

IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY THROUGH RIDDLE GAME

ABSTRACT

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Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian tindakan ini adalah untuk menemukan bagaimana penggunaan tebak–tebakan bisa meningkatkan penguasaan kosa kata dan aktifitas belajar siswa. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di SMPN 2 Abung Selatan di kelas VIIIE tahun ajaran 2012/2013. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan dalam tiga siklus; terdiri dari perencanaan, tindakan, pengamatan, dan pengayaan. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah ada tiga tahapan yang harus diterapkan dalam penggunaan tebak–tebakan untuk meningkatkan penguasaan kosa kata siswa, yaitu mengenalkan, mengetahui, dan mempraktekkan. Dengan menerapkan tiga tahapan itu, tidak hanya kemampuan penguasaan kosa kata siswa yang meningkat, tetapi juga aktifitas siswa selama kegiatan belajar mengajar. Berdasarkan hasil tersebut menunjukkan bahwa tiga tahapan yang digunakan dalam permainan tebak – tebakan bisa digunakan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan kosa kata siswa dan juga aktifitas siswa selama kegiatan belajar mengajar.

The objectives of this action research are to find out 1) how can the use of riddle improve students' vocabulary mastery 2) how can the use of riddle improve students activity. This research is conducted at SMPN 2 Abung Selatan in the class VIIIE in the academic year 2012/2013. This research was conducted in three cycles; each cycles consist of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The results are there are three steps which should be implemented in using riddle to improve students' vocabulary mastery, they are: introducing, knowing and practicing. The tree steps improve not only students' vocabulary mastery but also students' activity. Therefore it can be concluded that riddle game can be used to improve the students' vocabulary mastery and students' activity

Keywords: introducing, knowing, practicing, riddle, vocabulary mastery

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is one of the most important aspect of learning foreign language. Vocabulary can not be separated from the language because vocabulary is a part of language. Vocabulary is important for learning language because several reasons. First, the ability to understand the target language greatly depends on one's knowledge of vocabulary. second, vocabulary acquisition is an important aspect to master all language skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Edge, 1993).

Vocabulary is the first step to be taught before teaching other aspects of language. Vocabulary mastery is essential part of English as a foreign language. There is no doubt that vocabulary mastery plays an important role in four language skills. It gives contribution to the learners to perform or practice their skills better. Because of that reason, by mastering the vocabulary, they will be able to produce so many sentences easily either in spoken or written and to receive words in reading and listening.

From the researchers' preliminary study at the second semester of second year students in SMPN 2 Abung Selaatan, it was found that most of students are lack of vocabulary and also have low motivation in learning language. They became passive during the teaching learning process, because they could not understand the meaning of the words they can not get the information from the lesson. They also had low motivation in learning English.

Unfortunately, based on the researcher's experience when she was teaching English course at Junior high school, she found that 9 out of 10 students are lack of vocabulary. They got difficulties in learning English. They also became passive in doing the activity in the class. It's hard for them to express their ideas. They often used the wrong words when expressing their opinion. That problem also affected to students motivation in learning language.

Another possible problem was that the way of teaching and learning vocabulary used by the teacher is monotonous. It made the students bored while learning language. Because of that reason, the English teacher should create the technique or using an interesting media in teaching in order to make the students more interesting in learning English.

To make the students enjoy studying English especially vocabulary, the English teachers should create an interesting condition in the class. So choosing appropriate technique and media in teaching vocabulary is important in order to improve their vocabulary.

Considering the statement above, the researcher was interested to use an enjoyable media and technique that can motivate the students in learning vocabulary. Riddle is chosen to be used as a media and also technique in this research.

Riddle is excellent tools because it requires students to practice variety of language skills in order to find a solution. And also, it requires higher level of critical thinking which often needed in language learning. One interesting feature of riddle is that they appeal to all age groups, from the wise and experienced to the young.

Wright (1984) said that riddle game provides an entertaining way for students to identify vocabulary words, use the definition of a vocabulary word to create a riddle, for example, a riddle for the word "umbrella" might go, *"When the drops start to fall, you protect me to keep dry"*. Vocabulary riddle work as an oral activity for the class or as a written assignment in the form of a worksheet. Based on that statement, riddle can be used as an oral activity or as written assignment for the students.

By conducting this research, it is hoped to produce a model that is effective and can be used by the teacher in using riddle game in teaching vocabulary in order to help students improve their vocabulary mastery and their participation during teaching learning process.

To reach the result, the researcher uses action research in her research. It was chosen because by using action research the researcher considered to improve the process of learning, could find the solution of every problem in every cycle, and it could be fixed in the next cycle. Action research provides the best way to identify the steps of using riddle in teaching vocabulary. Finally the procedures of

teaching vocabulary through riddle can be developed for the improvement of learning process based on the empirical data collected in this research.

