

## Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery through Teaching Real Objects

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### **Abstract**

*This study was aimed to find out the improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery through teaching real object. This study was conducted by using Classroom Action Research. It was done through 1) planning, 2) action, 3) observation, and 4) reflection. The population of the research was the students of Amik Medicom. To get the sample, the researcher took one class, it was MI18B. This research applied quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative method were taken from the students' test. Qualitative data were taken from observation, questionnaires sheet and diary notes. The research found out that there are some improvements of the students' vocabulary mastery taught by applying real objects. It was proved from the students' improvement in cycle 1 until cycle 2. The improvement can be seen that in pre test the means score was 34.66. In the first cycle, meeting 1 the means score was 37,33, in meeting 2 was 47,66 and in meeting 3 was 53,5. In the second cycle, meeting 1 the means score was 68,83, in meeting 2 was 80,33 and in meeting 3 was 91,66. The improvement also can be seen from the percentage of the students' achievement in mastering vocabulary; in pre test, no one of the students got 75 points. In the first cycle, in meeting 1, and there no one student got 75 point, in meeting 3 there was 16.7% (5 students) got 75 points. It means there was an improvement about 16.7%. In the second cycle, in meeting 1 there was 20% (6 students) got 75 points, it means that there was an improvement about 3.3%. In meeting 2 there was 80% (24 students) got 75 points, it means that there was an improvement about 70%. In meeting 3 there was 100% (30 students) got up 75 points, it means that there was an improvement about 30%. It means that all of the students got better result. They could master many new vocabulary items and composed them into good sentences.*

### **Keywords**

improving; vocabulary;  
teaching



## **I. Introduction**

Norrish (1983:2) says that language is not a set of facts to be learned but a medium for expressing thoughts, feelings in communication with other people. It means that as the principal medium of communication, it plays an important and indispensable role in all aspects of human life, such as friendship, agreement, laws, convention, marriages and others.

One learns a language like English to enable him to communicate in that language. He intends to be able to listen, read, speak and write in that language. In order for him to achieve these goals, he must pile up and master a host number of vocabulary, for he cannot communicate his ideas as clearly as he would like to, and he cannot grasp the ideas transmitted to him, or reads newspaper columns or popular magazines or even understands newscast on the radio or television if he does not have the basic vocabulary for particular or general purpose.

Flower and Michael (1989:5) write:

Learning vocabulary is a very important part of learning English, if you make a grammar mistake, it may be wrong, but very often people will understand you anyway. But if you do not know the exact word that you need it is very frustrating for you and the person you are talking to. Good English means having a big vocabulary.

The quotation above clearly states that learning vocabulary is very important and becomes a must for every learner to make his English work well. It shows that English has a special place in the teaching of the foreign language at schools and, recently, in preschools and playgroups in this country.

Being a beginning teacher of English as a foreign language, the researcher has felt a deep concern for the present situation in teaching the language. Many teachers have ignored the importance of understanding how small children actually learn English at an early stage. These kids should be prepared for a future higher education. Without a solid basis for effective learning, they may lack the curiosity, creativity and even motivation to improve their own language skills. A teacher should know how to stimulate her learners' curiosity in language learning which may slowly build up their motivation. And motivating the students to learn is of course the most difficult job for the teacher. The learners' interest may vary from person to person. For that reason, the teacher ought to know and, in the end be familiar with various methods, approaches and techniques of teaching to make the lesson more interesting and inspiring.

The class interaction depends on the situation in which the students are involved and how well the teacher controls the class. The teacher ought to use some gadgets such as, real objects to help students learn more vocabulary for a playgroup right at their earlier stage. The teacher must be able to present the lesson in such a way as to make it more interesting and relevant to the students' needs for learning. Real objects or realia can increase the students' joy and will be interested in learning English. There are three ways of using realia, first for descriptions, and second as props in drama and another type of activity is a creative thinking exercise, finding different uses for an object, e.g. a ruler could be a weapon, musical instrument, a symbol of authority and so on. However, there is another possibility of using realia that is making a connection between objects and language.

Moreover, when students enjoy the class, they will receive the material better. That is why the teachers are demanded to arouse the student's attention by using real objects. In the dialogue, students use four separate strategies to increase their comprehension. The four strategies are summarizing, question generating, clarifying, and predicting, and they are used in that order (Sipayung, 2018). The problem of this study is formulated as: "The improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery through teaching real objects".

## **II. Review of Literature**

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

#### **a. Improvement**

Kants says (2001:45) that the word improvement has three senses, namely:

- The act of improving something
- A change for the better; progress in development
- A condition superior to an earlier condition

It means that improvement is an act to make change for the better in certain condition. In this research, the improvement is meant as a good result which is given by the students in vocabulary mastery by using a media such as real objects.

