IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY USING REALIA

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Abstract

This research aimed to improve students' vocabulary using realia to class VII F students of SMP Negeri 1 Sungai Raya in Academic Year 2017/2018. This research was conducted based on the problems found in the classroom. It was found that students had difficulties in understanding on meaning of words, spelling and pronunciation. This research was conducted through a Classroom Action Research in two cycles to 32 students of class VII F. In collecting the data, the researcher used observation and measurement technique. The tools of collecting data were observation checklist, field notes and test. The qualitative data were analyzed using the following procedure: organizing the data, describing the data and building interpretation. For the quantitative data were analyzed by finding and comparing the mean score of the test in cycle 1 and cycle 2. Based on the findings in this research, it was found that using realia in teaching and learning improved students' understanding on meaning of words, ability in spelling and ability in pronuncing the words. Besides, the presence of the things interests the students in teaching and learning in the classroom.

Keywords: Improve, Vocabulary, Realia.

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is the first thing that should be taught to the students because without enough vocabulary, they will learn nothing. The students need to have the wide range of vocabulary in order to learn English language skills.

The researcher did pre-observation during teaching and learning activity in class VII F students. It was found that most of the students still have difficulties in learning vocabulary. Whereas, vocabulary is the basic material of English lesson for the students of Junior High Schools. The students had difficulty in understanding on meaning of words. They also had difficulty in spelling it. They often spell some words as they heard. For example *shoes, chair, blackboard, and classroom* were written as *soes, cher, blackbord,* and *classrum.* Then, they often pronounce the words as they see such as, /globe/, /diktionari or diktionrai/, /setapler/, /saharpener/, /pencil/. Teaching English to students can be done by using many ways. According to Gower (1995, p.149), there are several ways that can be used in teaching English namely realia, mime and gesture, give example, give explanation or definition, translation, and concept question. In this case, the researcher uses realia to overcome the students' problems.

Realia is a term used in education to refer to certain real life objects. In education, realia are objects from real life used in classroom instruction. In teaching vocabulary, realia is teaching media used to present vocabulary by bringing actual objects of items or something represent it which used in classroom to illustrate and teach vocabulary. In addition, realia does not necessarily something tangible and further agree that something which is brought into the classroom digitally still counts as realia.

In this research, the researcher used cooperative language learning as the theory of learning in teaching vocabulary using realia. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maimie their own and each other's learning. According to Richard and Theodore (2006) cooperative languge learning is part of more general instructional approach as known as collaborative learning. Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. Olsan and Kagan (as citied in Richard and Theodore, 1992) defined cooperative language learning is group learning activity organized so, learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner in held accountable for them own learning and motivated to increase the learning of others. According to Richard and Theodore (2006) there are some goals in language teaching as follows; (1) To provide opportunities for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair and groups activities (2) To provide teachers with a methodology to enable them to achieve this goal and one that can be applied in a variety of curriculum settings. (e,g, content-based, foreign language classroom, mainstreaming) (3) To enable focused attention to particular lexical items, language structures, and communicative functions through the use of interactive tasks (4) To provide opportunities for learners to develop successful learning and communication strategies (5) To enhance learner motivation and reduce learners stress and to create a positive affective classroom climate.

Vocabulary is also one of all components that are important to use in communication. Vocabulary has an important role in developing the language four skills; writing, speaking, listening and reading. As mentioned by Cameron (2001, p.94) "a major research for language teaching terms, the development of words, the meaning and the links between them will cover under vocabulary." It means that to learn language, we must master the vocabulary well. Teaching vocabulary by using realia help students acquire new vocabulary in practical way, the students might find it easy to understand the meaning of the words and make the learning experience more memorable for the students. There are some specification to assess vocabulary in Brown (2000, p.172) as seen in table 2.1. The researcher added some categories in scoring the students' vocabulary as seen in table 2.2. The categories was taken from Heaton (1998) and for the criteria of scoring was created by the researcher herself.

