An Investigation of Teaching Aids Used by English Teachers in Teaching Vocabulary for Young Learners

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Abstract

This qualitative study aims at investigating the teaching aids used to teach vocabulary for young learners. The data were collected using questionnaires and interview to determine the kinds of teaching aids used to teach vocabulary, the challenges in implementing them, and how English teachers face these challenges. The data collected were analyzed qualitatively by referring to Miles & Huberman (1994). The results show that the dominant type of teaching aids used by the English teachers to teach English to the young learners is audio-visual which is a combination of visual and audio aids was seldomly used by the teachers. According to the interview, the teachers felt that students were more engaged by visuals and audiovisuals because teachers can place interesting decorations to guide the students; for example, a student's favorite cartoon character or animal. The result of the interview also showed that the teachers found challenges in implementing the teaching aids, namely (a) time consuming (b) quality of teaching aids (c) technical difficulties. To face the challenges, teachers usually consider alternatives that are equivalent to the media that should have been used, allocated time, and also skills in operating electronic to implement the teaching aids.

Keywords: English teacher, Teaching aids, Vocabulary lesson

Introduction

One of the easiest ways to learn English is to learn the language at a young age. Many people believe that the faster a person starts to learn new concepts, the quicker he or she can master. Todd (2003) in Lestari, Asrori, and Hefy, (2019) suggests that age factors determine the maximal achievement of L2. Paradis (2004) and Johnstone (2009) list some of the benefits of studying English at an earlier age. They claim that children have a great spirit in studying language, particularly the sound system, and we elaborate implicit knowledge under which information is implicitly retained. They have a strong sense and become less nervous. They also have much more time to learn other languages and a greater ability to become aware of intercultural identities. Eventually, as children learn faster, they can have more benefits in enhancing their skills.

Through teaching and learning process, young English learners will go through a process where their personality is created. Thus, tomorrow's education will be able to perform its position more efficiently by making the children artistic, imaginative and successful. One instructor will not be willing to adapt to the various backgrounds among all the pupils. In teaching, one of the most important things is communication. In fact, teaching equals to communication. In order to optimize teachers' teaching performance, the way teacher communicate something to the student need to be considered to be more effective. According to Asokhia (2009) most of the teaching in school is textbook dominated, which means that it is only focused on what have been written in textbook. The usage of teaching aids and also teaching techniques will make the lesson more enjoyable and also fun to the students. So that, the students will be easier to learn. It is suggested to use some teaching aids like CD or LCD projector in teaching. It can be seen on the syllabus designed by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. From it, we can see that the English teaching is started by learning some basic vocabulary around them which can be done in many ways. It is important to build a strong base of their English skill first. After that, the students are taught more complex lesson such as preposition, etc.

According to Merriam Websters' dictionary, teaching aids means an instrument (such as a book, a image, or a map) or a tool (such as a DVD or a computer) used by a teacher to complement or improve audio-visual teaching aids. It is widely recommended that teachers in elementary school provide children with resources for experiential learning that will help them develop a deeper and in-depth understanding of environmental issues or research Corney, (2000). Kolb (1984) suggested experiential learning model that acts as an effective framework for comprehending the learning process of students from a viewpoint of experiences. The model that Korb suggested learning as a cycle of four stages which are: (1) Concrete experience. Is an involvement of an activity where initial responses and affective responses are activated. (2) Reflective observation. Is when the student searching for the meaning of things by studying them from various points of view. This depends on how one sees the issue. (3) Abstract conceptualization. Is when the student constructing of the logic, interpretating the concepts and analyzing the perspective. It refers to how one thinks about the subject. (4) Active experimentation. It stresses on how the student performs what he or she has learned about the subject.

From the student perspective, teaching aids itself can attract students' attention according to a research conducted by Awwad, (2018). From the result of Awwads' research, we can see that 61% of the respondent (student) agreed that the use of teaching aids can attract their attention. Moreover, 74% of the respondents' answer positively indicates that using teaching aids in the lesson can make the lesson more memorable to the student. And 80% of the respondent agree that teaching aid can make them easier to understand new vocabulary.

