

The use of realia to improve students' vocabulary mastery

(A Class Action research at the Fifth Grade of SD Negeri Pondok 03

Sukoharjo in 2007/2008 Academic Year)

By:

Wahyu Triyas Cahya

K2201061

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Indonesia is one of many countries that place English as the important language that has to be taught in its education system. We know that English has been taught in our high school since several years ago, and in recent years, the elementary schools have begun to introduce English in their curriculum.

In Indonesia, a number of elementary schools have begun to introduce English into their curriculum as a local content. The GBPP 1994 states that English is not an obligatory lesson in the elementary school, except it is organized as a local content. It is also clearly stated in the curriculum of elementary school 2004, " *Sebagai upaya meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan khususnya poengajaran Muatan Lokal Bahasa Inggris Sekolah Dasar, pada tahun anggaran 2005 Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Provinsi Jawa Tengah telah menyusun Kurikulum*

Muatan Lokal Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris Sekolah Dasar untuk kelas I s.d kelas VI.” (Kurikulum Tahun 2004 Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris Untuk SD/MI Provinsi Jawa Tengah 2004:p.iii)

One of the elements in the language that cannot be separated from teaching English at elementary school is English vocabulary. It is difficult to master foreign language without mastering or understanding the vocabulary. According to Zimmerman, vocabulary is considered as one of the most important aspects of second language learning and priority is placed on developing a scientific and rational basis for selecting the vocabulary content of language courses. (James Coady: 1997). Edge (1993:p. 27) in his book “Essential of English Language Teaching” gives explanation about how important vocabulary is. He points out: “Knowing a lot of words in foreign language is very important. The more words you know, the better you chance of understanding or making yourself understood.”

In teaching vocabulary to children, the teacher should consider about the technique. It has to attract the children’s attention and involve the children in the whole activity. Scott and Ytreberg (1990: 5) define that: “words are not enough. Most activities for young learner should include movement and involve the senses. Teacher needs to have plenty objects and pictures”.

One of vocabulary presentation techniques is using real objects. Here, the teacher shows objects in the classroom such as bag, pencil, pen, book. Wittich and Sceuller (1979: 30) say that children begin to develop a visual vocabulary that takes on meaning as they interact with and affect things or processes they see.

Based on the writer's observation in the fifth year students of SDN Pondok 03 in teaching vocabulary, the method used by the teacher was not too exciting for the students. The teacher never used games, song, story and realia. The teacher explained grammar and translation a lot to the students.

The students have some difficulties in mastering vocabulary as follows:

1. They were not interested enough in studying English.
2. They thought that English is a difficult lesson, because it is still new for them.
3. The students have difficulty to remember the meaning of words. They often forget the meaning of a word after the teaching learning process happens.

The problems stated above are caused by some reasons; (1) The technique of teaching is only based on the book presentation, the students are passive, (2) The teacher focuses on the book. The students do the exercise from the book in teaching learning process. The teacher explains grammar and translation a lot to the students, (3) The material and teaching equipment are only from one book. The students are studying vocabulary only by seeing small pictures from the book. The teacher never brings other teaching aids or realia that attract students' curiosity to get their interest.

Basically, there are many techniques in teaching vocabulary as suggested by the experts. The writer estimates that the use of realia as one of techniques in teaching vocabulary can attract students' curiosity to get their interest in learning.

Teaching vocabulary to children by using realia has some advantages. Wittich and Sceuller (1979: 30) say that children begin to develop a visual

vocabulary that takes on meaning as they interact with and affect things or processes they see. From the discussion above, the writer is interested in carrying out a research dealing with the students' vocabulary mastery. Teaching vocabulary can be done by using realia as mode of presentation. Based on the reason above, the writer would like to write a thesis with the title: "Use of Realia to improve students' vocabulary mastery" (A Class Action research at the fifth Grade of SD Negeri Pondok 03 Sukoharjo in 2007/2008 Academic Year)

B. Identification of the Problem

Problem identified from the background of the study above that the students find the difficulties in improving their vocabulary mastery. The difficulties are: (1) They are not interested in studying English, (2) The students have difficulties to remember the meaning of the words.

The teacher never brings teaching aids or realia that attract students' curiosity to get their interest. So that, the writer has to find method that involving and exciting techniques and can improve the students' vocabulary mastery.

One of the appropriate methods in teaching English for children is using realia will be applied in this study.

C. Limitation of the Problem

Because of some reasons, it is quite difficult for the writer to handle all of the problems that may arise in teaching English. Therefore, the writer limits the problems on the use of realia in teaching English.

D. Formulation of the Problem

Based on background, identification, and limitation of the problem above, the writer formulates the problem as follows:

1. Can teaching Vocabulary using realia improve students' vocabulary mastery?
2. What are the problems occurring in teaching vocabulary using realia?

E. The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To find out whether teaching vocabulary using realia can improve children's vocabulary mastery or not.
2. To find out the problems occurring in teaching vocabulary to children by using realia.

F. The benefit of the study

The research result is expected to be able to give some benefits for the teacher who teaches English at elementary school, because the teacher can get description about how to use the teaching technique in teaching English to elementary students in which it should be suited to their characteristics.

For the students, it can serve them the more comforting and interesting situation inside the classroom so that they will be more interested to follow the lesson. Related to the vocabulary mastery in learning English, they will be easier

to master the vocabulary competence and they will be able to increase their English achievement especially in vocabulary mastery.



