TEACHERS STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH VOCABULARY IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary mastery is very important to support the four language skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Vocabulary is the initial stage to be taught before teaching other aspects of the language, especially for elementary school students. The importance of vocabulary teaching should be a top priority in English language teaching. The teacher becomes an important role in improving vocabulary mastery. Therefore, research has emerged related to the strategy of teachers in teaching vocabulary in elementary schools. This study aims to find out the teacher's strategy in teaching English vocabulary to elementary school students and to find out the teacher's perception in applying vocabulary teaching strategies. In this study, researchers used descriptive-qualitative research, and data collection used observation and interviews. This research was conducted in an elementary school in South Jakarta, where the respondents were two teachers. The findings of this study are classified into two themes; strategies used by teachers in vocabulary learning, and teacher perceptions in implementing these strategies. The results showed that English teachers applied image strategies, YouTube videos, songs, and games. Based on the teacher's perception, the strategies used during the learning process in the classroom are more effective for teaching vocabulary to elementary school students because they adapt to the characteristics of students who prefer to play while learning. The selection of learning strategies is also based on the needs of students, levels, and materials. Therefore, teachers teach by applying various activities and strategies to make students enjoy the process of learning vocabulary in the classroom more.

Keyword: Teacher Strategies, Teaching Engling Vocabulary, Primary School

1) INTRODUCTION

The success of language learning is largely determined by the amount of vocabulary that has been learned (Elhamdi, O. E. H., & Hezam, 2020). Therefore, everyone who wants to be proficient in English must multiply the vocabulary. The more vocabulary a person has, the higher his language skills will be (Hotimah, 2010). When students can understand words well, they will find it easier to communicate in spoken or written English.

The success of students in vocabulary cannot be separated from the role of the teacher in providing knowledge and teaching vocabulary. Because with a teacher who teaches vocabulary to students well, students will easily digest vocabulary material. A teacher must master the knowledge of vocabulary that includes the form, meaning and proper use of words. Because elementary school students have word maintenance that is still very lacking in terms of mother tongue (Indonesian) and target language (English). In addition, elementary school students have different characteristics from teenagers or adults.

Students have different characteristics; this will affect the way they learn in the classroom. Among expert scoot (2000) there are some common characteristics of children at the beginner level (5-10 years); They will tell what they heard. When teaching, teachers have to face questions they will be asked about what they hear. Second, they use free and wild fantasies. To overcome this trait, images can be used for the process of students being able to teach new vocabulary related to real objects. Thirdly, they love to play and learn. Basically, elementary school students like to play very much. Make the classroom atmosphere livelier with the teacher using games, role play or involving students in classroom practice exercises. They will enjoy learning while playing and learning the best for elementary school students is when learning while playing. Fourth, they are very enthusiastic and positive-minded. By using the right learning strategy, students will be enthusiastic in following the learning process in the classroom. Teachers should take advantage of the enthusiastic character of students in the teaching of vocabulary in the classroom, because they have great curiosity. Fifth, they rely on both spoken and physical words to convey and understand meaning. Sixth, they learn from direct instruction. Seventh, the understanding they gained was gained through their own eyes, hands, and ears. Eighth, they have very short attention and concentration. Therefore, teachers must be able to provide varied teaching activities. So that students do not get bored quickly during learning. Activities such as songs, games or providing icebreaking activities are very helpful to restore student focus.

With diverse student characteristics, it is a challenge for teachers to be able to use effective learning strategies for students in the classroom. By knowing the characteristics of students, teachers can determine good and appropriate strategies, techniques or media to achieve language teaching goals (Thabit et al., 2020) Teachers must know the character of students, this is an important part to be used as a reference in formulating a learning strategy. (Septianti, N., & Afiani, R. 2020). Even Reigleuth (1983) said the characteristics of students as one important

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factor in the development of learning management strategies. Before determining and developing learning strategies, teachers are expected to know in advance the character of students. Learning strategies can run optimally, when the teacher knows the characteristics of the students. Learning strategy is an action plan for a series of activities by using methods that are implemented according to the situation and conditions of the school and student context according to (Budiana, I., Haryanto, et al., 2022).

Lawton defines that a teaching strategy is a general plan for the learning process that includes the structure of the desired learner's behavior in terms of learning objectives, and the teaching techniques that will be applied by the teacher in applying the strategy. Teaching strategies refer to methods used by teachers to help students be able to learn the subject matter well and be able to develop learning objectives.

It can be concluded that learning strategies are learning models or learning methods chosen and used by teachers to deliver learning materials. The use of strategies in teaching is useful to make it easier for students to accept and understand the learning material provided by the teacher and in the end the learning objectives can be achieved as planned. Not all learning strategies are suitable for achieving all learning objectives and all learning conditions. Therefore, teachers must understand the learning objectives, individual students, class activities, and also the development of all aspects of student life in an integrated manner before implementing a learning strategy (Kusumawati, at al., 2019).

