TEACHING VOCABULARY TO THIRD GRADE STUDENTS THROUGH VIDEOTAPED CHILDREN’S SONGS

By
Nurul Azizi*

University of Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to find out if there would be any significant difference in the vocabulary of third grade students taught English vocabulary through videotaped children’s songs and other third grade students who were taught vocabulary in the standard way at MIN Lambaro in Aceh Besar. The method used in this research was experimental research with research instruments to get the data, via: a pre-test, experimental teaching and a post-test. The tests were used as the instruments in order to see if there was any difference in the results from the experimental group compared to the control group sample. The sample for this research was 30 students from the academic year 2014-2015. The research finding showed that there was a significant difference in the results from the tests given to the students who were taught English vocabulary through videotaped children songs and those who were not. This was proved by the results from the Z-test (0, 24) and the level of Z-table which was (1,224). Thus it could be concluded that the use of videotaped children’s songs could motivate students to memorize vocabulary better than the traditional way of teaching vocabulary to young students. From this result it is suggested that English teachers should use more suitable techniques in the process of teaching-learning in order to improve the students’ vocabulary, such as the use of videotaped children’s songs, so that the students can find learning more enjoyable and be more active in learning and thus find it easier to memorize new vocabulary.

Key words: Videotaped Children’s Songs, Memorize Vocabulary.

* Corresponding author: nurul_azizi@ymail.com
INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is very strong foundation for students learning a language. By having sufficient vocabulary, students can study English easier whether by listening, speaking, reading, or writing. As Clark (1981: 289) has said words are starting points; without words children cannot talk about people, places or things, actions, relations or states. His statement was supported by Langan (1997: 451), who also said good vocabulary is a vital part of effective communication.

Vocabulary mastery is the skill where speakers of a language can choose the appropriate lexical item or word in oral communication. Vocabulary mastery has been studied in research for more than a half century and some researchers have pointed out that vocabulary is one of the properties of language that has to be learned. It is not only a list words but also a system which is embedded in a language. Good vocabulary mastery supports mastery of all four language skills, both receptive and productive (Cahyono & Widiati, 2008). Nowadays, in Aceh Besar, English vocabulary is taught to students of elementary schools from the first grade up. This means that English is taught to the children from seven up to thirteen years of age. At MIN Lambaro, the 2006 curriculum is still used to guide the teaching. Based on the writer’s observations during her teaching since 2011 at MIN Lambaro Aceh Besar, she found that many students still had only a very small vocabulary because they easily get bored to memorize new words that the teachers taught them. Some students talked to each other, whilst others repeated the words spoken by the teacher.

According to Harmer (2007: 229), teaching vocabulary this is a major part of the teacher’s art. Students need to see words in context to see how they are used. Accordingly, the best way, perhaps, of introducing a new word is for students to read texts or listen to audio tracks; so they can see and hear those words in action. When the materials are authentic, students can use the vocabulary that they are listening to and read from a text in an authentic situation. Focusing on listening, teaching vocabulary can be taught through videotaped children songs as the media.

Videotaped children’s songs are defined as songs which are recorded using video that are provided with the lyrics on the video. In teaching, videotaped materials are commonly used but videotaped children’s songs are still rarely used, especially in Aceh. Many studies discuss the use of songs for teaching students. For example, a study by
Cakir (1999) mentions the importance of songs in the English classroom. Songs, rhymes, chants, and musical games are good material for the language teacher to use with young learners. They have innumerable virtues such as being a source of motivation and enjoyment and they can provide reinforcement for structure and vocabulary.

Through videotaped songs, students can learn how to spell the words correctly and increase their vocabulary mastery by reading the texts projected in these videos. These types of videotaped children’s songs are available in stores. By seeing the CDs available and knowing the nature of children, the writer was sure that the strategy of using videotaped children’s songs to increase students’ vocabulary would work. So she selected some songs which had interesting rhythms and contained simple vocabulary.

Songs can not only help young learners improve their listening skills and pronunciation; they can also be useful for teaching vocabulary and sentence structure. Many children's songs have simple sentence structures or sentence patterns that can become set in the minds of the learners. Therefore, the songs should be selected to suit the needs and age group of the learners. For example, the children’s song “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes” can help them to remember the names for parts of the body. In this study, the writer focused on songs for parts of the body. She wanted to carry out her study at MIN Lambaro, Aceh Besar, especially with the third grade students, age nine to ten.

The research question in this study is: Will there be any significant difference in the vocabulary of students who are taught English vocabulary through videotaped children songs and those who are taught without using videotaped children songs?

