IMPROVING VOCABULARY MASTERY BY USING SHORT STORIES

Nasria[1], Muhammad Ihsan[2], Andi Muhammad Dakhalan[3]
nasrianasir18@gmail.com
English Tadris Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training
State Islamic University Datokarama Palu

ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out whether short stories can be successful in improving students' vocabulary mastery or not. The researcher used quantitative research with experimental design using one-group-pretest-posttest. The sample of this research is class XI IPA 2 students of SMA Negeri 6 Palu that consists of 15 students. This class is taken as the experimental class, and the class is taught by using a short story, specifically about the legend. The selection of samples in this research used purposive sampling. After conducting the test, the researcher got the mean score of the students' pre-test is 48.33 while the average score of the post-test is 74.00. Then the data were analyzed using the t_{test} formula. The result of data analysis shows that t_{count} was greater than t_{table}, t-count = 6.282 and t_{table} = 1.771 at a significance level of 0.05. It can be concluded that there is a significant improving in students' vocabulary mastery after using short stories as learning materials.

Keywords: *Short story; vocabulary mastery.*

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is a collection of alphabets that form words and have meaning. Thus, vocabulary is the most important factor in English. If students do not master the vocabulary, students will not understand what they read, listen, write, and talk about. Without adequate vocabulary, it is hard for the students to have proficiency in the language. Things that can cause students' vocabulary mastery to be weak, namely: lack of student interest in English subjects, so students are not interested in increasing their vocabulary mastery, as we all know that in these 2nd years there is a pandemic *covid-19*, so students and teachers are required to carry out the teaching and learning process from home.

The situation makes the lack of interaction between teachers and students so that it is difficult for teachers to measure the students' vocabulary mastery. In addition,

during the pandemic, teachers also only gave assignments more than material explanations so students felt bored with their subjects.

One of the media that can be used to foster students' interest in reading is short stories. A short story is one of the literary works that can be used as material for learning English. Short stories are also one of the most effective materials for teaching other cultures to students. Through the short story, the students can get new words with actual usage in various forms.

The short story was chosen by the researcher because through short stories the students will gain some important and valuable knowledge about language which other media may not provide, such as proper use and arrangement of words. In short stories, the placement of words in the sentence has been arranged according to the correct arrangement.

The researcher specified the short story that is going to be taught in the school. The researcher chose the legend story because students can learn about other cultures, community customs, and traditions that exist elsewhere. Another advantage of using short stories is that they can make students more independent. Students can read and try to understand the meaning of the context. This strategy can also be developed independent learning for students.

This problem is the reason of the researcher discussing the title, due to the researcher's curiosity about improving vocabulary mastery at the second grade students of SMA Negeri 6 Palu through short story media, because what the researcher knows is that students' vocabulary mastery at that school is still relatively weak. For the reasons, the researcher interested to discuss the title about "Improving Vocabulary Mastery by Using Short Stories at The Second Grade Students of SMA Negeri 6 Palu".

Previous research can serve as a reference for current researchers. The first research is Meydina's research, entitled *The Effect of Applying Word Short Strategy toward Students' Vocabulary Mastery of the Eight Grade Students' at SMP Negeri 3 Palu*". This research shows that applying word sort strategy can improve students' vocabulary. It was proven that at the end of the research there was a significant increase in students' vocabulary.

The second is Agung Guritno's research, entitled "*Short Stories: The Powerful Media To Foster Students' Vocabulary Mastery In Reading At MTSN 2 Mataram, West Nusa Tenggara*" As the result, the use of short stories is able to increase the students' psychological aspect and the classroom climate. The students are become more excited, enthusiastic, and active in the learning process. This then makes the classroom climate more alive, and it is finally able to foster their ability in vocabulary mastery in reading. Moreover, this study shows the significant improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery. At the end of the cycle, the students have met at least the minimum score of 7.00 standard of minimum completeness in the four areas of spelling, pronunciation, meaning, and the use of the words.

