

## THE DIFFICULTIES IN TEACHING VOCABULARY FACED BY THE ENGLISH TEACHER AT SMO NEGERI 1 LUWUK

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### Abstrak

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan kesulitan yang dihadapi oleh guru bahasa inggris dalam mengajar kosakata di SMP Negeri 1 Luwuk. Jenis Penelitian ini menggunakan deskriptif kualitatif. Penelitian ini menggunakan instrumen wawancara untuk memperoleh data. Subjek penelitian ini adalah para guru di SMP Negeri 1 Luwuk. Data tersebut dikumpulkan melalui rekaman suara dan kemudian menggambarkan data tersebut untuk mengetahui kesulitan yang dihadapi oleh guru bahasa inggris. Berdasarkan hasil data wawancara peneliti menarik kesimpulan bahwa kesulitan yang di hadapi oleh guru Bahasa Inggris dalam mengajar kosakata berasal dari siswa dan fasilitas yang tersedia. Tidak memnungkinkan jika guru menjadi masalah untuk diri mereka sendiri. Kurangnya respon dari pihak sekolah mengenai perkembangan fasiltas dan minat siswa dalam belajar bahasa inggris tidak hanya menjadi masalah bagi para guru tapi juga tantangan dalam mengajar bahasa inggris. Sehingga upaya dalam meningkatkan metode dan teknik pengajaran menjadi salah satu solusi dan alternatif yang dilakukan secara berkelanjutan khususnya dalam pelajaran kosakata agar proses pembelajaran dapat berjalan dengan lancar.*

**Kata Kunci:** Kosakata, Kesulitan Guru

### Abstract

*This research aims to find the difficulties faced by the English teacher in teaching vocabulary at SMP Negeri 1 Luwuk. The type of this research was descriptive qualitative. This research used an instrument to obtain data. The subjects of this study were the teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Luwuk. The data was collected through voice recording and then describe the data to find out the difficulties faced by the English teacher. Based on the results of the interview, the research draws the conclusion that the difficulties in teaching vocabulary came from students and the lack of available school facilities. Do not rule out the possibility of the teacher being a problem for themselves. The lack of response from the school about the development of facilities and student interest in teaching English was not only a problem for the teachers but also a challenge so that efforts to improve teaching techniques and methods become one of the solution and alternative that can be continued especially in teaching vocabulary so that the learning process can runs smoothly.*

**Keywords:** Vocabulary, Difficulties of the Teacher

### Introduction

English is an international language that is used officially and is widespread in certain countries such as England and America. But, in Indonesia, English is more introduced as a foreign language. Furthermore, English is applied as a compulsory subject in schools with the aim that students can interact well in developing language skills. In the aspect of education, the role of English also helps in shaping the characters of students in competing in the modern world, given its very broad influence in the world so that is makes

it mandatory to learn especially students. Moreover, English language teaching developed dramatically because of the impact of globalization, it can be seen, where English has been taught since elementary school.

Teaching English at the junior high school level has been in communicating verbally and in writing. However, its influence as a foreign language requires students must master, such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In addition to these four skills to support the four language skills, students must have a good understanding of English components such as vocabulary. Vocabulary is the most important component in learning a language because in the process of communication, vocabulary becomes the main link obtaining information and makes it easier for someone to understand the purpose of the conversation. Therefore, the more vocabulary is possessed, the better a person's skills in language. It also means that student's skills in learning English are determined by how much vocabulary they have mastered. In addition, teacher involvement during the teaching process can be a determinant of student success in language.

Along with the development of the times, teaching English also began to develop. Teachers are required to be able to improve the quality of teaching to students, especially vocabulary. The difficulties in teaching vocabulary faced by the English teacher are overcrowded classes, lack of component, faulty methods of teaching in the teaching of English, non- available of good text books, apathy to new technique and procedures, inadequate provision of teaching Aids.

In language life, vocabulary has a very important role, both speaking in thought processes and as means of communication in daily life. Mastering vocabulary is not only limited to knowing the meaning of 'words', but in a broader context. Vocabulary is defined as a set of all words that are understood and was likely be used to compose new sentences for communication skills. The vocabulary explanation to experts is as follows:

According to Brown (2004) that vocabulary is the content and function words of language which are learned through by that they become apart of the child's understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. Second, vocabulary is words having meaning when communicating with others. In addition, Cameron (2001) defines that vocabulary is about learning words, children are not only expected to know the word but also they have to know what the meaning of that word.