Teacher is an educator who is responsible for the implementation of education in the classroom, the main task of a teacher is to educate and teach students as well as possible so that the learning objectives can be achieved to the maximum (Samsuddin, 2019).

### **b. Vocabulary**

Christopher (1999:35) states that vocabulary is language components which contain all of information about meaning and using of words in language which are possessed by a speaker, a writer or a listener. Furthermore, John (2000: 16) vocabulary is knowledge involves knowing the meanings of words and therefore the purpose of a vocabulary test into find out whether the learners can match each word with a synonym, a dictionary – tape definition, or an equivalent word in their own language. In learning vocabulary automatically it must to know the meaning of words it self and can use it in sentences.

A person is mentioned to be able to use good and correct language when they can actively use the language in speaking and writing. For students writing skills are extremely important, because at the end of their studies students should be able to write an academic paper and they moreover should have a good competence especially in thesis writing Kurniadi in Hafniati (2020).

From the explanation above, vocabulary is the total number of all words containing toward specific concepts possessed by someone or found in a language and it must to know the meaning of words it self and can use it in sentences.

### **c. Vocabulary Mastery**

As is defined in terms of educational objectives, mastery is the ability each student is expected to achieve in an educational objective. James (1981:7) states : “ Mastering was defined in terms of specific set of major objectives (content and cognitive-behaviors)”, then, Ray (1988:67) writes that vocabulary is the stack of words used by or known to particular person or group of person, a list or collection of the words or phrases of the language technical field.

Based on the description above, it can be explained that mastering vocabulary refers to the students’ ability to recognize and understand the total amount of words (vocabulary) that is presented in the vocabulary test.

### **d. The Principle of Teaching and Learning Vocabulary**

The teacher has the job to manage learning so that learners can do things with the target vocabulary that is learned. Wallace in Dongoran (1996:80) writes that there are nine principles in teaching and learning vocabulary. They are:

- ***Aims***  
The teacher has to be clear about his or her aims, how many things are listed and has the teacher expected the learners to be able to do. Unless the teacher is clear at this point, it will be difficult to assess how successful the vocabulary learning has been. Briefly, it should be clear what the teacher teaches and what the students learn.
- ***Quantity***  
After the teacher has decided the aims in learning vocabulary, he/she has to consider the quantity of the vocabulary to be learned: how many new words the learners can learn. The teacher selects the words that suit the level of the learners’ proficiency.
- ***Need***  
Teacher creates a certain situation. He or she has to communicate and get the words he needs. The teacher is an informant. The vocabulary is then presented in response to the learners’ own need and interest and then she or he perhaps is more active to

remember it after asking the informants. The students will be satisfied with what he or she needs as the target word.

- ***Frequent Exposures and Repetition***  
It is seldom, however, that we remember a new word simply by hearing it once. There has to be a certain amount of repetition until there is evidence that the students have earned the target words. A vocabulary must be used as often as possible.
- ***Situational Presentation***  
Using words must be related to the situation at hand. It is in line with how well the user knows to whom, where, how, he or she is speaking. It seems sensible that learners should learn words in the situation in which and to whom they are appropriately used.
- ***Meaningful Presentation***  
The learner must have a clear and specific understanding of what it denotes or refers to, i.e. its meaning. This requires that the word to be presented in such a way that its denotation or reference is perfectly clear and unambiguous, which is not always an easy task.
- ***Presentation in Context***  
Words very seldom occur in isolation. The meaning of a word can be influenced by the other factors in the context. It is important to the learner to know the usual collocations where a word occurs, the circumstances in which the event happens can influence the meaning of a word
- ***Learning Vocabulary in the mother tongue and in the target language***  
It is a very different way to learn vocabulary in the mother tongue in comparison to learning that in the target language. The teacher must provide both types of teaching.
- ***Inference Procedures in Vocabulary Learning***  
It is impossible for a student to master the words of a certain language. He needs the various meanings of words specifically taught. They may look up in a dictionary without understanding all the meanings. By making an inference from the context or guessing their meanings from the contexts, he can understand the words.

Based on the explanation above, it can be inferred that the principle of teaching and learning vocabulary is needed to make the materials more enjoyable, interesting, and challenging to the students.

### III. Research Method

#### 3.1 Location

The location of the research was AMIK Medicom Medan. It is at Jalan Darat Number 77 Medan. This research location was chosen because the same research had never been conducted there and also the facilities at the school support to take the research.

