

ENHANCING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY IN LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH DIGITAL EXTENSIVE READING IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to enhance the students' vocabulary mastery through Digital Extensive Reading activity in Junior High School. It is a classroom action research. There were 30 learners of grade VIII participated in this study. The qualitative data was analyzed through three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion/verification. The quantitative data, whereas, was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The data were collected from observation, interview and students' pre-test and post-test. The steps of implementing the digital extensive reading activity were included digital silent reading, reading report book, dictionary use and retelling. The results showed that there was significant improvement from 45.83 in the pre-test to 62.76 in the post-test of the students' vocabulary mastery. Therefore, digital extensive reading activities can improve students' vocabulary mastery.

Keywords: *digital extensive reading, vocabulary mastery*

There are four skills of language that learners should study as the language learning goal to show their proficiency in mastering the language. Those skills are, then, divided into input and output skill. Input skills are needed in order to perform the output. As we know that reading is one of the input skills in learning. Reading plays an important role on students' development in learning language because it can affect other skills. From reading, students will also learn vocabulary and structure of the language. Therefore, reading should be taught explicitly and implicitly in the school to gain maximum impact on students' learning development.

Besides reading, vocabulary mastery is essential in the process of learning language. Vocabulary is the key in learning language. Language learners can acquire the language effectively if they can master the vocabulary. It is in line with the Wilson's (1986) idea of, "*without grammar very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed*" (as cited in Xu Jianping, 2009). It indicates the importance of vocabulary knowledge as the basic competence in learning language. Moreover, Cameron (2001) agrees that vocabulary plays an essential part in learning language. It indicates that the key in learning language is by mastering vocabulary.

Harmer (2007) described some ways in teaching vocabulary. Those are introducing vocabulary, practicing vocabulary, vocabulary games and using dictionaries. Meanwhile, Nation (2018) explained five levels of vocabulary exercises occurring after the reading activity. Those exercises are apperceived input or noticing, comprehended input or recognizing, manipulation, and interpretation or integration. Moreover, Nation (2018) categorized some tests which comprise most of the typical used in vocabulary tests. Those are true/false questions, vocabulary depth test, definition completion test, meaning multiple-choice test, and translation test.

Reading is an alternative attempt for the students to learn vocabulary. That is because of some rationales. First, they will acquire small amounts of incidental vocabulary. Nevertheless, the amount of words can be numerous if the students read lots of comprehensible text (Nation, 2018). Second rationale is that the vocabulary learning can be more effective by having vocabulary exercises after reading. It can help students to acquire better in mastering vocabulary. The reading group students with vocabulary exercises after reading learned more vocabularies than the *reading-only* group (Zimmerman in Sonbul and Schmitt, 2010). Brown (2001) stated that the variety of reading performance depends on the variety of text in which teacher can expose the students over types of performance, oral and silent.

Silent reading is divided into intensive and extensive reading. Harmer (2007) mentioned that those intensive and extensive reading are two approaches in silent reading needed by learners in order to get utmost benefit from reading. Intensive reading is defined as a *classroom-oriented activity* in which students focus on the linguistics or semantic details of a passage. Extensive reading, meanwhile, is the opposite activity of intensive reading in which it is conducted to achieve the global meaning of the materials from the longer text such as novel, magazine, story and so on.

There are 10 principles of extensive reading presented by Day and Bamford (2002) which are; an easy reading materials; an availability of various materials and topics; learners choose their reading text on their own; learners read a lot; the reading purpose are for pleasure, information and general understanding; reading on the learners' own reward; reading speed; individual and silent reading; teachers guide the students; and the teacher is a role model of a reader. Those principles of extensive reading should be applied in obtaining successful extensive reading activity.

By implementing digital reading, students can explore many kinds of reading text. Fox (2014) said that students should be given an opportunity to be responsible of their learning, thus they could challenge their own curiosities. To sum up, the use of technology has a positive impact on students' motivation to read the literary text and provides the understanding of conventional reading and writing practices (Sylvester and Greenridge, 2009).

