participation was 75% in meeting 1 and 83.33% in meeting 2. It proved that by revising some factors of the action in Cycle 2 could help the students improve their vocabulary achievement and their active participation optimally. In conclusion, the use of riddles could improve the students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement in Cycle II. Therefore, the action was stopped.

The results were supported by some previous research results. Aini's research result (2003) showed that the use of riddles could improve the students' vocabulary achievement at SMPN 2 Jember in the 2002/2003 academic year. Similarly, this research results show that the use of riddles could improve the students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement because the use of riddle is an interesting way for the students to identify words (Frost, 2013). Besides, riddles can improve the ability of the students in thinking about the lesson (Karim and Hasbullah, 1986:2.54). It is generally liked by the students of all ages because it combines language practice with fun and excitement. Related to the above explanation, it could be concluded that the use of riddles could improve the eighth grade students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement at SMPN 1 Padang Lumajang in the 2013/2014 academic year.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussion, it could be concluded that the use of riddles could improve the eighth grade students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement at SMPN 1 Padang Lumajang.

The improvement of the students' active participation could be seen from the percentage of the students' active participation in Cycle I and Cycle II. The results showed that the students' active participation in the vocabulary teaching learning process in Cycle I increased from 50% in meeting 1 to 58.33% in meeting 2. Then, in Cycle II, the percentage of the students' active participation also improved from 75% in meeting 1 to 83.33% in meeting 2. It means that the use of riddles could improve the students' active participation in the vocabulary teaching learning process in two Cycles.

The improvement of the students' vocabulary achievement could be seen from the percentage of the students who got score ≥ 75 in the vocabulary test in Cycle I was 62.5% and 79.17% in Cycle II. It means that the use of riddles in the vocabulary teaching learning process was useful to improve the students' vocabulary achievement.

Based on the research results above, some suggestions are given to the following people. First, the English teacher is suggested to apply riddles in teaching

vocabulary. It is due to the fact that the use of riddles could improve the students' vocabulary achievement. Second, the students are suggested to be actively involved in the teaching learning process of vocabulary and they are suggested to improve their vocabulary achievement by practicing riddles with other topics with their friends. The last, the future researchers who have the same problems in teaching vocabulary are suggested to use this research result as a reference and a source of information to conduct a further research dealing with the use of riddles with the same or different aspects of the English components, research area, or research design to develop the quality of the English teaching learning process.

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