The research schedule can be seen as in the following:

**Table 1.** Research Schedule

No	Activities	Month / Week																												
		Decemb er				January				May				June				July					August				Sept			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1	Asking the title of thesis			X																										

	proposal																													
2	Writing thesis proposal					X																								
3	Seminar Proposal						X																							
4	Repairing the thesis proposal								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X													
5	Research field													X	X	X	X	X												
6	Analyzing the data																					X	X							
7	Writing thesis																						X							
8	Discussing thesis																						X	X						
9	Approval of thesis																													
10	Examination																													

### 3.2 Population and Sample

The population of this research was the eight grade students of SMP Swasta Rahmat Islamiyah Medan of 2019-2020 Academic Years. There were five classes, they are MI18A, MI18B, MI18C, MI18D and MI18E. Each class consisted of 35, 30, and 32, 30, and 30 students respectively. It can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2. Population**

No	Class	Total number
1	MI18A	35
2	MI18B	30
3	MI18C	32
4	MI18D	30
5	MI18E	30
	Total	157

The sample in this research was taken 1 class. It was MI18B. This class was chosen because they can be cooperative in this research and it can be represented all the students of the second Grade of AMIK Medicom Medan.

### 3.3 Research Design

This research was based on Classroom Action Research. According to Ferrance (2000), action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully, using the techniques of research which is used for various purposes: school based curriculum development, professional development, systems planning, school restructuring, and as an evaluative tool.

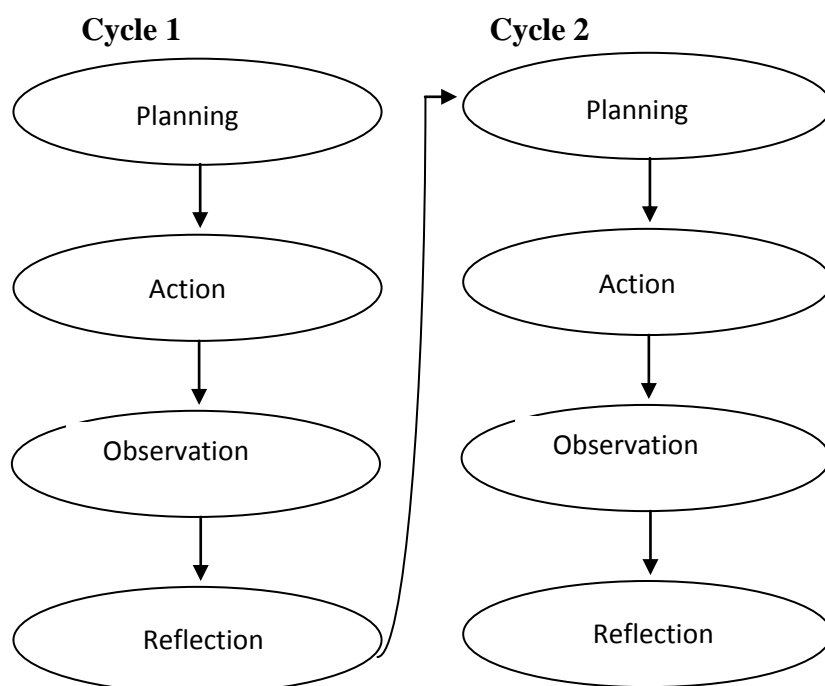
Action research can improve the teaching and learning process by reinforcing, modifying, or changing perceptions based on informal data and nonsystematic observations. Reasons for performing action research fall into three categories: to promote personal and

professional growth, to improve practice to enhance student learning, and to advance the teaching profession according to Johnson (1995) quoted by Ferrance (2000).

There are four phases each of cycle, namely: 1) planning, 2) action, 3) observation, and 4) reflection. Actually, if the result fails, it continued to next cycle by renewing the previous steps to solve the problem. The new cycle improved of teaching decision. If the new planning increased students' vocabulary mastery, the cycle will stop. If it does not increase students' skill, cycle will continue on and on the next cycle until result determined in research.

### 3.4 The Techniques of Data Collection

The technique of data collection in this research was conducted by administrating for two cycles. These included four steps namely: planning, action, observation, and reflection.



(Riel, M. (2007). *Understanding action research*: Pepperdine University, Center for Collaborative Action Research.

There were two cycles that was conducted by the researcher; each cycle was carrying out in three meetings.

### 3.5 The Techniques of Data Analysis

This research applied quantitative data. It means that quantitative data were taken from the students' vocabulary test. Score were used to analyze the improvement of the students in mastering vocabulary in each cycle. The teacher tests students by some aspects as explained before about testing of vocabulary.