The extensive reading activities can be implemented successfully by following the extensive reading principals described by Day and Bamford (2002). The digital extensive reading activities of this research would be implemented in the following ways:

a. Implementing various extensive reading activities.

In this part, the students were allowed to choose their reading text on their own from their smart phones. Then, they had to read it individually in silent. The digital sources of reading materials provide a large amount of reading text. After that, the students could write their reading on their reading report book which included the detail information about the text and the unfamiliar words found in the text.

b. Providing an online dictionary or digital dictionary.

The use of an online or digital dictionary was meant to help students in identifying the unfamiliar words from their reading.

c. Giving various vocabulary exercises.

The vocabulary exercises were given in order to check the students' understanding on the vocabulary as well as to improve their vocabulary mastery.

d. Retelling

The retelling part was conducted in pairs and in group work. This activity was meant to let the students share their reading with their friends.

From the observation conducted in teaching learning activities in grade VIII class G SMPN 1 Piyungan, the researcher found some issues to be concerned in this research. The first issue was that the teacher dominated the class. As a result, the students were not really interested in learning and participated passively in the learning activity. Most of them did other activities outside the lesson matters such as chatting with their friends, opening the other pages of their textbooks, looking at the sky through the window and even sleeping. Moreover, the students found difficulties to understand the text. They preferred to ask their teacher or their friends in order to understand the meaning. Some of them would also look at their friends' work instantly. It can be concluded that vocabulary mastery is the major problem for students in learning English.

Based on the observation, the researcher believes that it is necessary to improve students' curiosity in learning English to gain the learning purpose. One of which is by extensive reading. The researcher suggests extensive reading in learning English because the students can develop their vocabulary mastery. Then, they will try to understand the English text one step ahead. Moreover, the digital extensive reading is going to be applied in the learning process. The digital-based learning is chosen since the students, nowadays, live in the digital era. Hence, the researcher believes that the digital approach would gain students interest in learning.

Another study about online extensive reading study had been conducted by Arnold (2009). The research's findings showed that the implementation of an online extensive reading can meet the pedagogical goals of the learning that is an increase in students' motivation to read. The study, however, was conducted in German as a foreign language.

METHOD

Setting of the Research

This research was conducted in SMPN 1 Piyungan which was located in Srimulyo, Piyungan Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta. The participants of this research were students of grade VIII class G SMPN 1 Piyungan. There are 30 students all-together in that class, twenty-two (22) students are female while the rest eight (8) students are male. The research was conducted for about one month starting from the beginning of March 2019 till the mid of April 2019. Within one month observation, there were ... meetings. Each meeting lasted for 80 minutes. The meeting of each cycle followed the schedule from the school. The researcher implemented two cycles which comprised some steps i.e. reconnaissance, identifying the problems, planning, pre-testing, implementing, reflecting, and post-testing.

Procedure of the Research

According to Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns (2010: 9), there are four action research steps. Those are Reconnaissance, Planning, Acting and Observing, and Reflecting.

The first step of this research was reconnaissance. In this phase, the researcher collected the data by doing observation on the teaching and learning activity in grade VIII class G to determine problems in English teaching and learning. The researcher also interviewed the teacher and the students of grade VIII class G. From this interview, the researcher was able to collect the data. The researcher, then, analyzed them and learned that the problem in the teaching and learning process was vocabulary mastery. Therefore, the Digital Extensive Reading was chosen as the appropriate technique to be implemented to overcome that problem.

After doing observation and reconnaissance, the researcher planned to solve the problems obtained in the field. The objective of this action was to improve vocabulary mastery level of the students. The researcher, together with the English teacher of grade VIII class G, chose Digital Extensive Reading as the action to overcome the problem. The action plans including implementing Digital Extensive Reading activity; implementing various extensive reading activity such as digital silent reading, retelling story, and reading report book; employing the stages of the scientific approach in the teaching- learning process; using an online dictionary; giving interesting media and worksheet; giving compliment and reward; and doing a group work activity.

The researcher implemented the action by providing the digital-reading for students. The plans were conducted in 2 cycles by having two meetings for each cycle. The qualitative data were collected through observation and interview. The observation was done by the researcher, the English teacher and the collaborator, while the interview done after each meeting. The quantitative data were collected in the form of students' score.