The research was expected to give some significant results. Theoretically, the result of this study was expected to add to the knowledge in the existing literature about teaching vocabulary by using videotaped children’s songs to teach young learners English vocabulary. Practically, the findings of this study can be used as a reference for English teachers when teaching vocabulary to young learners. The information provided can also assist future related studies which are done to study better methods for teaching vocabulary to young learners. Results from this study were also expected to provide information for
the local Ministry of Education when making decisions about curriculum.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vocabulary is an important resource when constructing sentences. Learning vocabulary is a basic art. If children do not know enough words they will have difficulty in understanding what they hear and read and in finding words to write and speak.

Nunan (1991: 87) has said that vocabulary plays an important role because it appears in every language skill. Vocabulary building is really important in any language learning. It is a most important aspect in acquiring a language and in mastering a second language. Vocabulary knowledge is essential for the speakers of languages. Persons cannot express their ideas, feelings, and opinions well if they do not have enough knowledge of vocabulary.

According to Harmer (2007: 229), teaching vocabulary is a major part of the teacher's art. Students need to see words in context to see how they are used. According to Campillo (2012: 45) there are two ways to teach vocabulary, they are the traditional approaches and techniques, also called the teacher-centered approach and there are student-centered techniques. Most children enjoy singing songs, and they can often be a welcome change from the routine of learning a foreign language. For the teacher, using songs in the classroom can also be a nice break from following the set curriculum. Songs can be taught to any number of students and even those teachers with the most limited resources can use them effectively. Songs can play an important role in the development of language in young children learning a second language.

Videotaped children’s songs can be defined as songs which are recorded by using video and the text is provided in that video. In teaching, videotaped materials are commonly used but videotaped children songs are still rarely used.

Songs can be used for a number of purposes and there are many reasons why songs can be considered as a valuable pedagogical tool. They can help young learners improve their listening skills and pronunciation, therefore potentially helping them to improve their speaking skills (Murphey, 1992). They can also be useful tools in the learning of vocabulary, sentence structure, and sentence patterns, not to mention their reflection of the culture of the second language.
(Murphey, ibid). Perhaps the greatest benefit to using songs in the classroom is that they can be fun. Pleasure for its own sake is an important part of learning a language, something which is often overlooked by teachers, and songs can add interest to the classroom routine and potentially improve students’ motivation.

From previous studies, the writer concluded that many researchers had paid attention to the difficulties of improving and developing vocabulary at basic schools. This is considered a great indicator that teachers are in a real need for adopting and adapting new techniques and methods such as children’s songs.

METHODOLOGY

This experimental study was concerned with teaching vocabulary through videotaped children’s songs. The writer thought that videotaped children’s songs could help students memorize vocabulary. This technique could be better than the conventional way for learning vocabulary. Due to the nature of children, they are interested to learn something in a fun way. Children’s songs can provide a fun kind of atmosphere. So the writer wanted to do this experimental research at an elementary school. She conducted data study doing pre-tests and post-tests with a control group and an experimental group.

In this study, the writer used a vocabulary pre–test with the sample students. The vocabulary test was in the form of a written test which consisted of spelling words, matching pictures with words, re-arranging letters and multiple choices. The writer prepared her own tests by consulting the primary curriculum and discussing the tests with experts, in this case the English elementary school teachers, to seek their judgment about the appropriateness of the tests.

This study used the experimental approach which requires two groups of students, an experimental group (EG) and a control group (CG). The children’s songs were the treatment that was only used with the EG. At the end of the experiment, the writer used a vocabulary post-test with both groups in order to determine the effectiveness of using children’s songs for developing children’s vocabulary. The population of this study was all the third grade students at elementary school MIN Lambaro, Aceh Besar in the academic year 2013-2014. The total population was sixty students. The sample for this study was the students from classes 3A and 3B. Each class had 30 students. Class 3A was the EG while class 3B was the CG.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results
The researcher statistically compared the results of the tests (pre-test and post-test) from the EG and the CG in order to prove the hypotheses whether the experimental group got better results in learning vocabulary through videotaped children’s songs than the control group. It was found that there were some differences in the results from the EG and the CG in the means, ranges, standard deviations, t-scores and Z-test as shown in the table that follows overleaf:

Table 1. Summary results from the pretests of the EG and the CG.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Experimental Group (EG)</th>
<th>Z-test value</th>
<th>Control Group (CG)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N (Number of student)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R (range)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\bar{x}$ (Mean Score)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S (standard Deviation)</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>74.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The range of the pre-test scores from the EG and CG were the same, and the lowest scores from both the EG and the CG at 10 were also the same.