Table 1. The Vocabulary Table of Specification

Categories	Score	The Criteria of Scoring
Pronuncia-tion	3	The Students' can pronounce the words well
	2	The students' can pronounce the words adequate enough
	1	The students' can pronounce the words poorly
Fluency	3	The studentts' is able to continuous speech without too much hesitations
	2	The students' fluency is having a little disruption by language problem
	1	The students often break off and stop while presenting in front of the class.

Gower et all (1995) define realia is an actual object or items which are brought into a classroom as example or as aids to be talked or written about. Bierbaum, quoted in Wantini (2010), has listed some characteristics of realia: (a)They are related to the real world (b)They are usually more portable and accessible than the whole environment they present(c)They can be touched, manipulated and observed(d)They are often inexpensive

and readily obtained(e)They are almost infinitely various(f)They are versatile, and may meaningful without language(h)They combine elements of instruction and recreational and appeal to the cognitive and affective domains(i)They may lead from the general to the particular, or the reserve. Teaching vocabulary by using realia help students acquire new vocabulary in practical way, the students might find it easy to understand the fill several learning objectives or educational recreational needs(g)They are often meaning of the words and make the learning experience more memorable for the students. In this research, the researcher used parts of as realia or the real things. By using realia the teacher may have an interesting way in teaching vocabulary such as shiny, glossy, gleaming and sparking which does not rely on dictionaries.

Table 2. The Vocabulary Table of Specification (Modified)

Categories	The criteria of scoring			
	Poor 1	Average 2	Average to Good 3	Good to Excellent 4
Words Meaning (understanding on meaning of words)	The student is able to understand five of the words correctly.	The student is able to understand seven of the words correctly.	The student is able to understand eight of the words correctly.	The student is able to understand ten or all of the words correctly.
Spelling	The student is able to spell five of words correctly.	The student is able to spell seven of words correctly.	The student is able to spell eight of words correctly.	The student is able to spell ten or all of words correctly.
Pronunciation	The student is able to pronounce five of words correctly.	The student is able to pronounce seven of words correctly.	The student is able to pronounce eight of words correctly.	The student is able to pronounce ten or all of words correctly.

Acccording to Afdiyani (2013) in her research, there are five advantages of realia in teaching vocabulary: (a)Realia can be used at any stage of lessons to help the learners in presenting a new language(b)Realia does not need any special preparation. It is inexpensive because it is available in our environment(c)A good realia is not used only once but again and again(d)Realia will raise the students' interest(e)The students can use their five human senses(f)The students can learn in a way that they can be in contact with the natural environment. Besides that, she has also listed three disadvantages of using realia in teaching vocabulary (a)Sizes,the teacher could not bring the realia in the class because the size is too large, too long, or too wide. Therefore, it is impossible for the teacher to provide them(b)Portability is the accessibility to bring

objects to the class. Not all of realia can be brought to the class(c)Safety, in choosing the realia teacher should take into account whether it is safe or not. For example dangerous objects like wild animals cannot be brought to the class.

Teaching English vocabulary through realia can be done by having some procedures. Davies et al., quoted in Fauziati (2002), inform in detail about teaching procedures through realia. The sequence of activities consists of; firts, the teacher does substitution drilling in which the teacher uses cue words (words, pictures, numbers, names, etc.) to get individual student to mix the examples of the new patterns. Second, the teacher does individual imitation in which the teacher asks several individual students to repeat the model the teacher has given in order to check their

pronunciation. Third, the teacher ask the students to do choral imitation in which students all together or in large groups repeat what the teacher said. It works best if the teacher gives a clear instruction like "Repeat," or "Everybody" and hand signals to mark time and stress. Four, the teacher ask the students to do llistening practice in which the teacher obtains his/her students' attention and repeats an example of the patterns or word in isolation clearly, several times, probably saying it slowly at least once (It.........is.......a....book), separating the words. The last is the teacher does a ccorrection, in which the teacher indicates by shaking his/her head, repeating the error, etc., That there is a mistake and invites the student or a different student to correct it. Where possible the teacher does not simply correct the mistake himself/herself. The teacher gets students to correct themselves so they will be encouraged to listen to each other carefully.