From the observation, the researcher had a reflection on the action by having some interviews with the students and the English teacher to know their opinion about the action. This was aimed to determine whether the actions were successful. The successful action would be reapplied in the next cycle. The researcher also got some suggestions from the observer and the participants on the actions for the next meeting.

Data Collection Techniques

The data of this research were collected in the form of both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data were taken by means of observation and interview.

The researcher observed the teaching learning activity in the class. There were some aspects that were being observed by the researcher which were teacher and students' performances toward the teaching learning English, the students' proficiency level in language skills, and the materials or texts that used in teaching learning activity. The result of the observation, which was later presented in the form of field notes, was going to be used to identify the problems in reconnaissance to determine the next plan.

The interview, done towards the English teacher, the collaborator and the students, was conducted twice. First was conducted before the action in the observation on March 12th 2019. Then, the second one was conducted after the action in each meeting on March 26th-27th 2019 and April 9th-10th 2019. The topic in the interview session was mainly about the extensive reading activity. The teacher and the students were interviewed before and after the treatment. The results of the interview were essential to know their opinion about the extensive reading program.

Meanwhile, the quantitative data were obtained by conducting pre-test and post-test. These data were taken from the students' score in the pre-test and the post-test. The pre-test was administered on March 20th 2019 and the post-test was administered on April 16th 2019.

The test used in this study was to measure the effects of the treatment toward students' vocabulary mastery. The test was divided into two sections, the pre-test and the post-test. The pre-test had been administered to students before the treatment, while the post-test was administered to them after the treatment. After the period of reading activity completed, the results of both tests were compared to show whether the action effect on the level of students' vocabulary mastery.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data gathered in this research were in the form of qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data consisted of interview transcripts and field notes. Those data were analyzed and described qualitatively. The results of pre-test and post-test were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Validity and Reliability of the Data

In order to fulfill the request of the research validity, the researcher adopted five criteria of validity by Anderson et.al (1994). Those criteria are the democratic validity, the outcome validity, the process validity, the catalytic validity, and the dialogic validity.

The democratic validity was fulfilled by relating the study with the opinions and comments of the research's participants. The researcher had fulfilled this validity by interviewing and discussing with the English teacher and the collaborator. The outcome validity was fulfilled by connecting the result of the study with the indicators of a successful research. The process validity was fulfilled by matching the criterion of the real situation in the field study with the result of the study. The researcher fulfilled this validity by doing the observation before the action, taking notes during the implementation of the action, and discussing the implementation with the English teacher and the collaborator. The catalytic validity was fulfilled by evaluating the action whether the action considered to urge social change achieves its objectives. The researcher fulfilled this validity by interviewing the English teacher, the students and the collaborator about the teaching-learning process. Their opinion would be used as the reflection for the next meeting. The dialogic validity was fulfilled in peer review that is commonly used in the academic research. The researcher fulfilled this validity by having a discussion with the English teacher and the collaborator about the implementation of the action at the end of each meeting. The researcher could find some problems to be fixed and some suggestions to be implemented in the next meeting.

The researcher used triangulation in this study to avoid the subjectivity in analyzing the data. According to Burn (1999) there are four forms of triangulation which can be used to match various perspectives on the situation being studied. This was aimed to obtain the trustworthiness of the data. The researcher used three forms of triangulation i.e. time triangulation, investigator triangulation and theoretical triangulation. The data were collected in the one point of time to engage the same factors of the problem and its solution without combining the change on the other period of time. Moreover, the researcher had involved more than one observer in this study. It was aimed to avoid biased conclusion from the same research setting. In addition, the idea of this research was analyzed by looking more than one perspective and study. Therefore, the data of this research was interpreted by the researcher based on various theoretical studies on the related field.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research showed several results. Generally, the actions gave improvements towards vocabulary mastery of grade VIII students. The explanation of the research finding will be elaborated further in this part.

The use of Digital Extensive Reading in English teaching-learning aimed to stimulate students' motivation. The activities were designed interestingly for students and these activities were mainly done by using smartphone. Various reading materials were provided in the students' smartphone. It would make them easier to choose their reading in such an effective way.