Vocabulary is an additional process that involves strategies and the proper application of the strategies used, this will facilitate vocabulary learning. According to (Wenden, A. L., & Rubin, n.d.) students have different levels of learning skills in the language learning process. This means that language learners need to master several learning techniques so that learning a second language or foreign language becomes more effective.

Harmer in his book The Practice of English Teaching, also adds that there are four methods suitable for teaching English to students, namely the direct method, sugestopedia, lexical approximation, and total physical response. Experts mention many strategies, researchers collect some and they are Realia, Pictures, Games, Songs, memorization, and enumeration.

In this discussion, there are several studies on learning strategies used by teachers for vocabulary learning. Most of the studies are aimed at both students and college students. (Nazarudin, at al., 2019) conducted research in 3 public schools in Sakra district. This study

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aims to find strategies and problems or challenges faced by teachers in teaching vocabulary to young learners. The strategies used by teachers in teaching English vocabulary are modeling and demonstrasai. That is, the teacher gives a direct example of how to say words and students are asked to follow them. Question and answer sessions are also conducted by teachers during the learning process. To make students enjoy learning English, teachers use Songs in every meeting. For the challenge faced by the teacher is that students have very less learning motivation and students are very noisy when learning takes place, they will stop making noise when the teacher is angry. Other challenges that teachers face in teaching English vocabulary are teachers, students and schools. The problem for students is that some students are reluctant to follow the teacher and play more with their friends and the teacher does not provide good classroom management, this is the main problem for the teacher. The teacher's problem is that teachers have difficulty in managing the classroom because each student has different characteristics and needs. The problem with the school is that the school does not provide good facilities for classroom teaching. Starting from the unavailability of supporting media, textbooks and lack of training for teachers to support the teaching and learning process.

Based on the issues raised in the background of the study, the researcher set two research questions, and that is what strategy is used by teachers in teaching vocabulary to elementary school students? and Teachers' perceptions of the strategies implemented?

2) METHOD

This research is qualitative descriptive research that focuses on vocabulary teaching strategies used by teachers in elementary school students and teacher perceptions in applying these strategies in the vocabulary teaching process.

Settings and Participants

The study was conducted in one of the private school classes in south jakarta. Participants in this study were two teachers who taught English vocabulary.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

The instruments used to collect the data are observations and interviews. Researchers observe the entire process of teaching and learning activities and use observation to see the implementation of teacher learning strategies in the teaching and learning process. According to Creswell (2012) observation is the process of collecting open, first-hand information by

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observing people and places in a study. To obtain data, researchers take part in activities where researchers observe.

After observation, an interview with the teacher is conducted. This study used semi-structured interviews. (Turner III, D. W., & Hagstrom-Schmidt, 2022) said the standardized Open-ended interview is structured in the questions participants are asked the same questions but the questions are arranged in such a way that the responses given by the participants can be open. Using this Open-ended interview will allow participants to provide detailed information, as it allows participants to express all their perspectives and experiences and this can also allow researchers to ask probing questions. In principle, each participant interviewed was asked the same questions to avoid being biased between the interviewee and the researcher. Interviews were conducted using Indonesian to avoid difficulties in understanding the questions asked by researchers.

After collecting data from observed teaching and learning activities and the interview process with the teacher, the data is analyzed qualitatively by compiling the data into pieces or groups of information also known as themes and codes. Turner III, D. W., & Hagstrom-Schmidt (2022) said themes and codes are consistent phrases, expressions, concepts or perceptions that are common among researchers. The function of this theme and code is to reduce the bias of researchers and also has the potential to eliminate data analysis that is felt to be excessive in the data retrieval process.

3) RESULTS

Based on the results of interviews and observations conducted by researchers with English teachers, it shows that teachers use four strategies applied by teachers in elementary schools in improving students' mastery of English vocabulary. among others as follows:

Picture

It starts with displaying the image on the LCD. The teacher first explains the material to be studied that day then together with the students to guess, find, and match vocabulary-related images such as vowels and outdoor activities. In this activity, students have a very high enthusiasm to find the right answer. This can be seen from all the students who are enthusiastic about responding to the teacher's questions. After that it is continued by mentioning together the vocabulary related to the material. If the student is familiar with the material, the teacher

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continues the learning by opening the worksheet, then listening to the audio from the lcd screen. The audio is repeated twice so that students can understand the essence of the audio. After the repetition of the audio, students are asked to repeat orally the content of the audio being played. Then proceed with filling out the worksheet according to the audio that has been listened to. The teacher asks students to put stickers on the worksheet according to the right choice. Students are very enthusiastic when placing stickers on worksheets requested by the teacher. Stickers are used to match words with images on a worksheet. After everything is done filling out the worksheets, students are asked to come to the front of the class to fill out the practice questions and mark the answers in the lcd. Then it is discussed together to know the correct answer.

