Enhancing Junior High School Students' Vocabulary Achievement Through Online Dictionary

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Abstract

Vocabulary has a very important role in learning English. Without having good ability in vocabulary, learning English cannot be achieved well. Therefore, students' vocabulary achievement must be enhanced. One of the ways to enhance the students' vocabulary achievement is by using online dictionary. This classroom action research with cycle model from Kemmis & Mc Taggart aimed to enhance the eighth grade students' vocabulary achievement by using online dictionary and to know how it could enhance the students' participation during the teaching and learning process of vocabulary. The research participants were the VIII J students of MTsN 5 Ngawi, East Java, Indonesia. The data were collected by using a vocabulary test and observation during the teaching and learning process of vocabulary. Quantitative and qualitative descriptive analyses were used to analyze the collected data. The research results showed that there was improvement of the students' vocabulary achievement and their active participation by using online dictionary. The improvement of the students' vocabulary achievement was from 67.64% of the students got target score in pre-cycle to 82.35% of the students got the target score in the first cycle. The improvement of the percentage of the students' participation was 75% in pre-cycle to 83.7% in the first cycle. Hence, it is suggested for English teachers to use online dictionary in the process of teaching and learning vocabulary to improve the students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement.

Keywords: Online Dictionary; Teaching Vocabulary; Vocabulary Achievement

Introduction

Online learning is becoming the main activity in teaching learning process since Corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has spread out in most countries in the world including in Indonesia. All education activities are not allowed to be conducted offline in face to face as usual. The government took action on Mendikbud's letter No. 3/2020, and No. 36962/MPK. A/HK/2020, that virtual learning should be done in teaching and learning activities to minimize the spread of covid 19 by reducing social interaction in education (Wajdi et al., 2020). Teachers give the materials and tasks by some supporting online media applications such as whatsApp, goggle classroom, zoom, etc. Online learning media is a basic requirement for student learning in elementary schools until the university level.

In this pandemic era, teachers are struggling to find the best way in online teaching and learning. Abidah et al., (2020) explain that the government and educational institution should have an alternative of teaching learning process. The language learning strategy by using media is more appropriate and suitable in the teaching and learning of vocabulary. Teachers need to use a technology tool, and design the task from it to enhance the student's vocabulary achievement (Nikiforou, 2019). According to Dakhi&Maritha (2018), vocabulary is one of the language components that must be considered in teaching English. Without

having a lot of vocabulary, students are difficult to develop their English language skills. According to Aleeva&Safiullina (2016), the use of proper vocabulary is very important for efficient English learning. Mastering vocabulary can make students easy to study many skills in English such as grammar, communication or speaking skill and easy to express their ideas (Dakhi&Maritha, 2018).

Dealing with teaching vocabulary, the interview with the English teacher of MTsN (Islamic Public Junior High School) 5 Ngawi was conducted. The results of the interview showed that in pre-cycle, the percentage of the students' active participation of class VIII J was 75%, and the students' vocabulary achievement was 67.64 %. In addition,the English teacher still used the conventional teaching and learning activity, by distributing the materials and the learning tasks through E-learning in his vocabulary class during the pandemic time. As the result, the students did not actively participate in the teaching and learning process and some of them did not do their tasks well. According to Dakhi&Maritha (2018) many teachers do not consider the important role of media in vocabulary teaching. It needs to be solved by applying an appropriate media for teaching vocabulary in order that students can learn vocabulary successfully.

Based on the fact above, the researcher solved the students' problem by applying online dictionary for teaching and learning vocabulary. According to Barham (2017), online dictionary has some advantages, as the following: 1) it can be simply used everywhere and anywhere, 2) it provides some words in one picture, 3)the words can be searched quickly. In relation to the idea, Osmani (2014) investigated the effectiveness of using online dictionary in acquiring and teaching vocabulary in Tetovo. This research aimed to verify the efficiency of technology in the form of online dictionary. The study result showed that online dictionary was more effective than conventional learning method in learning vocabulary. The students were fun and more confident doing learning activity and answered the task well by themselves because the use of online dictionary was enjoyable for them. Baskın &Yıldırım (2020) examined the students' interest level in using a mobile dictionary by using a qualitative research design with questionnaire. The result of this study showed that the Turkish students mostly (about 82%) used Google translation in their vocabulary learning.