Based on the explanation of the experts above, researches can draw conclusion about the vocabulary is a component of all languages that make up whole part, with specific uses and meanings that make it easy for everyone to compose new sentences in the process of information and communication. In addition, process of learning English, vocabulary can help students increase their confidence in speaking in certain environments. Vocabulary also provides a basis for developing and training students in reading, speaking, writing and listening in the hope that students can understand the meaning of this word and apply it in the use of English.

Learning a language is often associated with composing a sentence that is a good regular in speaking. Some people think that they want to speak fluently using the language they are learning, but they rarely think of anything more important before learning the language, such as mastering vocabulary. According to Nation (2001) states that vocabulary to listen Knowledge implies knowing a word in the spoken form of the word and the spoken form can be recognized and understood it in and out of context rather than guessed at.

In addition, this will certainly have an impact on the academic value of students in learning English, because the more vocabulary is mastered, the better the language skills students have.

#### 1. Types of Vocabulary

According to Nation (2001), there are two kinds of vocabulary. The type of vocabulary is divided based on the vocabulary knowledge, namely receptive and productive vocabulary. The types of vocabulary will be discussed below.

a. Receptive Vocabulary

Receptive vocabulary is word that the learners recognize and understand when they occur in context, but which cannot produce correctly. It is vocabulary that the learners recognize when they see it in reading context but do not use in speaking and writing. The receptive vocabulary is also called as a passive process because the learner only receives thought from others. In language application, the receptive vocabulary is considered the basic vocabulary. It is much larger than productive vocabulary because there are many words recognized when the learner hears or reads but do not use when he speaks or writes.

b. Productive Vocabulary

Productive vocabulary is the words, which the learners understand, can pronounce correctly, and use constructively in speaking and writing. It involves what is needed for receptive vocabulary plus the ability to speak or write the appropriate time. Therefore, productive vocabulary can be addressed as an active use the learners can the words express their thoughts to others.

2. Teaching English Vocabulary

In learning languages, vocabulary is an important part to learn. A student will not be able to write, read, or understand spoken utterances in a language if he does not understand the vocabulary in that language, because it is almost impossible to learn a language without using words.

According to, Thornbury (2002) states that teaching words is a crucial aspect in learning a language as languages are based on words. When the students have a lot vocabulary they would make more words to express their ideas vocabulary should be learned and skills should be practiced. A different researcher indicates that techniques to be used in the classroom, teachers consider time availability, the content or teaching material (Takac & Singleton, 2008).

In addition, Schafer (2002) stated good vocabulary teaching is the creation of context in which students constantly use relevant vocabulary in their reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Without a sufficient vocabulary, students cannot communicate effectively or express their idea both of oral and written form.

Meanwhile, Maximo (2000) stated many reasons for devoting attention to vocabulary. "First, a large vocabulary is of course essential for mastery of a language. Second language acquirers know this, they carry dictionaries with them, not grammar books, and regularly report that the lack of vocabulary is a major problem".

Based on the explanation of the experts above, the researcher draws conclusions about the teaching of good vocabulary in which students use vocabulary to provide relevant ideas in oral or written form. Vocabulary is considered as one of the most discussed part in teaching English. Therefore, teaching vocabulary is not easy. When the teaching process takes place the teacher will be faced with various kinds of problems, such as how to teach students sequentially and the objectives to be achieved at the end of learning for satisfying results. The teacher must understand that teaching English vocabulary is something new and different from the mother tongue of students, so the way to present the material to them must be creative and able to be accepted.

3. Teacher Difficulties in Teaching Vocabulary

Difficulties in teaching vocabulary is not something new for an English teacher and even almost all over the world have the same type of difficulty. In some cases, the difficulty often faced by a teacher in teaching vocabulary comes from their students. But, for some reason, Thornbury, (2000) says that the difficulties faced by English teachers in teaching vocabulary to students in the classroom are as follows:

- a. Pronunciation: research shows that words are difficult to pronounce are more difficult to learn. For example: Gorgeous, Lecturer, etc.
- b. Spelling is sound and spelling mismatches will be cause of errors in pronunciation or in spelling, and can contribute to a words difficulty. For example: muscle,