The practice or repetition was very important for students in learning vocabulary. It made familiar with the words. Therefore, these five activities must be implemented orderly to achieve the goal in the teaching learning process.

METHOD

This research aimed to improve students' vocabulary. The form of this research is classroom action research. It emphasized on solving certain problem in the classroom, improving teaching and learning activity. Burns (2010) stated that action research was a form of study in which teacher applies the procedure in the classroom to solve the problem or improve teaching and learning process. In conducting this research, the researcher's acted as the teacher while the English teacher's acted as the observer of the teaching learning process. In this study the researcher used four steps based on Kemmis and Mc Taggart (as cited in Burns, 2010), i.e., planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

Planning

The first stage was planning. In this stage, the researcher and the English teacher planned a teaching learning strategy to solve the

problem in the class. The researcher provided lesson plan, teaching material, technique and instrument to collect the data including observation checklist, table of scoring and field note. The planning also aimed to improve the students' achievemnt in learning. The researcher chose the material based on the syllabus of the school in point *3.1. Memahami fungsi sosial, struktur teks, dan unsur kebahasaan dari teks deskriptif dengan menyatakan dan menanyakan tentang deskripsi orang, binatang, dan benda, sangat pendek dan sederhana, sesuai dengan konteks penggunaannya (*understand the social function, the structure of the text, and the unilinguistic of descriptive text by stating and asking about the description of people, animals, object, very short and simple, according to the context of its use.). The topic was about 'Describing Things'. Then the researcher prepared the teaching aids namely geometrically-cut paper and some real objects.

Acting

The second stage was acting. In this stage, the teacher presented the material that had already been prepared to the student. The teacher implemented the realia in the classroom. The teacher taught students by following the activites in the lesson plan. In this research the teacher applied realia to improve students vocabulary. The English teacher acted as a collabolator and as an observer in the classroom. There were three sections of activity in the class. They were pre activity, whilst activity, and post actvity. In pre activity, the teacher greeted the students, asked students to pray, checked the students' attandance, and motivated the students by providing the realia that related to the material. In whilst activity, the teacher gave the material and guided the students by giving the instruction of the media. In post activity, the teacher evaluated the students activities.

Observing

The third stage was observing. In this stage, the collabolator observed the students' activities in teaching and learning process. The collabolator used field note and observation sheet to collect data. In this stage, the

collaboator filled the field note down to record activities that occured in the class, including the obstacles that were found as well as the probable solution to overcome.

Reflecting

The fourth stage was reflecting whereas the teacher and the collabolator discussed the result of the observation. By reflection, the teacher and the collabolator knew how to improve students' activities for the next cycle. The result of reflection stage was used to determine what should be done in the next cycle.

The subject of this research is the seventh grade class F students of SMP N 1 Sungai Raya. The class consists of 32 students. In collecting data, the resarcher used observation and measurement technique. The collabolator observed the classroom situation before and during teacing and learning process. It aimed to know whether the teaching learning process in the classroom was having progressions. Thus, the observation had been done by using field note and observation checklist sheet. The collabolator observed students' activity and the progress of their comprehension on vocabulary. Kawaulich (2005) said that observation enabled the researcher to describe the situation in the class. In this research, the researcher used measurement technique to measure the students' comprehension on vocabulary. Measurement technique was the process where the researcher assigned particular number of test to collect data.

