

## **Improving Students' Vocabulary Achievement through Short Story**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The objectives of the research were (1) To describe the students' activity by giving short story material (2) To find out the improvement of students' form of word of learning vocabulary through short story at the Eighth grade of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar (3) To find out the improvement of students' function of words of learning vocabulary through short story at the Eighth grade of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar (4) To find out the improvement of students' meaning of words of learning vocabulary through short story at the Eighth grade of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar. The researcher used a Classroom Action Research (CAR). The researcher had conducted two cycles, where each cycle consisted of four meetings. It employed vocabulary test as instrument. The instruments were form, function and meaning of vocabulary item. The number of subjects of the research were 40 students in class VIII.13. Those consist of 20 women and 20 men. The researcher found the real data from the school to know the students' vocabulary. The research findings indicate that the use of short story improve students' vocabulary item of form, function and meaning. It is proved by the mean score of cycle I is 63 then improved to be 80 in cycle II. They are higher than the mean score of diagnostic test is 49.66. And the standard KKM (75), that could be achieved after conducting cycle II. From these findings, the researcher made a conclusion that by using short story could improve the students' vocabulary in learning process.

Keywords: *Short Story, Improving, Vocabulary.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The language has some elements, such as; grammar and vocabulary. One of the most important language items that should be taught to children is vocabulary. Recognizing enough vocabulary will make the students able to communicate and know English at least in a simple way because vocabulary is the core of English. Learning a language deals with learning the vocabulary. It is a basic to communicate and important for the acquisition process (Krashen, 1981: 12). It means that learning a language cannot be separated from learning its vocabulary. It is important to introduce it as a basic step to children in order to help them to understand utterances and to prepare them to learn English in the next level. Vocabulary mastery has significant role in achieving four language skills. Before acquiring four language skill, it is important to understand vocabulary first. Cameron (2001:72) states that building up a useful vocabulary is central to the learning a foreign language at primary level. Vocabulary is one of the important elements of language proficiency that becomes the basis of how well learners speak, write, listen and read. In the past, vocabulary teaching and learning were often given little priority in second language programs (Richard, 2002). Whereas, without a good mastery of vocabulary, learners may be discouraging in making use of language learning change around them such as watching English program, listening to the radio, reading some kinds of English test, etc.

In teaching and learning English, vocabulary as an element of language is considered as the most important factor in improving the mastery of four language skills. They are not able to be mastered if students are still lacking vocabulary. The teacher of English, as a foreign language should know very well how important vocabulary is. They know that students must learn thousands of words the speaker or writer use in their speech and/or writing. Fortunately, teacher and students agree that vocabulary is needed in learning and teaching, and it is not less important than grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. So, the English teacher should be able to find out solution in vocabulary teaching by creating various efficient and effective technique. Besides that, they should establish condition that make learning vocabulary occur within a reasonable period of time. According Hatch and Brown (1995:1) vocabulary is a list or set of words for a particular language or a list or set of word that individual speakers of language might use. Vocabulary is the most important material in foreign language teaching for young learners. Therefore, the teaching of English vocabulary has a very essential role in enabling Indonesian students to master English as their foreign language. To master English vocabulary, in fact, it has become a big problem for most Indonesian students. If one does not have sufficient number of vocabularies, he will not be able to communicate with his surroundings by using English language.

MTs Negeri 1 Makassar is one of the schools in Makassar regency, South Sulawesi province. In MTs Negeri Makassar, particularly at English learning, vocabulary is one of the compulsory subject, thus the students have to pass this course in order to follow the learning process. Currently, the teacher teach vocabulary subject by using a technique and material which are expected to be effective to make the students' achievement improved.

Though, some difficulties are faced by the students in understanding the material, the students are still a lack of vocabulary, therefore they always find difficulties in understanding and explaining the material. Moreover, they cannot do the test well. Overall, the students' score in vocabulary subject are still below 75 which is the standard score of KKM to pass the subject.

It is the teachers' and researchers' responsibility to find out the solution to overcome the problems encountered by the students in learning vocabulary. English teacher should know that techniques and materials which can help students to overcome their difficulties. By using a suitable and an attractive way in teaching and learning vocabulary in the classroom, it is expected that the learners will find it easier to learn. The material given in teaching and learning process is very important in improving students' achievement, especially in vocabulary achievement. Therefore, the students will be improved in learning and interested to learn vocabulary. Moreover, those problems mentioned before can be solved. A teacher has a responsibility to help the students to improve their vocabulary achievement. One of the materials can be implemented in teaching and learning process to help the students in improving their vocabulary. In this case, the researcher tried to help the students to improve their vocabulary by using short story.