The third is Dewi Nur Asyiah's research, entitled *"The Vocabulary Teaching and Vocabulary Learning: Perception, Strategies, and Influences on Students' Vocabulary Mastery"* The findings show that both teacher and students have positive response on vocabulary teaching and learning. Concerning strategies, it was found that teacher mostly employed Fully-contextual strategy, meanwhile, the Determination and

Metacognitive strategy were found as the most favored VLS chosen by students. The study also confirms that there is a significant relationship between students' vocabulary learning strategy and their vocabulary mastery (r-value Discovery = .023 and r-value Consolidating = .000, p<.05). It is recommended for EFL teachers to give a bigger portion to vocabulary in the EFL teaching and to teach vocabulary using the combination of fully-contextual and de-contextual strategy. It is also suggested to introduce students to various kinds of vocabulary learning strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vocabulary Mastery

Chan further states that English is the most powerful language in the world. It covers five opportunities; geography (the ability to travel), economy (the ability to participate in an economy), communication (the ability to engage in dialogue), knowledge and media (the ability to consume knowledge and media), and diplomacy (the ability to engage in international relations).

According to Thorburry, vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words we teach in the foreign language. While Richard and Rodgers state that vocabulary is one of the important elements of language proficiency that becomes the basis of how well learners speak, write, listen and read. In the past, vocabulary teaching and learning were often given little priority in second language programs. It means if students want to be proficient in English, students must be able to master vocabulary

Vocabulary mastery is the activity of mastering or the ability to understand and use words contained in a language, both spoken and written. McWhorter stated that "vocabulary mastery can increase reading comprehension significantly if the students use many strategies in reading comprehension". Without good vocabulary mastery, students will find it difficult to have conversations in foreign languages, especially English. In another sense, vocabulary is also interpreted.

Short Story

Webster dictionary explains that, short story is a piece of prose fiction, usually under 10.000 words. Short stories are much shorter than novels; short story usually has only a few characters and focused on a single incident. Lazar said that short story is a work of fiction. It tells one event in a very concentrated way, describes something at moment of crisis, introduces people who are told do not really exist, has plot and characters who are somehow connected with each other.

Based on the number of words used, short stories are divided into three types: the first is short story/flash. The usual opening section is only about 1 to 2 paragraphs, then goes to the core conflict section, then the final section which is also usually less. The number of words from short story/flash is about 500 to 700 words.

The second is medium short stories. At the opening it will be a little longer than a short story/flash, character of the story is described in clearer sentences. Medium short stories are usually used to explain the story in more detail. Medium short stories usually use around 700 to 1000 words.

The third is long short stories. At the opening and closing is made quite long. The process to enter the conflict section is also longer than usual, so the reader can understand the story in more detail. Long short stories are usually made with a lot of words around 1000 words or more. Intrinsic Element of Short Stories.

Intrinsic elements are subjects that build a person's literature like a short story. The intrinsic elements of the short story are theme, plot, setting, actors, character, point of view, the mandate.

METHOD

The Researcher used pre-experimental research to find the data about improvement students' vocabulary mastery after using short stories. According to Sugiyono, pre-experimental research methods can be interpreted as research methods used to find the effect of certain treatments on others under controlled conditions. The experimental design used is one-group-pretest-posttest. The researcher used a one-group-pretest-posttest design due to constraints and time constraints that researcher had due to *Covid-19* and the implementation of PPKM at the schools so that the time for implementing learning in class was limited.

The population in this research were the second-grade students majoring in science (IPA) class 2 totally 30 students. The researcher used purposive sampling as a sampling technique in this research. Purposive sampling is a technique of choosing the sample based on the criteria that relate with the students' problem. The sample in this research was the second-grade students majoring in science. The researcher chose IPA 2 that consist of 15 students.

There are two variables in this research; the dependent variable and the independent variable. The independent variable was short stories and the dependent variable in this study was improving vocabulary mastery.

In this research, the researcher used tests as the research instrument, namely multiple choices that consists 20 numbers. There were two stages of the test, the first was the pre-test and the second was the post-test, both stages were given the same treatment, namely measuring students' abilities by giving assignments related to the given short story. The difference was the time of giving the test.