Most of the students enjoyed the lesson because they could try something new. They were enthusiastically going along the lesson because they could read a lot of stories from their smartphone. The students, next, could explore a challenging reading by taking notes in their reading report book. Although the students were making it keenly, they found it difficult to fill their reading report book in the first meeting. In the next meeting the researcher could sort out that problem and could assist the students to compose their reading report. As a result, the students could enjoy their reading at the same time as noting down their reading report.

The vocabulary exercise activity was conducted effectively. The students did the task very well. They could understand the instruction and finished the task in time. Meanwhile, the retelling activity was conducted in pairs. The researcher could observe the students' understanding about the reading text from this activity. In this part, the students were doing a pair work or a group work activity which was allowed them to share and retell their reading to their friends.

The pre-test and the post-test were administered to see the improvement of the students. The pre-test was administered on March, 20th 2019 and the post-test was conducted administered on April 16th 2019. The score of the pre-test and the post-test would be compared and processed. Based on Burns (2010), to make the data valid and reliable, the data would be analyzed by conducting the t-test. The result of the tests can be seen in table 1.

Table 1. Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	45,8333	30	15,89423	2,90188
	Posttest	62,7667	30	15,11492	2,75959

Table 1 showed the mean of each test. There was improvement in test performance by 27% from the pre-test (45) to the post-test (62). The standard deviation of the post-test was lower than the pre- test. It explained that the students' score was homogenous to higher scores. Furthermore, it also showed the improvement of students after the action. The *p* -value of the test was 0, 00 which was lower than 0, 05. It could be concluded that there was a significant improvement of students' vocabulary mastery after having the action.

Table 2. The means of two vocabulary aspects

Vocabulary Aspect	Pre-test Means	Post-test Means
Meaning	11.2	13.5
Usage	2.6	6.1

From the Table 2, we can see the students' improvements in two aspects of vocabulary mastery i.e. the meaning and the usage of vocabulary. In pre-test, the meaning of vocabulary scored 11.2 in average while in post-test the score was 13.5 in average. The students showed an improvement in understanding the meaning of vocabulary by 2.3 points. Meanwhile, the students showed a significant improvement in the usage of vocabulary by improving 2.6 in average to 6.1 in average. It has an increase for 3.5 points.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

Conclusions

The Digital Extensive Reading improves students' vocabulary mastery in learning English. The students' level of vocabulary is quite low. Moreover, they do not have an interest to learn because of monotonous activities. These problems affected students' development and motivation in learning. After having implemented the action, there was such an improvement which could be seen from students test score—their post-test scores were higher than their pre- test ones.

The implementation of the actions had instigated some changes towards problems found in the class. By implementing the Digital Extensive Reading, various materials and activities were given to the students. Consequently, the students' opinion about having a boring lesson would be omitted in stages. The strategy of the action had created more effective environment in the teaching-learning process. In addition, the Digital Extensive Reading activity allowed the students to choose their reading as the learning material. They could explore more various reading text from their smartphones. Therefore, the students would have an enormous resource to be learned. The activities in the action of Digital Extensive Reading, in addition, had engaged the students to be more active in the learning process. The students showed their interest in learning as they were challenged by those activities.

Suggestions

The result of this study could be presented as the suggestion for the research's participants i.e. the teacher, the students and the researcher. For the teacher, creating an interesting learning environment is essential to attract the students' interest. By providing various learning activities and materials, the students could be more engaged in the learning. The implementation of Digital Extensive Reading could help the teacher and the students to create joyful learning experiences in the class.

For students, the students' lack of vocabulary could cause difficulties in learning English. The students should explore various English text and materials to improve their vocabulary knowledge. They have to find out the meaning of unfamiliar words and have to be able to comprehend the text, so it can help them perform better in English. By doing a Digital Extensive Reading, they could read more reading materials anytime. The digital based learning makes the learning more efficient.

Prior to initiate the action, the researcher should meticulously select appropriate materials suitable to the students' level. The choosing of material could be done by asking to the students to find out their preferences in learning or else by asking to the teacher.

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