

IMPROVING GRADE VIII STUDENTS' VOCABULARY ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH CONCEPT

ATTAINMENT MODEL

***Nova Jayanti Harahap**

****Tina Mariany Arifin**

Abstract

The objective of this research was to discover whether the application of Concept Attainment Model could in Grade VIII students. It was conducted by applying CAR (Classroom Action Research). The subject of this study was Grade VIII B Private Junior High School (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama : SMP*) Swasta Prayatna Medan which consisted of 38 students. The instruments used were quantitative data (vocabulary test) and qualitative data (diary notes, interview, and observation). Based on the data analysis, it was found that the students' score improved; it can be seen from the score in pre-test, post –test in Cycle I and post-test in Cycle II. In the orientation test, the mean of the students' score was 59.3, in the post-test of the Cycle I was 69.5, and the mean of the students' score of the last pos-test was 79.2. Based on the diary notes, interview, and observation, it shows that the expression and excitement of the students were also improved. It was found that teaching of vocabulary through Concept Attainment Model could improve students' vocabulary achievement. It is suggested that English teachers apply this Concept Attainment Model as one of the alternative strategies in teaching vocabulary.

Key Words : Vocabulary Achievement, Conceprt Attainment Model, Test, Data, Classroom Action Research

Introduction

Background of the Study

English is the first foreign language taught in schools in Indonesia. It is an international language, which is used by many people all over the world to communicate among nations either in spoken or written form. Realizing that English is an international language that is why English used in a global setting language to be well mastered by many people. English is a very highly recommended due to the strong position of English world, the Indonesian Department of Education and Culture has put a special role in the teaching of English. English as a foreign language is taught starting from the Elementary School up to the university level.

In the teaching of a language, the four language skills namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing should be well taught and mastered by the students. Since English is a new subject for most Junior High School students, the teachers have to make them interested in studying. Interest is an important factor to make them pay attention to the subject. The aim of teaching English in the Junior High School is to motivate them to be ready and have self confidence in learning English at higher levels of education.

Vocabulary learning is a very important part of learning a language. Students learn English in order to enable to communicate in that language. Students intend to be able to listen, to speak, to read, and to write in English. The material consists of spelling, listening, vocabulary, writing, reading and functional skills as the basis to get simple language skill. Vocabulary is one of the important points of

English learning. It is one of the language components and as a base of language. That is why vocabulary building should be given to children. Getting much vocabulary is better because they will have stronger base in learning and simple vocabulary is the best choice for students (color, number, fruit and so on)

Teaching English for Junior High school students are different from teaching English in higher level. Junior High school students still like playing. Teaching children is not same as teaching adults because they have different characteristics and different motivations. According to Harmer (2004:82), young children especially those up to the ages of thirteen or fourteen, learn differently from older children, adolescent and adults. In order to make English teaching successful, we have to consider some factors such as the quality of teacher, students' interest and motivation, the book used and the others. All of them were involved in a teaching and learning process. In teaching English to children, a teacher plays an important role because he has to give the very basic introduction of the first foreign language.

Based on the writer's interview and observation at Private Junior High School (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama* : SMP) Swasta Prayatna Medan, most of the students got frustrated and lost their interesting in learning vocabulary. The main problem was the students got difficulty in understanding a long list of words, because a teacher taught by asking the students to open the dictionary and the teacher's technique used in teaching vocabulary was not get interesting. It made students lazy learning vocabulary. For example, when they were bored with the

class, they will sleep during the class and ignore the lesson given by the teacher. Therefore, the teachers need to choose media that are best for students.

By applying the Concept Attainment Model, the teachers should do something to help their students to improve their vocabulary achievement. The writer wanted to apply the Concept Attainment Model as an alternative for teaching names of objects. The Junior High School students were given something new and different from what they usually get in class. They were not only as the object of the teaching learning process but as also the participants. In other words, the teacher made the students active instead of being silent. Through this study, the writer wanted to investigate a new teaching technique in order to increase the quality of English teaching learning process in Junior High School.

According to Martomidjojo (2009) the Concept Attainment can help students at all age levels in the understanding the concepts and hypothesis testing exercise. Sapra (2011:505) concludes in her research paper that the Concept Attainment Model focuses on meaning and understanding of the concept and to help the students internalize the scientific concepts rather than foster mere memorization. The model aims at acquisition of concepts which are flexible and have broader applicability. Ahmed et al (2012: 223) states the results showed that all the students including low achievers and high achievers, who were taught through the Concept Attainment Model performed significantly better than their counterparts taught through traditional method. Study results proved that the Concept Attainment Model emerged as effective instructional strategy in teaching of English.

From the results above, it can be summarized that the Concept Attainment Model is one of alternative and effective model to be applied to increase the students' vocabulary. The students will get many words and enjoy while they were study the vocabulary and also will motivate and encourage the students in learning. The other reason why the writer chooses the media for teaching vocabulary is it can train the students in memorizing the words.