- headache, etc.
- c. Length and complexity: long words are more difficult to learn than short ones. And the variable stresses of polysyllabic words are also difficult. For example: necessary, necessity, necessarily.
  - d. Meaning: when two words overlap in meaning, learners are likely to confuse them. Or it called word with multiple meaning such as *since* and *still*, can also be difficulties for learners.
  - e. Range: connotation and idiomatic, words that can be used in wide range of contexts will generally be perceived as easier than their synonyms with a narrower range. For example: *thin* is more used than *skinny*, *slim* and *slander*. The connotation of some words may cause problem too. Forexample: propaganda has negative connotation in English, but it is equivalent may simply mean publicity.

The students in a junior high school classified as young learners. They easily got bored when the teacher explained the materials. Most of them did not pay attention to the teacher especially when they felt tired and did not understand the material explained by the teacher.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher concludes that the problem faced by the English teacher in teaching vocabulary is something that is very complex and must be a solution so that the teaching process can be in the successful in the classroom.

Based on the background above the researcher want to find out the difficulties in Teaching Vocabulary faced by the English Teacher at SMP Negeri 1 Luwuk.

### Research Method

The research design used in this research was descriptive qualitative. This research focused on the difficulties of teachers in teaching vocabulary. According to McMillan & Scumacher (2001) qualitative research explores was to provide descriptions of social phenomena which happen naturally. This research was conducted because the research wanted to analyze the difficulties in teaching vocabulary faced by the English teachers. This research aimed to obtain descriptive information, to get a perspective of the problems to be discussed through the process of collecting new data based on the facts to be examined. Research instrument was tools that were selected and used by researchers in their activities to collect data so that these activities become systematic and simplified (Arikunto, 2007). In this research, the researcher only used one instrument was interviewed.

In analysing data, the researcher referred to Miles and Huberman (1994), he stated that the analysis data technique of qualitative study contains there linked sub-processes. There were data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification.

### Findings and Discussion

This researcher aimed to analyse the difficulties in teaching vocabulary faced by the English teacher. In this research, the researcher conducted interviewed with four teachers at the school and with the different time and place.

After the researcher interviewed the teachers, the researcher found the difficulties faced by the English teacher in teaching vocabulary. Bellowed was the data identification of the English difficulties in teaching vocabulary.

- a. Lack of vocabulary

The teachers' difficulty was lack of student vocabulary can be seemin interview below:

P1: *kalo masih kelas 7 masih baru jadi mungkin mungkin vocabnya masih luring (less vocabularies).*

I : *What difficulties do you face in teaching English vocabulary?*

P1: *If they are still in seventh grade so maybe the vocabulary is lacking.*

Based on the interview above, the researcher assumed that the teachers had difficulties on the lack of student's vocabulary, because for the students especially class seven which is a transition from primary school, some of them have not got an English lesson.

b. Pronunciation

The teachers' difficulty was pronunciation can be seen below:

I: *Adakah kesulitan ibu dalam mengajar kosakata?*

P1: *Baru juga masih kurang dalam pronunciation masih susah... difficult to pronounce*

P2: *Sulitnya listening siswa. Karena apa yang kita sampaikan anak susah untuk menangkap. Seperti pronunciation apalagi jika kita *m e n g e t e s* lewat native speaker. Dialog salah satunya masih agak kurang, difficult to pronounce.*

P1: *Then their vocabulary is still a little bit so it's difficult*

P2: *The student difficulties are caused what is conveyed to students is difficult to understand. Such as pronunciation especially if we test by native speakers, one of the dialog was lacking.*

Based on the interview above, the researcher concluded that the teachers had difficulties in teaching vocabulary especially in listening. Therefore, the students were also difficult to repeat the pronunciation of the native speaker.

c. Wrote sentences

The teachers' difficulty from the students was write sentence it can be seen in interview below:

P1: *Kesulitannya itu kalau masih di kelas VII mereka masih kurang dalam penguasaan kosakata terutama dalam pengucapan, kesulitan dalam menulis kalimat. (less of vocabularies mastery)*

P1: *The difficulty is that if they in grade seven, they were lacking in mastering vocabulary, especially in pronunciation and also difficulty in writing sentence.*

Based on the interview above, the researcher argued that the teachers' difficulty in teaching vocabulary to the students when they asking the students to write the sentence because the students did not know the composing sentence.

