IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY THROUGH THE USE OF WALL CHARTS IN ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

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Abstract

The objectives of this research are: (1) to find out whether wall charts can improve the English vocabulary mastery of the fifth grade elementary students (2) to find out students' motivation when wall chart is used in teaching vocabulary. The research data were collected by using observation, interview, document, and test (pre-test and post-test). The data were analyzed through descriptive analysis which consists of assembling the data, coding the data, comparing the data, building interpretation, and reporting the outcomes for the qualitative data and descriptive statistics for the quantitative data. The research findings show that wall charts are able to improve students' vocabulary mastery and students' motivation. It shows that there was an improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery before and after the research.

Key words: action research, vocabulary, wall charts, motivation

INTRODUCTION

Learning English since childhood gets more attention from society. People feel an importance to introduce a foreign language especially English to their children. There are many reasons why English is introduced in the early age. English as international language is very important to the society because English is used in several aspects such as education, social, culture etc. Teaching English at the early age is easier than teaching to the adult. Brumfit (1984: vi) explains

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that young children have more opportunities than adult. When learning, children can learn all the time without having worries. They have more knowledge in learning English with the help of people around them like their parents, friends and teachers. Furthermore, they have a strong personal need to learn if they are surrounded by people speaking the second language. If we compared to the adult, children are more able to accept new things on their surrounding and they are quicker to learn something. It means that learning English in primary level is the right decision.

Kasihani (2007) states that by teaching a foreign language like English in the age of 10, it will develop their cognitive skill, because students in that age are still in the shift process from egocentric phase where they are often to see phenomena in this world just from their own point of view to reciprocity phase where they will try to see the phenomena from other point of view. According to Cameron (2001:1), children often seem less embarrassed than adults at talking in a new language, and their lack of inhibition seems to help them get a more native-like accent. This means that children which can be expected as students in elementary school have bigger chance to improve their English better and probably faster than adult or higher-level students.

English teaching at the primary school level focuses on teaching vocabulary. Vocabulary refers to list or a set of words individual speakers of language might used (Hatch and Browns, 1995:1). Hammer (1991: 62) explains that teaching vocabulary does not only teach new meaning of words but also teach

how to spell and how to pronounce the words. Teaching vocabulary in the early English learning is very important. Students will find difficulties in learning English if they lack vocabulary. Shoebotton states that vocabulary much more than grammar is the key to understand what students hears and reads in school, and to communicate successfully with other people. For this reason it is very important for students to build up a large store of words (Shoebottom, 2011: 1).

Vocabulary is the most important component language because it affects the four language skills that are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Related to the importance of vocabulary in language learning, Decarrico in Celce and Murcia (2001: 285) states that vocabulary learning is central to language acquisition, whether the language first, second, or foreign. The reason of why vocabulary is important in learning language is implicitly proposed by McCharty. According to McCharthy (1990: 3) when we speak of the vocabulary of language we are primarily but not exclusively, teaching about the words of that language. Therefore, if vocabulary is related tightly to the learning words of certain language, then it will be central in language learning. For instance, all languages in this world are used by help of words. Words' mean connecting language to the real world. They can be the represent of things in the real life and also used to express feelings of the language user.

Teaching vocabulary for young learners is not easy. Forts (2008: 1) states that teaching vocabulary is quite difficult because there are thousand hundreds words in English. The teacher has to introduce new words and ask the students to

practice them, making clear the meanings and the ways in which each can be used. According to Nation (2001: 1) deliberately teaching vocabulary is the one of the least efficient ways of developing learners' vocabulary knowledge but nonetheless, it is important part of a well balanced vocabulary program. In Indonesia elementary school, the students study the basic English on vocabulary enrichment.

When the writer did pre observation in SDN Parangjoro 1 Sukoharjo at five grade students, the writer identified some vocabulary problems related teaching learning process in that school. They are as follows: (1) Students did not able to spell words correctly. They wrote the way the words were spelled. For example puzzle [pʌzl] was written, pazel; noodles [nu:dlz] was written nudel; (2) students had difficulties to pronounce English word correctly. There were many students who pronounced words incorrectly; (3) students had difficulties to remember meaning of new words. Having been presented words in a meeting, the students could not mention the meaning of those words in the next meeting (usually 1 or 2 days later); (4) students were not able to use words that they have learned in simple communication.

