

Using Local Short Stories to Improve Students' Vocabulary

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Abstract

The objective of the research was to find out whether or not the use of local short stories could improve students' vocabulary. This research involved 25 students in grade IX.B of UPTD SMPN 6 Barru. This sample was taken using the purposive sampling technique because the observation showed that students lack vocabulary achievement and have low motivation to learn English. This pre-experimental study employed a one-group pretest-posttest design; the treatment of this research consisted of four meetings in the class. The data were collected through vocabulary tests before and after giving local short stories as treatment in four meetings. The pretest and posttest results were analyzed using SPSS version 25. It showed a significant improvement after local short stories were applied in the treatment, proving that the students' experimental post-test mean score of 79.92 was higher than their pretest mean score of 41.84. This indicates that local short stories can improve students' vocabulary achievement.

Keywords: *Vocabulary, Local Short Stories*

1. Introduction

Language is a means of communication made up of sentences that convey meaning. At school, vocabulary means learning its language. It looks like vocabulary takes an integral part in a language that will make a language meaningful. Moreover, Vocabulary is key to English language teaching because without vocabulary students cannot understand others or reveal their ideas. (Wilkins, 1972) Vocabulary is an essential element in knowing language because to master a language we automatically have to master its vocabulary.

Actually, in the implementation, teaching vocabulary is not easy. Language learners

sometimes get bored when learning vocabulary. It causes the ways teachers teach to be not interesting for the learners (Sakkir, 2021). Teachers' role is not only to teach and ask learners to memorize the vocabulary, but teachers should engage and attract learners to make them able to learn vocabulary. Also, teachers should keep choosing and developing the strategies to teach such as using games, movies, songs and the alternative strategy is using literature likes literary works (Sakkir, 2018). Literary works include novels, poetry, short stories, legends, fairy tales, movies, and songs.

Literature and language are closely related because language is used to create literature. Literature can be the best media for expressing a specific subject in every languages' implementation. Using literary work as an alternative way of teaching and learning vocabulary can help language learners to know many new words and improve their vocabulary.

Moreover, in this research, the researchers use literary work namely local short stories. Local short stories are the traditional stories passed down from generation to generation. The researchers chose local short stories in improving student's vocabulary mastery because local short stories provided psychological advantages compared with the foreign learning sources, as long as the materials are supported with good layout, adequate vocabulary, and grammar, this enables the learners to learn the level and moral values (Alamsyah, 2016). From this explanation, the researchers expect that teaching vocabulary using local short stories is a good method that students should learn the vocabulary and help students build up a reading habit.

For this reason, this study concerns students' vocabulary that is taught by reading local short stories. The difference between this research and the previous research lies in the level of school and story used; the previous research used to level at primary school and senior high school meanwhile in this research, the researchers used local short stories in IX grade students at junior high school.

2. Literature Review

2. 1. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a critical element of the language that should be learned. Learning vocabulary is prime because we can read, speak, write, and listen competently. A person said that to 'know' a word, they can recognize its meaning when they see it Cameron (2001). According to Finochiaro (1974), vocabulary is the contents and function words of a language that are learned so thoroughly that they can be used in the performance of any communication.

According to Hornby (2000), a vocabulary list of words that a person knows or uses. Napa (1991) believes that vocabulary is an important aspect of language. Without words, there would be no language. Words are symbols or signs of ideas; it indicates that words can express what people think. By learning vocabulary, people can communicate whether to convey their thoughts, messages or express their ideas.

Vocabulary consists of several types, including active vocabulary, passive vocabulary, function words and content words. The researchers focused on content words, especially nouns, verbs, and adjectives. So, the kind of vocabulary should be related to the material of school. In teaching vocabulary teachers have to use some aspects of vocabulary. Mardianawati (2012) stated that to teach student's vocabulary teachers to use some aspects of vocabulary that can be by the learners are as follows:

a. Meaning

When conveying the meaning to the students, teachers should teach them that a word may have more than one meaning when used in a different context.

b. Spelling

Spelling is very important in learning vocabulary. Because spelling is needed in reading. Spelling is as the connector sound a letter. Therefore, a teacher has to keep students' pronunciation and spelling of English correctly.

c. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the way to say words or letters. Pronunciation is difficult to learn because there is no connection between word spelling and pronunciation. Some words have only one pronunciation and sometimes a word has two pronunciations or more than two pronunciations.

d. Word Classes

Word classes are categories of a word such as nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and prepositions. Word classes are important features in semantic analysis to determine a pattern of regional or social usage as well as meaning.

e. Word Use

Word use refers to how a word is used in language. Word use may also involve grammar and thus be the subject of profound analysis.