To determine students' individual scores, the researcher analyzed students' score on the pretest and posttest by using the following formula of Sugiyono:

$$\frac{A}{N} \; x \; 100$$

Where:
A   = Number of students who answered the item correctly
N   = Total number of items
100   = Constant number

To determine the average score of the pretest and posttest, the researcher used the following formula:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Where:
$\overline{X}$ = Mean score
$\sum X$ = Amount of each data
N   = Amount of data

To know the mean deviation of the students' score between pretest and posttest score, the researcher used formula bellow:

$$Md = \frac{\sum d}{N}$$

Where:

Md = Mean deviation

$\sum d$ = Deviation

N = Number of students

To get the square deviation, the researcher used the formula bellow:

$$\sum x^2 d = \sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N}$$

Where:

$\sum x^2 d$ = Square deviation

$\sum d$ = Deviation

N = Number of students

To answer the research question, the researcher conducted an analysis using the following formula by Arikunto as follows:

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2 d}{N (N-1)}}}$$

Where:

t = Score of t-test

Md = Mean of differences pretest and posttest

$\sum x^2 d$ = The sum of square deviation

N = Number of sample

1 = Constant number

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Before giving the test to students, the researcher had given test to other students besides the research sample to determine the level of difficulty of the tests with the time given as a validation of the tests. The tests would be pre-test and post-test that would be given to the sample in this research. Here the result of the research:

a. Result of Pre-test

Table 5
Students' Pre-test Score

No	Name	Correct Answer	Wrong answer	Score
1	FA	14	6	70
2	R	9	11	45
3	NR	6	14	30
4	RA	9	11	45
5	N	10	10	50

6	AP	10	10	50
7	DDP	12	8	60
8	R	8	12	40
9	K	7	13	35
10	F	5	15	25
11	EP	13	7	65
12	DA	11	9	55
13	A	12	8	60
14	YA	10	10	50
15	PU	10	10	45
Total				725

After the data was obtained, the average score of the students' pre-test was calculated using the formula for the mean score. To calculate the mean score, firstly the researcher added all the standard scores of students and divide by the number of students. The calculation of the average score can be seen in the following formula:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$
$$\overline{X} = \frac{725}{15}$$
$$\overline{X} = 48.33$$

Based on the description above, the data shows that the lowest value of the pre-test is 25 and the highest is 70 with mean value is 48.33.

Table 6
Students' Post-test Score

No	Name	Correct Answer	Wrong answer	Score
1	FA	18	2	90
2	R	16	4	80
3	NR	9	11	45
4	RA	16	4	80
5	N	17	3	85
6	AP	12	8	60
7	DDP	13	7	65
8	R	18	2	90
9	K	16	4	80
10	F	14	6	70
11	EP	19	1	95
12	DA	14	6	70
13	A	15	5	75
14	YA	12	8	60
15	PU	13	7	65
Total				1.110

After the data was obtained, the researcher needed to know the mean score by using the following formula:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$\overline{X} = \frac{1.110}{15}$$

$$\overline{X} = 74.00$$

Based on the description above, the data shows that the lowest value of the post-test is 45 and the highest is 95 with mean value is 74.00.

After getting the mean score of pre-test and post-test, the researcher then continued to count the deviation and square deviation. The result is presented below.

Table 7
The Result of Pre-test and Post-test

No	Name	Pre-test	Post-test	Deviation	D²
1	FA	70	90	20	400
2	R	45	80	35	1.225
3	NR	30	45	5	25
4	RA	45	80	35	1.225
5	N	50	85	25	625
6	AP	50	60	10	100
7	DDP	60	65	5	25
8	R	40	90	50	2.500
9	K	35	80	45	2.025
10	F	25	70	45	2.025
11	EP	65	95	30	900
12	DA	55	70	15	225
13	A	60	75	15	225
14	YA	50	60	10	100
15	PU	45	65	20	400
Total				365	12.025