In relation to that reason, the researcher conducted an action research at the second grade students of SMPN 2 Abung Selatan by using riddle to answer the following questions:

- (1) How can the use of riddle improve students' vocabulary mastery?
- (2) How can the use of riddle improve students activity during teaching learning process?

METHOD

The method used in this research was an action research. The subject of this action research was the second year students of SMPN 2 Abung Selatan (VIII E) consisted of 35 students. In this research, the researcher implemented three cycles where each cycles consist of planning, action, observation, and reflection (Carr & Kemmis, 1986).

The three cycles can also be drawn as : (Pre – Experiment) Developing Model → Testing Model → Collecting and Analyzing Data → Reflecting and Revising Model → (Cycle 1) Planning the Revised Model → Testing Model → Collecting and Analyzing Data → Reflecting and Revising Model → (Cycle 2),

(Setiyadi, 2013:61). This methodology is considered appropriate since through

this methodology, the researcher can identify problems in real context, namely classroom, and finding the reflection is used to revise the model.

This research was conducted in SMP N 2 Abung Selatan. The subject of this research was the students of second grade of SMP N 2 Abung Selatan. The researcher acted as the real teacher, while the real teacher acted as the observer. The problem of this class was the students were not active in teaching learning process, and also they had lowest average score than the other class.

For data collecting technique, the researcher use observation, vocabulary test, and questionner. The indicators were based on learning product that was the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery and learning process that was the improvement of the students' activities during teaching learning process. The vocabulary test consisted of 30 item of multiple choices. There were thee aspects that were tested in the vocabulary test: Form, Meaning, and Use (Nation, 2001) and for observation sheet, it was divided into pre – activity, while – activity, and post – activity.

The questionner used to know about the students impression after being taught by using riddle and also to knoe whether this media is good or not for the students.

RESULT OF THE RESEARCH

This research was conducted in six meetings. The first and second meetings were cycle 1 (pre experiment). This was used to test the model which has been developed. The third and fourth meetings were cycle 2, while the fifth and the sixth were cycle 3. The cycle 2 was used to test the model which has been revised by the researcher from the reflection of cycle 1, while cycle 3 was used to test the model which has been revised from the reflection in cycle 2.

In cycle 1 the researcher use two steps in using riddle, they are : *introducing* and *knowing*. *Introducing* step was in the pre activity and *knowing* in the while activity.

The result from cycle 1 shows the learning product, the mean of vocabulary score is 67,8. From 3 aspects of vocabulary, use is the lowest score (40), followed by form (70) and meaning(80).

In learning process, based on the result of students' observation sheet, it shows that in cycle 1 there are some students who have no bravery to express their ideas during teaching learning process. And also, since they just did the riddle which given by the teacher, they were not really active in teaching learning. They only did the riddle without practice to make their own riddle. The researcher assumes that if the students practice to make their own riddle, it can be useful to help

them in remembering and understanding the target words which have been given and also to improve their score in answering questions about use.

In cycle 2, the researcher add one more step that was *practicing*. And also, in the post activity, the conclusion of the lesson was made by the students who was pointed by the teacher. This was to make the shy students become more enjoy in expressing their ideas. One more revising was in the way of students learn. In this cycle, the researcher used group work in order to make the students inteact each other and hopefully the students with higher ability could help the one who has lower ability.

In cycle 2, there is an improvement of students speaking mean score to 70,2 or improved 2,4 points. The improvement also occures in three aspects of vocabulary, 70 for questions about form, 80 for questions about meaning, and 60 for the questions about use, while the improvement is 20.

The result of observation sheet shows that the students interact to each other while in group work. But only some of them, the rest still could not do the discuccion well. This was because they tend to let their other friend to do the task. And also another reason was the students with better ability will dominate the discuccion. While the lower became passive because all task was done by the higher.

There were two problems which were faced in the second cycle. The first was some students could not participate well in group discussion. Some of them prefer

chatting with their friend than doing the group discussion. Only a few of the students who did the group work well. So the researcher decided to not to use group discussion, because this would made the students can not concentrate well. And also the teacher felt difficult in managing the group because the interaction was more complicated. And the second was the decrease of some students score. As the result of observation, the students who got lower score were the students who did not participate well in group discussion.

The three steps is also applied in cycle 3. The difference was in the cycle 3 the students work individually. The last, in cycle 3, again the students vocabulary mean score improves to 75,5 or improved 5,3 points. The improvement of vocabulary aspects are: 80 for form, 80 for meaning, and 70 for use.

In addition, the result of observation sheet shows that the students' participation improves more active because most of them has involves in every stage of learning. All problems have been solved by the activity in cycle 3. The first problem was the students can not do the group work well. It solved by let the students work alone, but still they can interact to each other. They did their own task, so they responsibility was needed to solve the task. The next problem was about students score. The result of students' vocabulary test in cycle 3 showed that there was improving of students score. This was because the teacher guides the students to understand the vocabulary. By guiding the students in concluding the main point from the lesson, the teacher had helped the students in memorizing

the new vocabulary. So, the researcher decided to stop the research just until cycle 3. The shy students also more actived in the cycle 3. By asking them to conclude the lesson, they looked enjoy sharing their ideas in teaching learning process.