The researchers concludes that the word aspect in teaching vocabulary is important. The researchers focus on meaning, spelling,

pronunciation, and word use as a basic aspect to teach student vocabulary. This aspect matches with students' ability to learn vocabulary.

2. 2. Short Story

A short story is a work of fiction usually written in prose and narrative format. According to Bulman (2007), a short story is traditionally defined as a prose narrative of at least 2000 words, implying that anything less is some sort of short. It means that a short story is a short prose narrative that usually can be read in a short time. In other words, the reader does not need much time to comprehend what the short story tells about. According to (Ryandi, 2010) there are various short stories. Some types are ancient tales, fantasy humor, satire, education story, h, and local stories. (Nurmy, 2010, p. 6).

In this research, the researchers focused on a local story. The local story is a type of story that deals with the customs and traditions of rural and small-town life. Local short stories were taught in the ninth grade of junior high because the researchers used short stories based on the narrative text at junior high school and the types of text that students learn at the junior school level, especially ninth grade based on the 2013 curriculum.

According to Dersi (2013), Reading stories helps cognitive development learners as extensive reading increases vocabulary levels. Sanda (2009) stated that short stories can improve the students' English proficiency. This shows that reading a short story is important for mastering language

skills, especially vocabulary. The researchers hopes that local short stories become short stories that increase students' vocabulary and encourage students' interest in reading and learning their own culture.

2. 3. Teaching Vocabulary of Local Short Stories

Local short stories are a short story that includes traditional stories, beliefs, and customs of a group of people. Local short stories can include moral values, and teachers can use the story's moral message to advise students. Using local short stories will improve their vocabulary and build up their reading habits.

Alamsyah (2016) stated that local short stories could compare local values and foreign values so that the students can be more aware of the differences leading to cultural diversity awareness. It means local short stories can be implemented in teaching language, as long as the teacher can select a suitable context. Besides that, local short stories enrich students' knowledge of their own culture.

Rodliyah, Imperiani, & Amalia, (2014) claims that students learners prefer target culture reading materials because they are more interesting and convenient to read and their relative understanding of the sentence structure and vocabulary. A local culture storybook could help the students easily understand the vocabulary and content of the story. Ratminingsih, Budasi & Kurnia (2020). Ismail (2019) states that reading local folktales stories is a potential activity to improve the students' vocabulary.

Based on the reason, it is clear that local short stories can be material for teaching language. By reading local short stories, the student's will improve their vocabulary and learners will be easy to comprehend the narrative text

3. Research Methodology

In this study, the researchers used a pre-experimental design with one group pretest-posttest design. Pretest and posttest used to compare vocabulary student' after treatment applying.

According to Arikunto (2006) Population is formulated as a whole group of clearly formulated individuals or objects. In this research, the population is the third-grade students of UPTD SMPN 6 Barru in the academic year 2021/2022. The total population is three classes and consists of 86 students.

The samples of this research were 25 students. In this case, the researchers used purposive sampling to apply the experimental design; the model must not be too "good" and too "bad" in their English achievement.

The researchers used a vocabulary test. The test consists of 30 items. It includes ten items of matching test, five items of a complete sentence which measure to the word meaning, five items of vocabulary building (make a simple sentence) which measure to the word use and ten items oral test to measure pronunciation and spelling words.

The test was given to students twice; they were pre-test and post-test to measure

students' vocabulary achievement. Before doing the treatment, the researchers used a pre-test before giving the students the first meeting. The test consists of 30 questions to determine students' prior knowledge. The procedure:

- The researchers told the students that they would discuss a narrative text.
- The researchers distributed the short story that relevant to the material based on the curriculum of SMP, the third-year students.
- The researchers gave some vocabulary to students on how to spell, pronounce and make a simple sentence.
- The researchers gave the direction of the test to the students.
- The researchers collected the worksheet of the students after the test.
- After the researchers applied the pretest, the treatment began in the second and third meetings. The treatment of the research also follows the procedure.
- The researchers told the students to discuss a narrative text (local short stories).
- The researchers explained what the local short story is.
- The researchers asked the students to read local short stories carefully.
- The researchers discussed with students what is the story about.
- The researchers asked about the meaning of 15 words after they read the local short story.