The researchcer used some tools such as observation checklist , field notes, and test to collect data. The tools of collecting data in this research was describe follow: (a) Field note is a note that records important activities and extraordinary behavior in the classroom during the implementation of the technique. Furthermore, Ary et al. (2010) state that fied note provides some data and results of observation incuding people's behavior within the setting, places, objects, and activities. (b) Observation checklist is utilized for observation result in which the resercher use to observe the students' activities. Burns (2010) explained that observation checklist sheet is a structured table in which provides a clear focus of observation and check what happened in the classroom (c) Test , the researcher used test to examined the improvement of students in vocabulary. Cohen et al. (2007) explained that test has some purposes. For example, it aimed to know the students' strengths, weakness and difficulties, to measure achievement and also to measure students' potential.

The researcher used the result from observation checklist sheet and field notes. The researcher analyzed the data by using qualitative explanation. Best and Kahn (2006) states that there are some steps of analyzing qualitative data as follows: (a) Organizing the data (b) Describing the data and (c) Interpretation. In analyzing quantitative data, the researcher calculated students score from the test by using the formula:

Table 3. Rubric of Assessment

Score	Indicator
20	Correct Answer
0	Incorrect Answer

The final score for each student for every test is counting using the following formula:

Students' score =   correct items X 100

After knowing the students individual score, the researcher calculated the students mean score. The formulation of mean score as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{n}$$

Where:
M = Mean score
$\sum x$ = the sum of students' score
n   = total number of the students'

Table 4. The Criteria of the Score

Score	Classification
80 – 100	Good to Excellent
70 – 79	Average to Good
60 – 69	Average
50 – 59	Poor to Average
0 – 49	Poor

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISSCUSIONS

Findings

The researcher applied classroom action research in order to solve the students' problems and to improve students' vocabulary of seventh grade students' in class F of SMP Negeri 1 Sungai Raya. This research was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consisted of one meeting. In the first cycle, the teacher taught about 'Describing things in my classroom', and for the second cycle the topic was 'Describing things my bedroom'.

The researcher explained the teaching learning process by using realia and showed some of the findings on following explanation:

Improving Students' Understanding on Meaning of Words Using Realia

There are several steps as follows; 1) the teacher made a list of words related to the topic on whiteboard. 2) The teacher showed the things of the words. 3) The teacher used toys to show realia that were possible to bring in the class. The students understood the meaning of English words by showing the real things.

Improving Students' Spelling of Words Using Realia

In teaching spelling of words to the students there were several steps as follows; 1) the teacher made a list of words related to the topic on whiteboard. 2)The teacher showed the things and read the English words one by one to introduce name of things to the students. 3) The teacher erased list of words from the whiteboard. 4) The teacher read the English words again and asked the students to write the words out from the teacher on their books.

Improving Students' Pronunciation of Words Using Realia

In teaching pronunciation of words to the students there were several steps as follows; 1) the teacher gave the students list of English words related to the topic. 2) The teacher read the words to teach them the correct pronunciation of besides, the teacher also showed them the realia or toys. 3) The students repeated after the teacher. 4) The teacher asked the students to come in front of the class to pronounce the words individually.

By analyzing the results of the observation sheets and score of the tests, the researcher concludes that using realia was appropriate in teaching English to the junior high school students. The score of the test also showed that the students' vocabulary mastery was improved. The improvement was indicated from the increasing of the students' mean score in spelling of words and pronuncing it. The students' mean score in understanding on meaning of words, spelling and pronuncing them in first cycle were 98.67, 68 and 70. Then, the mean score of spelling and pronunciation in the second cycle were 80.72, and 81.42. The display of realia could help the students to know the name of the things because they had direct experience with the things which were being learned.

Discussions

In this section presents discussion of the research findings during the research. The result of this research showed that the use of realia in teaching and learning process especially in teaching vocabulary could improve the students' vocabulary mastery. The improvements could be seen from the observation and field notes.