To find out the class mean score in each cycle, the formula was applied as follows:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\Sigma x}{N}$$

Where :

$\bar{x}$  = Class mean score

$\Sigma x$  = Total score

N = The total number of student

To categorize the number of master student, the formula was applied as follows:

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%$$

Where: P = Percentage of student getting score 75

R = Number of student getting score 75

T = The total number of student taking the test

## IV. Result

### 4.1 Data Analysis

The research was done in one class with two cycles and six meetings. In every meeting, the teacher taught vocabulary mastery by teaching real objects. In this time, she taught them through action research such as planning, action, observation, and reflection. All these activities were done to know the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery through teaching real objects.

### 4.2. The Quantitative Data

The quantitative data showed the real score of the students' test when they did the vocabulary mastery test based on the topic given. For make it clearly, it can be seen Table 3 as follows:

**Table 3.** Students' score in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

NO	Students' Initial	Pre Test	Cycle 1			Cycle 2		
			1	2	3	1	2	3
1	RY	40	40	50	60	70	80	90
2	AB	40	40	50	60	75	80	90
3	FH	40	50	60	75	80	90	100
4	ED	30	30	40	50	60	80	90
5	RT	40	40	50	60	70	90	100
6	GH	20	30	40	50	60	70	80
7	UI	40	40	50	60	70	80	90
8	DP	50	50	60	75	80	90	100
9	TY	40	40	50	60	80	90	100
10	PH	30	30	40	50	60	70	80
11	KI	40	40	50	60	70	80	90
12	SE	20	30	40	50	60	70	90
13	MT	40	50	60	75	80	90	100
14	YI	40	40	50	60	70	80	90
15	JI	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
16	MB	20	20	30	50	60	80	90
17	DR	30	30	40	50	60	70	80
18	ER	40	40	50	60	70	80	90
19	FU	20	30	40	50	60	70	90
20	OP	40	40	50	60	70	80	90
21	DF	40	40	60	75	80	90	100
22	SR	40	40	50	60	70	80	90
23	WA	30	30	40	50	70	80	90
24	TY	40	40	50	60	70	80	90
25	TU	30	30	40	50	60	80	100



26	BU	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
27	NR	30	40	50	60	70	80	100
28	OI	30	30	40	50	60	70	90
29	DT	40	40	50	75	70	80	90
30	TR	40	40	50	60	70	80	90
Total Number		1040	1120	1430	1605	2065	2500	2750
Means		34.66	37.33	47.66	53.5	68.83	80.33	91.66

From Table 3, it showed that in pre test, the lowest score was 20 and the highest score was 50. The means score was 34.66. It meant that all of the students did not have good ability to master vocabulary. They got bad score because they could not answer the questions because they focused to their dictionary to know the meaning of the objects.

In cycle 1 meeting 1, the lowest score was 20 and the highest score was 50. The means score was 37.33. It explained most of the students got bad score because they could not mention the name of the flowers eventhough they opened dictionary to find the objects.

In cycle 1 meeting 2, the lowest score was 30 and the highest score was still 60. The means score was 47.66. It explained that there was an improvement but it was not give satisfaction because most of the students still got bad score. They still could not mention the name of the fruits eventhough they were taught real objects. They shocked to apply this technique because they were used to be dictionary to find the ideas or opinion to be found the meaning of the objects.

In cycle 1 meeting 3, the lowest score was 50 and the highest score was 75. The means score was 53.5. It explained only few students gave good respond toward this technique. It proved from their score which only 35% students could improved their achievement in vocabulary mastery.

In cycle 2 meeting 1, the lowest score was 60 and the highest score was 80. The means score was 68.83. It explained most of the students felt comfortable toward this technique. Listing some new words in the blackboard gave them motivation and good feeling to predict the name of the objects and made good sentence.

In cycle 2 meeting 2, the lowest score was 70 and the highest score was 90. The means score was 80.33. It explained most of the students got good result, only 5 students still unfocussed their attention toward the topic of vocabulary mastery. But the teacher still gave motivation for them and guided them to improve their achievement.

In cycle 2 meeting 3, the lowest score was 80 and the highest score was 100. The means score was 91.66. It explained all of the students got best result. They could master many new vocabularies and made them into good sentences. Therefore, the result of the research showed that all of the students got score up 75%.

## **V Conclusion**

After analyzing the data, it can be concluded that there is some improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery taught by applying real objects. It proved from score of the students got up 75%.

The result of this research in teaching learning process showed improvement toward students' vocabulary mastery by using real objects. Therefore the following suggestions are offered to English teachers, it is better to apply real objects to improve the students' vocabulary. These activities made the teaching learning process were active.



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