- The researchers gave an example of how to spell and pronounce the word correctly and say it clearly.
- The researchers gave the example of how to make a simple sentence.
- The researchers told students to make five simple sentences and write ten new words with meaning they found at the end of the meeting.
- After giving the pre-test and treatment, the students must do the post-test in the fourth meeting. The test consists of 30 questions based on the local short stories students read before.
- The data analysis technique used by the researchers in processing data was descriptive quantitative data to analyze the data obtained from the pre-test and post-test results.

The pre-test and post-test scores were obtained using rank from 0-100 by counting the correct answer and classifying students' achievement by Kemendikbud (2017). Furthermore, the researchers used paired-sample T-tests using SPSS to know the hypothesis data.

4. Findings and Discussions

4. 1. Findings

4. 1. 1. Mean score and standard deviation of pre-test and post-test

Table 1 Mean score and standard deviation of pre-test and post-test

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	PRE-TEST	41.8400	25	11.34563	2.26913
	POST-TEST	79.9200	25	8.76033	1.75207

The table above shows that 41.84 is the mean value of the pre-test score with a standard deviation of 11.34, besides 79.92 is the average value of the post-test with a standard deviation of 8.76. This shows that the post-test value is higher than the pre-test, and the post-test standard deviation is lower than the

pre-test standard deviation. It means that after receiving treatment based on local short stories, the student's vocabulary can improve.

4. 1. 2. The Frequency and Percentage of Pre-Test and Post-Test

Table 2 The Frequency and Percentage of Pre-Test and Post-Test

No	Classification	Range	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
			Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	Very Good	93 -100	0	0	2	8
2	Good	84 - 92	0	0	7	28
3	Average	75-83	0	0	8	32
4	Poor	< 75	25	100	8	32
Total			25	100	25	100

Table above shows that none of the students got very good and good scores in the pre-test. There were 25 students (100%) who only got poor scores, but after giving the treatment, the table shows in the post-test, eight students (32%) got poor and average scores, seven students (28%) got good scores, and two

students (8%) got very good scores. It can be concluded that the score in the post-test was higher than the score in the pre-test.

4. 1. 3. Mean Score of the Vocabulary Aspect

Table 3 Mean Score of the Vocabulary Aspect

Vocabulary Aspects	Max. Score	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
		Mean score	Mean score	
Meaning	35	16.40	30.50	14.1

Word Use	25	11.16	21.63	10.47
Spelling				
/Pronunciation	40	14.28	27.79	13.51

There are four aspects of vocabulary the researchers assessed in the students' vocabulary tests. The table above showed an increase in all the mean scores of all aspects. The most significant improvement of the aspects is on the students' meaning, spelling and pronunciation; the lowest improvement is

on the word use aspect just by 10.47. It can be concluded that using local short stories could improve students' vocabulary, especially in terms of meaning, spelling, and pronunciation.

4. 1. 4. Paired Sample T-Test

Table 4 Paired Sample T-Test

		Paired Samples Test							
		Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	PRE-TEST - POST-TEST	-38.08000	10.37192	2.07438	-42.36132	-33.79868	18.357	24	.000

The table above shows the results of the computation of the T-test of the students' pretest and post-test scores. We can see that the significance value of this study is 0.00 with the significance level used is 0.05 ($0.00 < 0.05$), then the value of the t-table was 2.064. The T-test value is higher than the t-table value ($18.35 > 2.064$). So, this indicates that the Null Hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted where the use of local short stories improves the vocabulary achievement of the third-year students of UPTD SMPN 6 Barru.

4. 2. Discussions

This part deals with the interpretation of the findings. The major purpose of this study was to find out whether or not using local short stories could improve the students' vocabulary of the ninth-year students at UPTD SMP Negeri 6 Barru. The data collected through vocabulary tests showed that the use of local short stories could improve students' vocabulary. There are possible explanations for the result found in this research.