Although there were improvements on the students learning achievement some weaknesses raised in conducting the action. In the first cycle, the teacher couldnot control the students well. Therefore, the situation in the class was noisy especially when they did an assignment in groups. In doing the task in groups, some students did not cooperate well

with their group members. They only looked at their friends working. The teacher did not give enough attention to the students. The teacher did not give enough chance for all of students to participate in every activity, because the time was limited. There were limitations of using realia in teaching and learning activity, because there were some words cannot be show through realia. The teacher can use some toys to replace the realia and some pictures can be used if the toys were not available. The teaching and learning process in the second cycle run better than the first cycle. In cycle 2, the researcher could have the better classroom management. The teacher could reduce the students' noisiness and be more manageable. The students were not busy with themselves. They could put their concentration more on the lesson. Although, there was still a little bit noisy from back, generally the listened to the teachers' explanation enthusiastically. Some of the students who were previously shy showed up their action confidently and actively. They said that it was fun.

Compared with the cycle 1, there were several progressions in cycle 2. The students actively took a part on the lesson. It seemed that they did not feel bored anymore with the teaching learning. They could express freely in line with the topic in doing the action. The classroom atmosphere was also much better. To support the data, in the end of cycle 2, the teacher conducted tests for spelling and pronouncing the English words. The mean score of the spelling English words was 80.72 and the mean score of pronouncing the English words was 81.42. There was an improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery after cycle.

Considering the research findings explained above, the researcher concludes that the use of realia gave many advantages. They are: 1) using realia in teaching and learning improves the students' vocabulary mastery especially in helping them in understanding meaning of English words. 2) Using realia helps the students in spelling and pronuncing the English words. 3) Using realia combined with fun learning activity can motivate the students in teaching and learning.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
Conclusions

Based on the research findings, it was found that the students' vocabulary especially in understanding on meaning of words, spelling and pronunciation at the seventh grades students in class F of SMP Negeri 1 Sungai Raya improved from cycle 1 to cycle 2. Furthermore, the implementation of realia gave positive impacts to the students' attitude in teaching and learning process. The students were interested in the lesson and motivated to learn. They became more active to get involved in teaching and learning process.

The Implementation of Realia Improve Students' Vocabulary Mastery

Having conducted the research of teaching English vocabulary at the Junior High School level, it can be shown that the implementation of realia can improve the students' vocabulary mastery. There were several improvements reached by the students, not only on their academic score, but also on their behavior to the lesson. Dealing with the score that the students got, there was a significant improvement. The use of realia improves the seventh grade of students' achievement in learning English especially in learning vocabulary. It can be seen from the comparison between the mean score of the tests in cycle 1 and cycle 2.

The Advantages of Using Realia To Teaching Learning Vocabulary Mastery

Related to the students' attitude or behavior to the lesson, there were some positive progressions that supported them in mastering the vocabulary taught. Using new media called realia media could create more comfortable atmosphere inside the class. During the teaching and learning process, the students were more active, enthusiastic and interested to take a part in the lesson. They were not shy anymore and they were highly motivated to join the instructional process. It also increased their confidence. It can be seen from their bravery in demonstrating some actions or giving some instructions as well in front of the class to reflect certainly English words.

Based on the conclusion on the study, there is a significant improvement in the students' vocabulary mastery after they are taught using realia. It is one of the effective media in teaching English in Junior High School since it can improve the students' vocabulary mastery. Then, the researcher concluded that realia can improve vocabulary mastery of class VII F students of SMP Negeri 1 Sungai Raya in academic year 2017/2018.

Suggestions

Based on the research findings, the researcher suggests as follows: (1) In applying relia in English teaching, English teacher should consider some aspects: the material, the clearness of the instruction, students understanding with the commands, and the time allotment. (2) The teacher should use toys or model not picture to replace realia in teaching and learning activity. (3) Realia is recommended for the English teacher to improve students' vocabulary, especially in teaching noun. (4) The teacher should also think about the lesson sequence consisting of orientation, presentation, guided practice, structure practice, and independent practice in order to make the instructional process run well. (5) The teacher should monitor students' activities during teaching and learning process in the classroom. (6) Further researchers can apply realia to solve students' vocabulary problems. They should apply realia with interesting materials, media and activities.

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