Some problems also occurred during the process of teaching and leaning. The problems were: (1) Students did not pay attention to the lesson; (2) When the teacher gave explanations, students talked to each other, it made the class noisy; (3) Students in the class were passive. Based on the problem in the classroom situation, It can be said that the students had low motivation in learning English.

Those problems were mainly caused by three things: (1) the teacher has not utilized teaching media for teaching and learning process. According to preliminary observation, the teacher only used LKS to explain the material. She manually wrote some list of word as well as the meanings on the blackboard. Afterward, she insisted asking them to read and pronounce them. Such a way did not grab students' attention; (2) the teacher did not use variety or effective teaching techniques to teach the students. The teacher was preaching to explain the material. In addition teacher tended to be dominant in the teaching learning process. The teacher asked the students to do the LKS and check it together. This condition makes class very bored and students have low motivation; (3) the students do not have enough motivation to learn English. They assumed that English is quite difficult to them.

Teacher should find the best way in teaching English to get the best result. Based on the problems identified, the writer would like to try to provide a suitable media that is expected to help teacher in improving vocabulary mastery. Wall chart can be used to improve vocabulary mastery. As we know, teaching is a complex process and visual aids, such as picture, realia, wall chart, drawing etc, are a great help in stimulating the teaching of a foreign language particularly in vocabulary teaching. Bowen (1994: 1) states visual aids are great help stimulating the learner of a foreign language. The students must use their ears as well as their eyes but it is the eye that is primary channel of learning. Good visual materials will help maintains the pace of the lesson and the students' motivation.

Some pictures actually are perfect for the purpose of teaching particularly the vocabulary. There are many types of pictures that are proposed by some expert; one of them is wall chart. Wall Chart is large card displaying diagram or picture. Most wall charts consist of combination of visual and verbal material (Bowen, 1994: 13). While Doff (1988: 87) states that a charts (sometimes called wall chart) is a large sheet of paper or card with writing, picture or diagrams which the teacher can either hold up for the class to see or display on the wall or blackboard used for extended presentation or practice. Wall chart is one of suitable media to teach vocabulary for children. Basically, children love the interesting picture. It makes the teacher easier to give explanation about new vocabulary to young learners.

Bowen (1994: 15) also states that wall chart suitable for pair or group work in intermediate and advance classes and unsuitable for whole class teaching because it is usually complex, with printing too small to be seen by the student from their seats.

The reason of why wall chart is used as the way to enrich the students' vocabulary is that young learners as the object of the English language learning are usually interested in a real-life activity. It is also stated by Phillips (1996: 74).

"Vocabulary is best learned when the meaning of the word(s) is illustrated, for example by a picture, an action, or a real object. The children should then meet and use the word(s) in relevant contexts, in order to 'fix' them

in their minds. This helps establish their relationship to other words, so that a vocabulary network is built up.

By wall chart the teacher will get more advantages, because teaching vocabulary to children by using wall chart can; (a) quick way for the students to visualize what the teacher are saying -- numbers, trends, up or down; (b) forceful -- emphasizes main point; (c) convincing -- proves a point, see and hear; (d) compact way to convey information; (e) more interesting than just talk or print (Remember to use as many of the five senses as possible) Wingenbach (2010).

In presenting vocabulary, Cross (1999: 11) points out a design to explain an enrich students' vocabulary using wall chart with step as follow: (1) Sound and the meaning. In this steps, when the teacher teach the word "kite" it is easier for the students if the teacher pronounce the word to them and show them at the same time the object of the picture, that the students, get the meaning immediately. (2) Repetition, in this step, the teacher gets the class to repeat the words that they have learn a few times. It is help the students to practice how to pronouncing words correctly and remembering meaning of words. Thornbury (2005: 24) reveal that the time-honoured way of 'memorizing' new material is through repeated rehearsal of the material while it is still in working memory. However, simply repeating an item (the basic of rote learning) seems to have little long-term effect unless some attempt is made to organize the material at the same time. (3) Written Form, the teacher writes the word or sticks the words under picture to show the

meaning of the picture. It helps the students to know how to write words of that meaning correctly.

Based on statement above, this research aims at identifying whether and to what extent the use of wall charts improve students' vocabulary mastery and to find out students' motivation when wall chart is used in teaching vocabulary.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research is action research method. There are some definitions given by some expert. Wilf Carr and Kemmis (1986:) says that action research is simply a form of self- reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which these practices are carried out. In line with Carr and Kemmis, R. B. Burns in Burns (1999: 30), action research is the application of fact finding to practical problem solving in social situation with view to improve the quality of action within involving the collaboration and cooperation of researchers, practitioners and laymen.