Firstly, before the teaching and learning process, the researchers gave a pretest in the first meeting to measure students' previous vocabulary knowledge. The result of the pretest showed that the students had a lack of

vocabulary. Based on the criteria minimum mastery (KKM) of English lessons for the third-grade students of UPTD SMP Negeri 6 Barru, the students must get the minimum score of 75. In fact, the result of the pretest showed that none of the students could not achieve the score. By looking at the students' pre-test, 25 students only got a poor score. There is no students' got average, good and very good score.

This indicates that the students could not understand the meaning of words, so it's difficult for them to answer the question. Also, the students could not make sentences correctly. They could not use the appropriate tenses based on the direction in the test given and could not spell and pronounce the word correctly. So, the problem which appeared after the pre-test, the researchers did treatments to achieve the objectives of this research. The treatments used local short stories to improve the students' vocabulary. It was supported by Ismail (2019) stated that reading local folktales stories is a potential activity to improve the students' vocabulary.

Besides, during the process of treatments, the researchers not only used one title of the local short story and used three titles of local short stories and every local short story; the

students learned many new words. Also, in the treatments process, the researchers taught the students the kind of vocabulary which consisted of nouns, verbs and adjectives.

The students found it was easy to grasp the meaning of the words and the spelling. It means that the students understand well about the words so in the treatment process, when some words are taught, they can easily remember and understand them. The researchers can conclude that in the pre-test, some of the words in the pre-test were difficult to understand and were pronounced the words. But, after giving treatments, some of the words are easy for the students and understand how to spell and pronounce, because the students understood the meaning.

Secondly, the students found it difficult to determine made sentences. Most of the students could not answer the test given correctly. They did not know how to make sentences. So, concerning the problem, in the treatment process, the researchers taught the students how to make sentences. Thus, in the post-test, the students could make sentences correctly. The comparison of sentences in pre-test and post-test are shown in the following table:

Table 5 The Comparison of Sentence in Pre-Test and Post-Test

Sentence	
Pretest	Posttest
She are exercise	I am alone
Lion look danger	I fall in school
Send really good	We plant a fruit in garden
My friend know English	They live in town
I scare	Nunu wears a new hat

Based on the table above, in the pre-test, the students make sentences incorrect, but in the post-test, the students can make sentences correctly and develop their sentences to be longer. The change can happen as the result of the treatment process wherein the students are taught to make sentences and develop their competence to create various sentences.

This research proved the previous research by Beno, H (2019). He found that using a short story can improve students' vocabulary mastery after applying the action, and students could easily understand new vocabulary. It was supported by Dersi (2013) that reading stories helps in cognitive development learners as extensive reading increases vocabulary levels. Ratminingsih, Budasi & Kurnia (2020) stated that a local culture storybook could help the students easily understand the vocabulary and content of the story.

Erkaya (2005) stated that short stories help instructors teach literary, cultural, and higher-order thinking aspects. Students are interested in reading stories and can find out what happens next since they are familiar with narrative conventions. Local stories are an excellent way to learn a foreign language because they put it in a familiar and remembered setting. Sakkir (2011) stated that short stories are very useful in improving students' vocabulary.

Based on the explanation above, the researchers concludes that local short stories could improve the students' vocabulary achievement. It can be seen by the mean score from 41.84 to 79.92 as a result of the results. The researchers in this study had two hypotheses, and the results of inferential and

descriptive statistics analysis showed that null hypotheses (Ho) were rejected and alternative hypotheses (H1) were accepted. Based on the result, the researchers concludes that the third grade at UPTD SMP Negeri 6 Barru has a better ability in vocabulary after having treatment through using local short stories.

5. Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussions in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the use of local short stories improves the vocabulary of the third-year students of UPTD SMPN 6 Barru. It can be proved from the significant difference between students' scores in pre-test and post-test after giving treatment. In this study, researchers found the activeness and enthusiasm of students in receiving lessons. Students seem to be always involved in the lesson when researchers use local short stories. The researchers concludes that the students' ability to master vocabulary cannot last long whereas if the student no longer repeats, they will forget. Other constraints also, giving local short stories makes them interested in learning English and easily understood vocabulary, especially in aspect meaning, spelling, and pronunciation.

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