d. Dictionary

The teachers' difficulty was the students did not bring dictionary can be seen in interview below:

P1: *Sulitnya itu datang dari siswa karena ada sebagian siswa yang jarang membawa kamus ke sekolah. The difficulties come from the students. The students' faced difficult because of they seldom bring a dictionary.*

P1: *The difficulty becomes from the students because there are some students who rarely bring a dictionary to school.*

Based on the interview above, the researcher argued that the teachers' difficulty in teaching vocabulary to the students when they did not bring the dictionary because the dictionary very important to support the students know translate the vocabulary their learned.

e. Low of student motivation

The teachers' difficulty was from the student lack of motivation students can be seemed in interview below:

P1: *That is from the children who low of motivation. Therefore, we command is automatically difficult for them to respond.*

Based on the interview above, the researcher assumed that the students lack of motivation because the students did not interest to learn vocabulary.

Therefore, many students were slow to understand the vocabulary that they have.

f. Facility

The teacher difficulty from the school can be seen in interview below:

P1: *Lack of teaching for teachers such as the as medias because the best supporter used media such as in focus. Because, the children respond fast when they saw the pictures or videos, and then because of the lack of ingredients, we as teachers need to be extra in teaching, so that they can understand more quickly.*

P2: *From the school not yet provide dictionary facilities. But, from the teacher, took the initiative, for students affected by sanctions to buy dictionaries as a form of fines. But from the school itself, so many English programs not had been prepared.*

Based on the interview above, the researcher concluded that the teachers had difficulties when they taught, because the school did not have facilities to support their teaching in class room.

In this part focused on the interpretation about teachers' difficulties in teaching English vocabulary at SMP Negeri 1 Luwuk. In this research, the researcher found that are six difficulties of the teachers. Based on the interview above.

The researcher assumed that the lack of vocabulary in seventh grade students was due to differences between elementary school and junior high school. There were some students who have never learned the basics of English in elementary school and they find out about English when they seventh grade in junior high school. They think English was a difficult to learn. Therefore, they need time to adapt to English lessons. It is made the learning process a difficult to get students' attention so that teaching vocabulary to student that's need much time, material and also patience in teaching English to them.

From the results of the analysis, the researcher found pronunciation was one of the student's difficulties in learning English. This was due to differences in writing when they pronounce. Meanwhile, when the teacher listens to dialogue in the classroom the students did not understand what was being said. In addition, when the teacher did repetition in reading the students find it difficult to pronounce the sentences that were given. Therefore, repetition of the material needs to be done. Choosing words and sentences from easy to difficult was also important at the end of each lesson.

From the above statement, the researcher found writing was also a problem faced in teaching English. Writing was one of the skills in English. Writing can help students develop creativity in thinking. The teacher must pay more attention to the material provided based on the student's condition. Such as descriptive text material, try to use an environment that is not too broad in scope to train students in writing and not only use themes in textbooks at school.

Based on the result of interview, the researcher found students' motivation also became a difficulty for the teacher. Based on the result of the review that, when the teacher asks students to do something they were hard to respond, different for students who have the willingness of what were they willing to do. Therefore, if student were less motivational difficult for them to learn English, because of the student's motivation have a passion to learn.

From the research data, the researcher found the dictionary that was on difficulty by the teacher. Based on the interview with the teachers that the absence of their desire to have dictionary was one of the obstacles faced by the English teacher because some of them feel English was a very difficult lesson among other lessons. Furthermore, for the students who did not bring a dictionary the teacher chooses to make a rule such as fines for students who commit violations at school.

From the illustration, the researcher found that there was a lack of school attention in providing teaching facilities ranging from projectors which incidentally were very helpful for teachers in developing children's learning methods, because in here children are more responsive when they see pictures or videos. In addition, the absence of a language lab is one of the main factors in terms of listening facilities.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the research findings and discussion in the previous chapter the researcher concludes that the difficulties in teaching vocabulary faced by the English teacher at SMP Negeri 1 Luwuk that the main factors they had difficulty in teaching English came from their students, such as their lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, writing skills which still needed to be directed. In the addition to the interest in learning and motivation of students who are still lacking in learning English especially vocabulary. In addition, other factors from the lack of adequate infrastructure facilities provided by schools so that teachers must be extra in teaching English especially vocabulary to students.

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