Before the study conducted, researcher has done a preliminary study at SDN 2 Mekarsari. From the obtained preliminary interview data, it can be said that two of four English teachers in SDN 2 Mekarsari thinks that it is very tricky to get all student's attention to the lesson. They also said that there are some students who talked to their friends during teaching and learning activity. To overcome this situation, they (the English teachers) started to use teaching aids that provided by the school in teaching English. Sometime they also made it their selves. Although they have

already implemented teaching aids to the lesson, the English teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari still think that they cannot get quite maximum result so it is important to know what are the challenges that they face while implementing teaching aids to teach vocabulary. In this research, case study method is implemented to study more about what are the type of teaching aids are used and also the challenges in implementing it by four English teachers in SDN 2 Mekarsari. Here before the pandemic of COVID-19 has begun, English

Method

This research applied was qualitative method. In specific, this research was a descriptive qualitative. The researcher collected data through online questionnaire (google form), guided interview and documentation and analyze qualitatively the results of it research.

(1) questionnaire method in the form of online questionnaire (google form) (2) interview. The researcher chooses those methods in order to know more about what type of teaching aids that the English teacher use, how the teacher implement and also the challenges in applying them to vocabulary teaching, and also the challenge they face while implementing the aids. The researcher needed to do an assessment by using questionnaire and also interview to gain deeper information.

Then lastly, the documentation method is chosen because we need to record all the data that gained during the research (especially data in the form of audio and also picture. This helped the researcher in analyzing the data. These three methods are conducted by giving the English teachers questionnaire first. After that, the interview method is conducted. While doing the interview, researcher also did the documentation by taking some pictures of the interview session by camera, and also recorded the session by using the voice recorder.

The researcher used triangulation techniques in order to avoid the bias in the result of the study. the researcher was using methodological triangulation which combined interview and questionnaire or check list in collecting the data needed. The method of analysis was according to *Miles and Huberman* (1994:266)

Findings & Discussions

The results of this study showed types of teaching aids used by teacher, how they implement the aids, and also the challenges to use teaching aids in teaching vocabulary in SDN 2 Mekarsari. The primary and secondary data were obtained in this research. The primary data were collected by using questionnaire while the secondary data were collected by using interview guide. The obtained data were used to analyze how teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari use teaching aids in teaching vocabulary and also the type of teaching aids they use. Here are the results of types of teaching aids:

Figure 1. Teachers' Response

Media pembelajaran apa yang biasanya anda gunakan untuk mengajar kosakata (vocabulary)

4 tanggapan
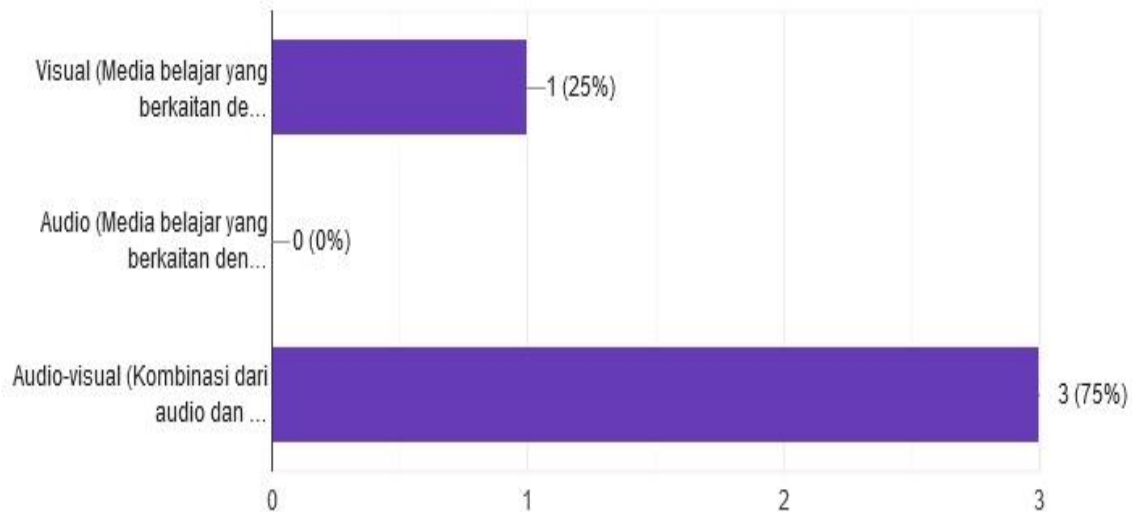
From the data that were obtained through the questionnaire, it can be seen that the most used type of teaching aids used by English teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari is audio-visual which is the combination of visual and audio aids. As further information, most of the respondents are rarely using audio aids rather than visual and also audio-visual. According to the interview, the reason why audio aids are rarely to be used is because the teacher feels that students are more interested to the lesson compared to when the teacher use rather visual or audio-visual aids. They feel the student are more engaged by visual and also audio-visual because the teachers can put attractive decoration to the aids; for example, students favorite cartoon character or animals. The same result also identified by Fauziah et al., (2018) the study stated that respondents in Fauziah's research agreed that audio visual aids could attract students' attention and at the end it could improve their vocabulary abilities because they learned more vocabulary and retained it better while using them. On the other hand, there is a opposite result from the research done by Marwana (2019) which stated that the students were happy with their English learning while using audio aids only because the teacher used music in the teaching and learning process. According to the students' interviews conducted by the researcher during the study, they participated actively in class. Which means it is a very positive response towards teaching aids in English learning.