To know about the students' impression after being taught by using riddle, the researcher gave questioner to the students. There are 10 open questions in the questioner. From the result of the questioner, can be concluded that riddle made the students more motivated to learn. And it also makes them easily understand about the vocabulary which was taught.

DISCUSSION

The result of the research showed that the students' score had improved in each cycle.

The result of vocabulary score in cycle 1 showed that the lowest score was the questions about use and the focused point is about grammar. So the researcher decided to add one more step that was practicing. By practicing making their own riddle, undirectly also let the students to practice their knowledge about grammar. The more the students practiced their grammar, the better their knowledge about grammar. As stated by Setiyadi (2006), the fuency building can be emphasized after the students have been provided with enough practice of mastering the English grammar for the purpose of accuracy. It showed that practicing is needed

in learning grammar. In cycle 2 and cycle 3 the researcher used practicing in the while activity.

In the cycle 2, some of the students score decreased, although the average score improved. From the observation, it was found that this was because the students could not do the group discussion well. As cited from a journal from Mifflins (1997), according to Ames (1984), individual structures lead students to focus on task effort as the primary basis for motivation (as in "I can do this if I try"). Whether a student perceives a task as difficult depends on how successful she has been with that type of task in the past. That statement showed that the individual work might be better than group work. From individual work, the students could be motivated to try to do the best as she/he could. According to that statement, it can be concluded that individual work could rise the students' individual responsibility to their own task. They had their own motivation to do the best as she or he can do in the task. That's why the researcher assumed that for this situation, individual work is better than group work. Because of that reason, the researcher preferred to individual work than group work. The progress could be seen from the students score in cycle 3. If the score of cycle 2 and cycle 3 were compared, the score in cycle 3 was higher, and showed good improvement than in cycle 2. That's why the researcher rejected group work as the activity.

The students showed a good improvement in their activity in the classroom. From pre observation till cycle 3, the students were always active in following teachers'

instruction. The problem which occurred were as mentioned in the table 4.11 and the way to solve the problem. Only some of them who did not active because still shy. This statement was supported by the result of questionnaire which had been given to the students. There were 10 open questions in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was given to know students impression about using riddle in teaching learning process. And the result was the all of the students enjoy their learning by using riddle as the media. They felt fun in learning English vocabulary. And this could motivate students to learn. This fact is in line with the statement from Wright (1984) as stated in chapter II. He said that riddle game provides an entertaining way for students to identify vocabulary words, use the definition of a vocabulary word to create a riddle.

Riddle is fun. When the students feel fun in learning, they will have strong motivation to learn. This also supported by Uberman (1998) who said that games offer students a fun-filled and relaxing learning atmosphere. After learning and practicing new vocabulary, students had the opportunity to use language in a non-stressful way. This can be seen from the result of the shy students' activity in classroom. By using riddle game, slow but sure the shy students became more active and brave to express their idea.

As the finding of this research, the researcher have made a model in order to use riddle in improving students' vocabulary mastery:

Step	The activities	
	Students	Teacher
<i>Introducing</i>	The students are introduced about riddle. Propose examples of riddle in their mother language according to their understanding about riddle, then continue propose examples of riddle in English.	Introduces the students about the riddle. Gives examples of riddles in their mother language, then after the students understand, continue to the examples in English.
<i>Knowing</i>	Analyze the riddles which have been given by the teacher, answering the riddle, knowing the new vocabulary and its meaning.	Help the students in analyzing the riddles and also the vocabulary which is unfamiliar for the students.
<i>Practicing</i>	Practice to make their own riddle by using the target words which have been analyze in the previous step.	Facilitates the students if they have any questions in doing their practicing step.

This is the final model which has been used by the researcher in her research. By implementing this model, not only can improve students' vocabulary mastery but also can improve students activity during teaching learning process. In the teaching learning process, the students should more active than the teacher. The

teachers' duty was as helper who helps them if they have any difficulties in following the teaching learning process.

CONCLUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Considering all the data gathered after finishing the research, which had been held in the second year of SMP N 2 Abung Selatan, some conclusion can be drawn as follows:

1. The way to improve students' vocabulary mastery by using riddle is by implementing the *introducing, knowing, and practicing* step.
2. By implementing those three steps, the students' activity during teaching learning process can also improve.

Based on the finding, the researcher will state the suggestions as follows:

1. Having the research about using riddle in improving students' vocabulary mastery, the researcher suggests the English teachers to apply the media in the classroom for teaching.
2. The teacher should pay more attention to the shy students who were not actively involved in sharing their ideas in the class in order to make them more active. Give them instruction to increase their confidence to be actively involved in learning.

3. When doing the group discussion, the teacher should pay attention to the students who have higher ability. The teacher should control them in order not too dominate the discussion therefore the discussion will be running well.

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