Games

The teacher presents a game in the form of a quiz. In this game students are asked to guess the correct answer. The enthusiasm of the students was very noticeable in this game session. By using the game students quickly easily memorize the vocabulary that has been taught before. All students participate to answer the exercises in game application. Games are one of the strategies that can increase students' enthusiasm in learning. In observation, this technique is very effective to make students enthusiastic in learning vocabulary, all students participate in answering all questions in the game. Students offered to fill in the exercises that were being displayed on the LCD screen. They eagerly mentioned the answers to each question presented in the game.

Youtube Videos

Youtube videos are also applied by teachers in learning English vocabulary in this school. Teachers use animated videos and learning videos from youtube to teach vocabulary to students. The video will be broadcast and make students directly focus on the lcd screen to see and listen to the content of the video. Youtube videos are shown during material that requires visuals, characters, animation and audio to support the material presented. First the teacher will explain in advance the material. Then show a youtube video to show it animatedly so that students can understand the material. At the same time, the teacher explains the material as the video is played. During student rest sessions, the teacher still shows youtube videos, this is to strengthen students' vocabulary memory, develop new words, and for entertainment during breaks.

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Song

The use of songs is carried out by the teacher in supporting learning activities, only applied at a certain time. Such as filling recess hours, supporting material that requires visual and audio tools in its application so that students can listen to and understand the material being taught.

Song in vocabulary learning is one of the alternatives in carrying out fun and cheerful teaching and learning activities for elementary school students.

The reaction of students in using the strategies that the teacher uses is very enthusiastic and enjoys the teaching and learning process, this can be seen from the enthusiasm of the students when the initial practice starts with searching for outdoor activity vocabulary and finding vocal words. Enthusiastically, elementary school students together filled in exercises related to outdoor activities and vocal materials. During learning, teachers use several learning strategies.

When students feel that they do not understand the material provided by the teacher, students will immediately ask the teacher about something that has not been understood. In this study, it showed that students are involved in all activities in the classroom by answering all the teacher's questions and shows that students interact well with their teacher, especially for the teacher's instruction when they come to the front of the class to write down their answers and interact well with other learners. If it is felt that students have begun to lose focus or feel bored with activities in class, the teacher will immediately apply ice breaking to regain student focus.

4) DISCUSSION

The research findings related to the learning strategies used by teachers in teaching vocabulary in elementary schools include games, Youtube videos, songs, and images. The results of this observation show that this strategy is very effective in making students enthusiastic in learning vocabulary, all students participate in answering all questions asked by the teacher. As for the use of pictures in teaching vocabulary to elementary school students, it was found that students were enthusiastic in searching, matching and guessing the pictures displayed on the lcd. In accordance with the statement of (Mansourzadeh, 2009) the use of images makes

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vocabulary learning more fun and interesting. Another finding in this study is that the use of games can increase students' enthusiasm and motivation in vocabulary learning. It can be seen; all students participate to search and answer questions in the game. This is in accordance with the statement of (Bakhsh, 2016) who said that games can help students to learn vocabulary effectively. As for the use of YouTube videos in teaching vocabulary to elementary school students, it was found that students became excited when using YouTube videos in class. (Hariyono, 2020) said that the use of videos on YouTube makes students have a positive response in teaching and learning activities and makes it easier for students to understand vocabulary. Teachers use songs in vocabulary learning in the classroom to support vocabulary learning. According to (Pavia, at al., 2019) songs can be beneficial for students to improve their vocabulary mastery. By using songs, they can mimic the pronunciation of words.

This study is a study that only focuses on a less than extensive number of participants. It also examines the teaching of internal vocabulary whose observations have a short time. The suggestion in this study is that in the next study related to the teacher's strategy in teaching vocabulary so that the scope of the research is expanded and the research participants are expanded. Because in this study the number of observations made and participants was very limited.

5) CONCLUSION

The study was conducted in grade 2 of an elementary school in South Jakarta. The research participants involved were two English teachers. Researchers focus on what strategies are used by teachers in teaching English vocabulary and teachers' perceptions of using those strategies. The study found that, teachers used several strategies in teaching vocabulary such as games, images, YouTube videos and also songs. Teachers use varied Strategies as learning progresses. They use two or more strategies at each meeting. This is done to make students happy in learning English vocabulary and to make it easier for students to understand vocabulary during the teaching and learning process. Further findings are based on teacher perceptions, the learning strategies chosen by the teacher are adjusted to the needs of students, levels, and also the material. The strategies used during the learning process in the classroom are more effective in teaching vocabulary to elementary school students because they adapt to the characteristics of students who prefer to play while learning. The benefits of this research are expected to

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improve vocabulary teaching strategies in elementary schools and suggest effective strategies to be applied in vocabulary teaching for primary school teachers.

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