Furthermore, Schmuck (1997: 28) proposes that action research is study a real school situation with a view to improve the quality of actions and results within it. It aims also to improve one's own professional judgment and to give insight into how better to achieve desirable educational goals. Action research offers a means for changing from current practice toward better practice.

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The model action research used in this study is the model developed by Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns (1999: 32). There are four steps of teaching: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. These moments are the fundamental steps in a spiraling process through which participants in an action research group undertake to:

a. Planning: Develop a plan of critically informed action to improve what is already happening. In this stage, research should arrange his classroom procedure very clearly. Specific goal, meaningful activity, and realistic should be on the research considerations.

b. Action: Act to implement the plan. In this stage, the researcher does the plans and the classroom procedure that he has made before. It can be seen the correlation between the goal, activity and the outcomes.

c. Observation: Observe the effects of the critically informed action in the context in which it occurs.

d. Reflection: Reflecting process on these effects as the basis for further planning, subsequent critically informed action so on, though a succession of stages.

He illustrates his approach to action research in the model shown below:
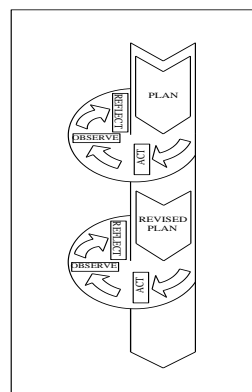
Action Research Spiral (Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns 1999: 33)

In this classroom action research, the researcher used some technique of qualitative and quantitative data to collecting data.

1. Qualitative data are collected by: Observation, Interview, and Documents

2. Quantitative Data

    The test instrument is used to collect the data of students' vocabulary mastery. It has been done in terms of pre-test and post test. This data, further, was used to estimate the significant learning improvement caused by action research.

    After collecting data, the next steps of study is analyzing the data obtained from observation, interview, document and test. Burns (1999: 156-160) propose five steps in analysis of qualitative data. Those steps are:

    a. Assembling the data

        The first step is to assemble the data collected over the period of research.

    b. Coding the data

        Coding is a process of attempting to reduce the large amount of data that may be collected to more manageable categories of concepts, theme and types.

    c. Comparing the data

        At this stage you may also be able to map frequencies of occurrences, behaviors or response. Table may be crated using simple descriptive techniques to note frequency counts or percentages. The main

aim at this stage is to describe and display the data rather than to interpret or explain them.

d. Building interpretations

This stage demands a certain amount of creative thinking as it is concerned with articulating underlying concepts and developing theories about why particular patterns of behaviors, interactions or attitudes have emerged.

e. Reporting the outcomes

The final stage involves presenting an account of research for others.

The result of the tests (pre-test and post test) were analyzed by using a statistical technique to find the students' mean score. The data from the test were analyzed in order to prove whether or not implementing the used of wall chart to teach vocabulary mastery.

In this research, the students' mean score of the post test 1 was compared to the students' mean score of post test 2 to know whether there was any improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery.

Result and Discussion

The research was conducted at the fifth grade of SDN Parangjoro 1 Sukoharjo. The problems are about the students' low mastering vocabulary and

their low motivation also needed to improve. The researcher chose wall charts to solve the problem.

Cycle 1 was implemented in several stages: planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The acting and observing was conducted in the same time. It was in the three meeting. The plan was designing the vocabulary tasks through implementation of wall chart to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The material was taken from book, LKS, and Internet. The researcher combines the wall charts with games and drilling to improve the students' vocabulary mastery and their motivation. After analyzing the observation result in the cycle 1, the researcher did reflection in order to evaluate the teaching and learning process she did so far.

Based on the result of the post-test 1 in the cycle 1, the researcher found that there is some improvement in mastering vocabulary. The mean score of the students had improved from the pre-test 54.5 into 66.2 in the post test 1. In the cycle 1, the students more gave attention to the lesson and they did not talk to each other with their friends. However, they were still passive in the class; they did not have confidence to learn English. They still got wrong to pronounce words. The students spell the words incorrectly; they spelled words likes what they heard. They had difficulties to use words in the sentences. In the cycle 1 they were able to remember the meaning of the new words. They still remember the meaning when the researcher asked them in the next meeting.