To fill the gap, the present research focused on investigating the online dictionary in the form of dictionary.com in the teaching of vocabulary by using classroom action research as the research designwith the participants of theVIII J students of MTsN 5 Ngawi, East Java, Indonesia.

Method

Research Design

This research used the Classroom Action Research (CAR) in order to improve the students' vocabulary achievement and their active participation in the vocabulary teaching and learning process. Latief (2009) claims thatthe Classroom Action Research can be effective media to improve the quality of teachers' performance in teaching as well as students' participation in their English learning, including vocabulary learning, in the classroom.

This research was conducted by using Classroom Action Research (CAR) designas suggested by Kemmis&McTaggart (2007) in which the cycle model consist offour steps in each cycle. The four steps are the planning of the action, the implementation of the action, the observation and evaluation, and data analysis and reflection of the action.Further, Kemmis&McTaggart (2007) explain that a classroom action research covers the activities that need repeated cycles. Therefore, those four steps were carried out in this classroom action research.

Research Data and Data Analysis

This research was conducted at the eighth grade of MTsN 5 Ngawi. The participants of this research were 34 students from class VIII J of this school. This research used two main data collection methods, namely observation with an observation checklist, and thevocabulary test. The researcher used four indicators of the students' participation in the observation checklist as follows: (1) The students paid attention to the teacher's explanation, (2) The students answered the teacher's questions in relation to the use of online dictionary for learning vocabulary, (3) The students used online dictionary while doing the tasks of vocabulary individually, and (4) The students did the vocabulary exercises provided. The students were categorized as active participants if they did at least three or four of the indicators. Meanwhile, the students were categorized as passive participants if they did one or two indicators.

Dealing with collecting the data by using a vocabulary achievement test, Laufer& Goldstein (2004) clarify that testing vocabulary can be testing on one component, large sample of items, and measuring learner's total vocabulary. The vocabulary test, in this research, used the materials of the vocabulary covering nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives. This was because the learning materials assessed in the test were based on theEnglish curriculum used at the moment at the school. Furthermore, the vocabulary test was for measuring the students' ability in finding the meaning of words, the synonyms, the antonyms, and the forms of the words based on the four indicators of the learning objectives in this research. There were 10 questions for each indicator. The total number of the questions was 40 irems and each correct answer was scored 2.5. So, the maximum total score of the vocabulary test was 100.

There were two criteria of the research success as the following.

1. The use of online dictionary could improve the students' active participation if at least 80 % of the students were active in the the vocabulary teachig learning process.
2. The use of online dictionary could improve the students' vocabulary achievement if at least 75% of the students got score 71 (KKM score) or more in the vocabulary achievement test in each cycle.It deals with the second subsection of method.

Findings and Discussion

This classroom action research was conducted in MTsN 5 Ngawi. The action in the first cycle was done in three meetings. The first and the second meetings were done for implementing the action that was teaching vocabulary by using online dictionary. The teaching and learning process was based on the lesson plans that had been constructed for meeting 1 and meeting 2. The time allocation in each meeting was 2 x 30 minutes. Then, the

third meeting was done for conducting the vocabulary achievement test. The schedule of the implementation of the actions in Cycle 1 was explained in the following table.

Table1. The schedule of The Action in Cycle 1

No	Activities	Day/Date	Times
1	Meeting 1	11th of November 2021	07.00 a.m–08.00 a.m
2	Meeting 2	15th of November 2021	08.50 a.m&10.00 a.m
3	Vocabulary Achievement Test	18th of November 2021	07.00 a.m-08.00 a.m

In meeting 1 and meeting 2, the observation was done by the researcher by using an observation checklist to know the students' participation during the implementation of the action.