The second one is the challenges that the English teachers face in implementing teaching aids for teaching vocabulary. The result shows that there is positive response from the student when the English teacher uses teaching aids in class. Also, for the English teacher according to the data, student is more willing to participate, enthusiastic, more active and also can enjoy the

teaching and learning activity which is in line with the researches done by Andriani, (2016); Fauziah et al., (2018); Sakkir et al., (2020); Utami, (2015) where they proved that teaching aids has a strong effect towards students' vocabulary skills. Even though, the English teacher still find some obstacles in the use of teaching aids to teach vocabulary which one of them are a time-related obstacle. The last one is how the teacher face the challenges. The way teacher faces every challenge can be classified related to the challenges faced. For example, the teacher that having a problem related to time management will find a better way to manage their time by adding some more time to make the teaching aids. From the interview data, this teacher is having a really hard time dividing their work time for school and also for their personal business. Next for the teacher who find some challenges in the lack of quality of the electronic teaching aids provided by the school, according to the teachers, there are some electronics that sometimes malfunction and could not be used. To face it, they usually find another alternative that equivalent to the media for example bringing their own laptop and speaker so they can still show the video/anything else that they are prepare for the lesson. They also meet the challenge where the quantity of the media that provided by the school is deficient. There are a lot of time when some of the English teacher teach at the same time at different classes. So, they face this challenge by adding some more teaching aids that they made themselves so they can teach as they plan. There is also some teacher who feel difficult to find a picture that match with the material but also still can attract their students' attention. To face this challenge, the teacher is trying to give a question related to the material

This research is aimed to find out (1) Type of teaching aids which the English teachers use for teaching vocabulary in SDN 2 Mekarsari (2) The challenges that the English teachers face in implementing teaching aids for teaching vocabulary in SDN 2 Mekarsari (3) How English teacher at SDN 2 Mekarsari face the challenge. The research result is the most used teaching aids by the English teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari is audio-visual aids. For the challenges, there are three main challenges that they face which are time-related challenges, the quality and also the quantity of the provided teaching aids, and also technical problems. And lastly the teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari has their own way to face the challenge. Further discussion will be listed below.

Before going more deeply about the discussion, it is necessary to know how important it is to apply teaching aids into the class. Generally speaking, teaching aids is a useful tool to advance the teaching strategy as it is proven in some researches such as Andriani, (2016); Fauziah et al., (2018); Sakkir et al., (2020); Utami, (2015). These researches result prove that teaching aids helps the teacher to gain students attention, engage the student, and also improving their understanding. With these benefits, it can be said that it is important to use teaching aids in class so that the teaching process will be having the better outcome. As an addition, Teaching aids is "A Teaching Aid is an instructional aid (book, chalk board, picture), an object (such as a globe, or map or a specimen) or device (such as a DVD or computer) used by a teacher to enhance or enliven classroom instruction." (Kapur, 2018) which consist of visual aids, audio-visual aids, and also audio aids. according to its definition, it can be said that teaching aids can include more than one learning style either visual, auditory, or kinesthetic.