These improvements however were still not significant; therefore the researcher concluded to continue the research to the next cycle. There were several problems related to the students' vocabulary mastery and students' motivation that could be seen on the class situation that needed to be solved. Therefore, the researcher had revised her plan that would be conducted in the second cycle. The second cycle was conducted in three meetings. Each meeting took 70 minutes. In this cycle the researcher tried to overcome the problems which still occurred in the first cycle. The researcher would divide the students into small group. It would make them more focus on the lesson and would help the researcher to check the students' ability easily. To overcome the problem when the students felt bored in the drilling section, the researcher would make little competition. This activity was expected to give more motivation to the students. The researcher still conducted drilling activity in cycle 2.

To make the students understand how to use vocabulary, the researcher used drilling, gave them task and asked them to make and practicing dialog. Practicing dialog in front of class also improved students' confidence. The researcher still used game to make them more active and interested.

In the cycle 2, the researcher still combined wall charts with games and drilling. She also added competition in drilling to make student more interested on the drilling. The students were bored when the researcher drilled whole class.

How ever, there was some improvement in the cycle 2. The students were more active in the lesson. They tried to answer questions although they did not

pronounce some words correctly. They were more confident in answering questions in front of the class. When in the first cycle the students had no focus on the lesson, in the second cycle the students had more focus on the group work. They were not noisy but they were more enthusiastic.

The students did not felt bored in drilling, in the second cycle. The class was noisy, but this was positive effect. They seemed interested in the lesson and enjoyed the lesson. The improvement students' achievement, it can be seen in the following table that students' vocabulary mastery improved:

Table 1 The Improvement in Achievement Score.

	Score		
	Pre-test	**Post-Test 1**	**Post-Test 2**
Total score	1635	1985	2310
Mean score	54.5	66.2	77

From the table above, it can be seen that the mean score of each post-test is higher than pre-test. It can be concluded that there is an improvement of students' vocabulary mastery. Their score increased from cycle one onto cycle two. The climate of class during teaching learning process also improved after the researcher applied wall charts. The students become aware of what the lesson is about and paid more attention to the lesson. The use of wall chart in the action could raise students' interest on the vocabulary mastery. The men score of post-

test 2 is higher than the mean score of post-test 1. It can be said that the revision of the plan was successful.

Through the use of wall chart, the students were more motivated during teaching and learning process. They were interested to the teacher explanation and did not talk each other. The students seemed enthusiastic with the lesson and they asked and answered question actively in the teaching learning process.

Conclusion and Suggestion

The finding of the research question is focused of the research. The research questions are: the uses of wall chart improve students' vocabulary mastery of the fifth grade of students and students' motivation. The use of wall chart in teaching vocabulary, make fewer mistakes in identifying the meaning of new words, Students make fewer mistakes in spelling words, make few mistakes in pronouncing all the words provided and able to use words in simple sentence . It is shown by the result of the test. The mean score got improved from pre-test to the cycle 2 test. In the pre-test the students got 54.5, in the cycle 1 test they got 66.2 and in the cycle 2 test they got 77.

Next, wall Chart is proven able to improve students' motivation. Their motivation improves during with class activities. It can be seen from the students paid attention and more focus to the lesson. The students were interested in the teacher explanation and did not talk each other. They seemed enthusiastic with the

lesson and they are daring to answer questions, ask questions and actively get involved in the teaching learning process.

Having concluded the result of the research, the research would like to propose some suggestion for English teacher, the institution of education, and also for the other researcher. The suggestion are described as follow:

1. For Teachers

    The teacher should be creative and be bright to select teaching aids and technique in teaching vocabulary. One of teaching aids can be used by teacher to teach vocabulary is wall chart. Teaching vocabulary by using picture can attract the students' interest and their motivation. Wall chart is also a suitable media that could combine with teaching techniques. It is very easy to teacher for make wall chart, because wall chart is kind of simple media.

2. For Students

    The students should be active and motivated to learn English. They learn not only to find great number but also to gain experiences and their knowledge. They can practice English in their daily life, everywhere and every time.

3. For School

    The education institution should support facilities to the teacher of the teaching. It will help the teacher to improve the quality and to be more creative in delivering the material.

4. For Other Researchers

This research studies the use of wall chart in teaching vocabulary to children. It is hoped that this study can be used as an additional references for further researchers to improve and create other techniques which will give contribution in teaching English especially teaching English for children.

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