The results of the observation showed that in meeting 1, all of the participants (34 students) did the first and the second indicators. They were paying attention to the teacher's explanation and the students answered the teacher's questions in relation to the use of online dictionary for learning vocabulary. There were 6 students who did not use online dictionary because they did not do the task. The others (28 students) did the third and the fourth indicators that were the students used the online dictionary and did the vocabulary exercise given. There were 6 students who fulfilled only two indicators, and they were categorized as passive students. There were 28 students who fulfilled four indicators and they were categorized as active students.

In meeting 2, the participants were 32, because 2 students were absent. The result of observation showed that 32 students fulfilled indicator 1 and 2, that was the students paid attention to the teacher's explanation and the students answered the teacher's questions in relation to the use of online dictionary. There were 2 students who did not fulfill indicator 3 and 4 because they did not bring their gadgets at that time. So, there were 30 students who fulfilled the third and the fourth indicator that was the students used the online dictionary and did the vocabulary exercise provided. The results of the observation in meeting 2 showed that there were 2 students categorized as passive students, and there were 30 students who fulfilled four indicators, and they were categorized as active students.

To know the percentage of the students' active participation, the researcher used this following formula.

$$E = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

Note:

E: the percentage of the students' active participation in the vocabulary learning using online dictionary

n: the students who were categorized as active participants

a. Meeting 1

$$E = \frac{28}{34} x\ 100\% = 82.35\%$$

b. Meeting 2

$$E = \frac{30}{32} x\ 100\% = 93.75\%$$

In the first meeting, there were 28 of 34 students or 82.35% students who were considered as active students during the vocabulary teaching and learning process by using online dictionary. In the second meeting, the students' active participation increased to be 93.75% students.

Table2. The Students' Participation in Cycle 1

Meeting	Percentage (%)	
	Active	**Passive**
Meeting 1	82.35%	17.64%
Meeting 2	93.75%	6.25%
Average	**83.7%**	**16.3%**

Based on the table above, the average percentage of the students' active participation in meeting 1 and meeting 2 was 83.7%. This showed that the first research success criteria stating that the use of online dictionary can improve the students' active participation if at least 80% of the students are active, was fulfilled. It could be stated that the use of online dictionary in teaching and learning vocabulary could improve the students' active participation.

The vocabulary achievement test was conducted in meeting 3. The vocabulary test in this research consisted of finding the meaning of words, the synonyms, the antonyms, and the function of the words. There were 10 questions for each indicator. So, there were 40 test

items in the test. Each correct answer was scored 2.5. Therefore, the total score of the vocabulary test was 100. And, the time allocation was 60 minutes.

The students' scores of the vocabulary test were analyzed by using the following formula.

$$E = \frac{n}{N} \, x \, 100\%$$

$$E = \frac{28}{34} x \, 100\% = 82.35\%$$

Note:

E: the percentage of the students who got score ≥ 71 in the vocabulary test

n: the total number of the students who got score ≥ 71 in the vocabulary test

N: the total number of the students doing the vocabulary test.

The vocabulary achievement test results in Cycle 1 showed that the students who got score 71 or more were 82.35% or 28 students. It means that the second research success criteria stating that the use of online dictionary could improve the students' vocabulary achievement if at least 75% of the students got score 71 or more in the vocabulary achievement test in each cycle was fulfilled. Comparing the number of students who got vocabulary test score 71 or higher in the pre-cycle that was 67.64% or 23 students and the one in the first cycle test, that was 82.35% or 28 students. So, there was an improvement of the students' vocabulary achievement.

Since there was improvement of the students' participation in learning vocabulary by using online dictionary and their vocabulary achievement, therefore the action cycle was stopped and the second cycle was not conducted.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this research, it could be concluded the following points.

1. The use of online dictionary could enhance the eighth grade students' active participation during the vocabulary teaching and learning process at MTsN 5 Ngawi. It could be seen from results of the observation which showed that the students' active participation improved from 25 students or 75% of the students in the pre-cycle to 29 students or 83.7% of the students' active participation in cycle 1.

2. The use of online dictionary could enhance the eighth grade students' vocabulary achievement at MTsN 5 Ngawi. It was proven by the total 34 students who got score ≥71 in the vocabulary test improved from 67.64% or 23 students in the pre-cycle to 82.35% in the vocabulary test in Cycle 1.

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