After computing the deviation score between pre-test and post-test score, the researcher computed the mean deviation of the students' score. The computation was presented as the following:

$$Md = \frac{\sum d}{N}$$

$$Md = \frac{365}{15}$$

$$Md = 24,33$$

After counted the mean deviation, the researcher next computed the square deviation as shown below:

$$\sum x^2 d = \sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N}$$

$$\sum x^2 d = 12,025 - \frac{(365)^2}{15}$$

$$\sum x^2 d = 12,025 - 133225$$

$$\sum x^2 d = 12{,}025 - 8{,}881.6$$
$$\sum x^2 d = 3{,}143.4$$

Furthermore, researcher need to analyze the data statistically (t-count) to determine the significance between the pre-test and post-test. The calculation was as follows:

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\dfrac{\sum x^2 d}{N(N-1)}}}$$

$$t = \frac{24{,}3}{\sqrt{\dfrac{3{,}143.4}{15(15-1)}}}$$

$$t = \frac{24{,}3}{\sqrt{\dfrac{3{,}143.4}{210}}}$$

$$t = \frac{24{,}3}{\sqrt{14.968}}$$

$$t = \frac{24{,}3}{3.868}$$

$$t = 6{,}282$$

To prove whether the hypothesis of this research is accepted or rejected, the researcher needs to test the hypothesis based on the result of the data analysis. The t-count is a statistical test that generally compares the calculated t value with the t- table. If the t-count is greater than t-table, it means that alternative hypothesis was accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected.

The degree of freedom (df) value is calculated using the n-k formula where *n* is the number of samples and *k* is the number of variables. The number of samples in this research was 15 and the number of variables was 2, then 15-2 was 13. From the calculation, it was known the degree of freedom (df) was 13. It was found that t-count with df 13 which shown at significant level 5% is 6.282 and t-table with df 13 which is shown at significant level 5% is 1.771.

During the research process, the researcher can see that the use of short stories is one of the best materials to improve students' vocabulary mastery. Short stories can attract students' interest in learning, especially in reading according to the opinion of William James which the researcher has stated in the previous chapter. This can be seen from the enthusiasm of students when doing the assignments that have been given. Students' curiosity about the contents of the short stories they read requires them to translate every word of the short story.

Besides being able to attract students' interest in learning, learning using short stories can also help the researcher manage the class well so that during the

learning process, the students and the researcher feel relaxed and comfortable, as stated by Radno Harsanto in the previous chapter. This can be seen from the enthusiasm of students in doing the given assignments. During the research process, the researcher was always around the students so that when students did not get the meaning of the words they are looking for, students can ask the researcher. To make the class atmosphere more relaxed, the researcher did not answer directly but throw questions to other students so that students competed to find out the meaning of the hard-to-find words. According to Suryosubroto that students' self-confidence can be developed by actively involving students in every learning process. By throwing questions to other students, then there was a process of helping each other in doing assignments between students which can lead to students' self-confidence that they can work on their assignments to completion. In addition, helping each other in doing the task also does not make students tense so that it can make the class atmosphere comfortable and students can relax during the learning process. After that the researcher asked the students to return to focus on their respective work.

Besides of discussion above, this research shows that the use of short stories to improve students' vocabulary mastery is successful. Comparing t-$_{count}$ (6.282) and t-$_{table}$ (1.177), it is known that t-$_{count}$ is higher than t-$_{table}$. The result is 6.282 > 1.177. Therefore, it could be concluded that the researcher hypothesis is accepted. In conclusion, that there was significant improvement vocabulary mastery after using short stories as reading material at the second-grade students SMA Negeri 6 Palu.

CONCLUSSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion above, it can be concluded that the result of this research shows that the short story succeeded to improve vocabulary mastery of the second-grade students significantly. The pre-test shows that the highest score is 70 while the lowest is 25 and the average score is 48.33. After completing the treatment, the researcher gave a post-test. The post-test results show that the highest the score is 95 while the lowest is 45 and the average score is 74.00. Short stories can be a solution for teachers to help students in teaching and learning in particular to help improve students' vocabulary mastery because it is proven by mean the pre-test score increased from 48.33 before treatment to 74.00 after treatment.

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