The pre-test mean scores were 22 for the EG and 21.5 for the CG, which means that there was no significant difference. The standard deviation in the pretests from the EG was 84.6, while for the CG was 74.4. So, the scores from the EG were slightly more scattered than those from the CG. The Z-test value pre-test from the EG and the CG was 0.24 at the level of significance of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$). Thus the null hypothesis (Ho) was accepted in the limit given (-1.96 and + 1.96) meaning that there was no significant difference in the pre-test results from the two groups.

Table 2. Results from the post-tests of the EG and the CG.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Experimental Group (EG)</th>
<th>Z-test value</th>
<th>Control Group (CG)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N (Number of student)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.224</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R (range)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\bar{x}$ (Mean Score)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S (standard Deviation)</td>
<td>252</td>
<td></td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The range of the post-test scores for the EG was $80-30 = 50$ and for the CG was $80-10 = 70$. The differences in the range were not significant. The standard deviation post-test was 252 for the EG and 167 for the CG. This indicates that the EG post-test scores were more homogeneous than those from the CG.

Based on the analysis, it was found that the mean score from the post-tests of EG (the group of students that was taught by using videotaped children’s songs) was higher than that from the CG (the group of students that were taught using the conventional method). The mean score of the post-test was 64 for the EG and for the CG was 52. The difference was $64-52 = 12$. The size of this difference in mean scores from the post-tests from the EG and the CG was considered meaningful. This difference indicates that the effects of the treatment using videotaped children’s songs were positive.

The difference between the two means from the post-tests was significant because the calculation of the $Z$-test value was much higher than the coefficient of the $Z$–test as provided in limit ($-1.96$ and $+1.96$) at level of significance $5\% (\alpha = 0.05)$, hence the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Meanwhile, the $Z$-test value was 1,224 at the level of significance of $5\% = (\alpha = 0.05)$. This meant that the results from the two groups were significantly different. At the same time, the higher mean score showed that the treatment had had a positive effect on the students’ achievements in English vocabulary. In other words, the strategy used with the EG gave significantly better results than that used with the CG. The results from this study showed that videotaped children’s songs can have a positive influence on the students’ ability to learn English vocabulary. It can be summarized that teaching students by using videotaped children’s songs can support and improve their ability to learn English vocabulary as the students are more motivated to learn English.

**Discussion**

There is only one point that needed to be discussed. The discussion covered the research questions stated above. (1) Will there be any significant difference in the English vocabulary of young students who are taught through videotaped children songs and those who are taught vocabulary in the standard way? A clear discussion of this one main question is presented herewith.
The results discussed above showed that the treatment has had a positive effect on the students’ achievements in learning English vocabulary. In other words, the strategy employed with the EG, teaching vocabulary using videotaped children’s songs provided significant better results than that used with the CG, i.e. teaching vocabulary in the standard way.

The use of videotaped children’s songs in teaching vocabulary has some benefits for the learners. Videotaped children’s songs can help children memorize new words better. Learning with this technique the children hear whole sentences and absorb grammar and syntax subconsciously. It is an easy way for them to learn and remember words and phrases. This shows that the use of videotaped children’s song for teaching vocabulary to third grade students at MIN Lambaro Aceh Besar was better that the standard teaching technique of writing and reading words aloud.

There are a numbers of reasons why the students in the EG got better results. First, using videotaped children’s songs for teaching vocabulary motivated the students to remember and understand the meaning of the words. Second, the students got more ideas when they listened to and watched the videotaped English children’s songs. Third, the students sang the songs together because the rhythms used in the videotape were the same as the rhythms of popular children’s songs in Bahasa Indonesia.

Other factors that may influence the result are the similarity of the test and the teaching technique of using videotaped children’s songs. Here, the EG had an advantage over the CG. This was because the use of the videotaped children’s song helped the EG students to memorize the vocabulary.

Many advantages can be obtained by students when they learn vocabulary using videotaped children’s songs because they can not only listen to the words but they can also watch the video. In summary, videotaped children songs can provide an enjoyable change in the classroom, as well is being fun and a break from the class routine. In addition videotaped children’s songs can help the students to develop an ear for the sound of the language so that they can develop good pronunciation.
CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions
The results from this study shows that teaching vocabulary by using videotaped English songs has a lot of influences on the students’ ability to learn new vocabulary. It can be summarized that teaching students by using videotaped children songs can support and improve their ability to learn English vocabulary as the students are more motivated to learn English. By using videotaped children’s songs, the students learnt more English vocabulary.

Suggestions
Based on this study, the researcher has some suggestions. She suggests that English teachers should use suitable techniques in the process of teaching-learning in order to improve the students’ vocabulary, such as using videotaped children’s songs. Other teachers should use this technique to teach English vocabulary to their young students. It is important for teachers to create a pleasant situation in the classroom so that the classroom can be a place where the students enjoy practicing the language they are learning.

REFERENCES