From the questionnaire result, we can see that the most used aids to teach vocabulary in SDN 2 Mekarsari is audio-visual aids. This is in line with a research by Fauziah et al, (2018) the

research stated that respondents agreed that audio-visual aids could attract students' attention and at the end it could improve their vocabulary abilities because they learned more vocabulary and retained it better while using them. In addition, a research done by Marwana, (2019) which stated that the students were happy with their English learning while using audio aids only because the teacher used music in the teaching and learning process. Which means it is a very positive response towards teaching aids in English learning. They were happier, more engaged, and more enthusiastic about learning English; they were able to better understand the materials; they could improve their grammar and vocabulary; they could come up with new ideas; they could express themselves; and they could use it in their everyday lives.

From the data that were obtained through interview shows that there is positive response from the student when the English teacher uses teaching aids in class. Also for the English teacher, according to the data student is more willing to participate, enthusiastic, more active and also can enjoy the teaching and learning activity which is in line with the researches done by Andriani, (2016); Fauziah et al., (2018); Sakkir et al., (2020); Utami, (2015) where they prove that teaching aids has a strong effect towards students' vocabulary skills. Even though, the English teacher still find some challenges in the use of teaching aids to teach vocabulary. One of them are a time-related challenge. Time-related challenge are the challenges that the teacher face when it comes to creating aids that suitable for the material which usually takes longer time than they expected. In this case, Teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari find that making\using the teaching aids could be more time consuming.

The second challenge is related to the lack of media and also lack of quality to use in school especially the electronic type of teaching aids (such as LCD projector, speaker, etc.) The school offered several instructional materials for the teachers to utilize in their classes, such as an LCD projector, computer, flashcards, and so on. According to the interview, the aids do not always operate effectively (especially the electronics), and the quantity of teaching aids available is restricted, so not every teacher can utilize them at the same time. The last challenge is, technical challenges. Which is This relating to the teachers' skill in finding a suitable aid for the material and also knowledge on how to use the aids especially the electronic one. Some teacher finds it difficult to apply picture to the material meaning that sometime they are still not sure if the picture is suitable to the material or not. Applying teaching aids in teaching vocabulary still being a difficult thing to do for teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari especially there is also some challenges where the teacher doesn't really understand how to operate electronic teaching aids but they tend to find another solution for their own challenges according to what they have experienced.

To face the problem, the English teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari usually adapt themselves to the situation. Example for time-related challenges when teacher spend too much time in making the aids, they will adjust/manage their time by allocating more time, adjusting another schedule so they will have more time to work on the teaching aids. For the challenge related to the quality and also quantity of the aids itself usually will be solved by the teacher itself by using their creativity to make their own aids according or finding alternatives for the aids such as bringing their own laptop and speaker so they can still present the video/whatever else they have prepared for the class. Lastly, to face the technical challenges, like what has been written above, the teacher

attempting to read more books about teaching technique in order to improve their ability to select the appropriate picture to teach. So does on how to operate electronic aids effectively. In conclusion, the teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari doesn't take advantage of all type of teaching aids to teach vocabulary. They are tended to focus on using only two type of teaching aids which is visual and also audio-visual which are more suitable for teaching vocabulary in their opinion. They (the teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari) also, they think that audio aids are not enough engaging for their class and it is not appropriate to teach vocabulary. This is in line with the research done by Putri, (2015) which said that teaching vocabulary using song lyric (audio aids) is not effective because the students do not know the meaning of vocabulary in the song because the students never hear the song before and also it is difficult for the student because they are not seeing the object that are being taught.

Conclusions and Suggestions

In brief, the results of this research can be summarized as follows. The use of teaching aids by the English teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari are still focused on one type of teaching aids which is textbook. The teacher does use LCD Projector and also computer but only when they feel it necessary. As an addition, the English teacher here still having constraints in the quantity and also the quality of the teaching aids which are provided by the school especially the electronic one such as the LCD projector, audio player, etc. so at some cases the teacher needs to anticipate the chances of malfunctioning device/teaching aids by providing the student by alternatives one such as flashcard, printed picture, etc. which leads them to another problem related to time management. According to the interview of the English teacher in SDN 2 Mekarsari they still do not have enough time to make an extra teaching aid.

Suggestion can be delivered based on the research that had been done is as follows.

1) It is recommended to the English teacher to also learn basic computer skill in order to be more update about the teaching technologies such as electronic teaching aids and also further invention in teaching
2) It is recommended for the school to always check the quality and also quantity of the provided tools and device so the teacher can use it in classroom comfortably and effectively
3) For future researchers, the results of this study can be used as a comparison, reference, and as a consideration to deepen further research.

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