Research Question

Based on the background of the study, the research of problem is formulated as the following: “Does the use of Concept Attainment Model Improve the Students' Vocabulary Achievement?”

Conceptual Framework

Vocabulary is one of the most important parts of communication. In mastering English, students must have adequate vocabulary. Therefore, vocabulary is a breath of language. Without vocabulary proficiency, the students automatically cannot obtain the four skills of English, such as speaking, listening, reading and writing. The bigger vocabulary they have, the easier to master English they feel.

In obtaining those four skills of English, the teacher is suggested to use an effective strategy while teaching vocabulary. By using Concept Attainment Model, the students are expected to find their new words themselves that are related to the keyword or target word and then they put all new words in the line.

While doing these activities, the teacher should be aware that it is impossible to understand those words quickly. Thus, the teacher has to make some repetition to the next meeting to help the students in understanding the new vocabularies. Meanwhile, the teacher has to limit the vocabulary because the more vocabulary they get, the more difficult to absorb it. For that reason, the teacher should be careful in choosing the words based on the level of the students. By doing all the activities through Concept Attainment Model, the students are expected to have fun in learning vocabulary. Therefore, mastering a certain amount of vocabulary is accepted that students can communicate fluently.

Research Method

This study was designed as Classroom Action Research (CAR). According to Best & Khan (2002;24) states that action research is focused on immediate application, not on the development of theory or on general application. The purpose is to improve school practices at the same times. CAR consists of four steps, namely: Planning, Action, Observation, and Reflection. These steps will be applied in each cycle, because CAR is a cyclical process. If the result in the first cycle failed, it will be continued to the next cycle be renewed the previous cycle to find out the problem solving. If the second cycles increase students' achievement on vocabulary, the cycle will be stopped. If it does not increase students' vocabulary achievement, cycle will be continued to the next cycles until the result determine was achieved. In this study, the action was going to apply by doing Concept Attainment Model.

Result and Discussion

This study applied Primary data and Secondary data. The Primary data was obtained from the mean of student's score in taking test. The subjects of the research were Grade VIII B students of Private Junior High School (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama: SMP*) Swasta Prayatna, Medan. The numbers of students in that class were 38 students. The data were taken from the students who came from the first until the last meeting. During the test, all students were present. The Secondary data were taken from diary notes and observation sheet.

The finding of this research is that Concept Attainment Model can help the students improve their vocabulary achievement. By Concept Attainment Model, the score of the students in vocabulary kept increasing from the pre-test until the post-test of Cycle II. It was proved by the data which showed that the mean of the students in the post – test II (79.2) was higher than that of the post-test I (69.5) and also higher than that of pre-test (59.5).

The Concept Attainment Model was applied to improve the students' vocabulary achievement. The Concept Attainment Model was one of the many techniques that could make the students easier in learning English especially in the vocabulary achievement.

This research proved the effectiveness of applying the Concept Attainment Model. It was shown in the table 4.1, the students' score from pre-test, the post-test in Cycle I and the pre-test and post test in Cycle II. It was because the teacher

controlled the class better, directly admonished the students who were noisy. So, the class become quitter and also provided more interesting activity in Cycle II.

Students' data in the post-test of Cycle II showed that the mean of students' scores were higher than the mean of the students' score in post-test of Cycle I and also better than the pre-test. In the last test of Cycle II, There were 25 students who get the score above 70 point and only 10 students who get the score under 70 point. And the higher score was 93.

This improvement not only happened in the mean of students' score but also the expression, interest, and excitement of students showed that there was improvement. It can be seen in the interview, diary notes and observation sheet. Most of the students were more active and enthusiast during teaching learning process.

It implied that the use of the Concept Attainment Model could improve the students' vocabulary achievement and also help the teacher to teach vocabulary.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Conclusion

In this chapter, the whole result, and analysis about the model of teaching which can be considered by determining the diary notes. Observation sheet, and data of students' achievement in score. The mean of the students' score in the last meeting of each topic showed that the highest score were achieved by the students. Furthermore, by considering that the students' scores were achieved in

the highest points when students had been taught after two cycles of Concept Attainment Model.

It can be seen from the improvement of the students' mean score for Orientation-test (59.3); vocabulary test in Cycle I (69.5), and vocabulary test in Cycle I(79.2). The students' score continuously improved in each test. Therefore, it was concluded that Concept Attainment Model could improve students' achievement in vocabulary.

Suggestions

The result of the research of the study showed that Concept Attainment Model can give contributes to improve the students' vocabulary achievement. To English teachers, it is suggested to use Concept Attainment Model in their scenario of teaching and manage the class situation becomes more interesting. Concept Attainment Model could be considered as an appropriate and effective method of teaching in improving students' vocabulary achievement. The teachers should do more variety in teaching because variation in teaching can keep the students' interest in learning. When it will learns it will help the students to keep concentration on their subject.

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