Short story is one of the modern prose forms. As literary work, short story become an interesting thing for people to read and talk. The function of story is to entertain and to enrich mental experience. The reason, that short stories are the most suitable literary genre to use in English teaching due to its shortness, is supported by Collie and Slater (1991: 196) when they list four advantages of using short stories for language teachers. First, short stories are practical as their length is long enough to cover entirely in one or two class sessions. Second, short stories are not complicated for students to work with on their own. Story is talking about author expression to anything about life experience concerning with human imagination. And the short stories encourage the students to think about moral, social and philosophical.

The researcher applied a short story in the class to teach English. In this research the researcher gave the story to the students about fable and the researcher asked to the students to identify the word between noun and verb after that the students translate to

Indonesian. The research treated the students' vocabulary through the word form, word function and word meaning. Furthermore, these activities are as one of the language teaching. It is considered to be able to give students great motivation from which they can improve their vocabulary in motivator for their students. This motivation fully plays a very important role to the willingness of the students in studying English.

Based on the illustration above, the purpose of this investigation was to find out:

1. To describe the students' activity by giving short story material.
2. To find out the improvement of students' form of words of learning vocabulary through short story at the Eighth grade of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar.
3. To find out the improvement of students' function of words of learning vocabulary through short story at the Eighth grade of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar.
4. To find out the improvement of students' meaning of words of learning vocabulary through short story at the Eighth grade of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar.

## **METHOD**

In this research, the researcher used classroom action research, where it consisted of one class. The research was held in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar, the population of this research was all of the eighth-grade students of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar year 2017-2018. The sum of the population was 520 students of 13 classes. The researcher chose the VIII.13 of the eighth-grade students.

In collecting the data, the researcher used the CAR principle to collect the data. This research was done through cycles which each cycle consisted of four phases they are: Planning, Action, Observation, Evaluation or Reflection. The researcher proposed two cycles each cycle consisted of four meetings which was preceded pre-cycle or diagnostic test. They are first and second cycle and each cycle are the series of activity which closed relation where the realization of the second cycle is continuing and repairing from the first cycle is described as follow:

### **Pre-cycle/Diagnostic test**

In pre-cycle the researcher intended to know the initial condition of students. The researcher observes students' activity in English class and gives diagnostic test. Based on observation and the test, the researcher then recognizes the problem that was happened to the students and their difficulties in answering the test.

## Cycle 1

The first cycle in this classroom action research consist of planning, action, observation and reflection as follows:

### 1. Planning

In this phase included:

- a. Making lesson plan before doing classroom action research.
- b. Preparing model and materials of short story
- c. Making the observation paper for observing the condition of learning process.
- d. Making instrument evaluation to know the improvement of the resultat study after they studied through short story after cycle 1.

### 2. Action

The second step after planning was action, to implement the instructional strategy that planned in a lesson plan. The implementation took in five meetings in each cycle where four meetings are used for learning process and the fifth meeting was used for cycle test.

- a. Implementing the teaching learning process based on the lesson plan.
- b. Describing to the students about technical object by introducing some new words in short story.
- c. Showing the short story to the students by deciding on a topic for instruction about nouns and verb in the story.
- d. Asking the students to pay attention of as many words as they could that was in the story and asking them to write down a list of these words.
- e. After the list of words was completed, the difficult words were looked the meaning.

### 3. Observation

In this phase, the researcher observed:

- a. Students' participation and response during teaching and learning process.
- b. Students' competence in vocabulary.

### 4. Reflection

Reflection was aimed to see the result of each cycle action process, to analyze, understand and conclude the activity in each cycle. The researcher analyzed each cycle to know whether the action was success criteria or not than what was the lack of that activity based on evaluation at the end of the cycle.

## Cycle 2

In cycle 2 also consisted of same activity with cycle 1 they are:

### 1. Planning

In this phase include:

- a. Continuing the activities that were done in the first cycle.
- b. Repairing the weakness in the first cycle.
- c. Making lesson plan before doing classroom action research.

- d. Preparing model and materials of short story.
- e. Making instrument evaluation that was used in classroom action research cycle.

## 2. Action

In this stage, action was done to improve the result based on the cycle 1 reflection.

The stages had same procedure but different material.

- a. The researcher gave more motivation to be more active.
- b. Implementing the teaching learning process based on the lesson plan.
- c. The researcher gave brief explanation about the short story steps slowly and clarity.
- d. The researcher divided students to be some groups where every group had to focus and discuss about the material of short story. There were eight groups of forty students.
- e. In every groups there were five students, two students looked for the noun and the three students looked for verb in material of short story.
- f. Asking the students to look the words as the difficult words in material of short story what was given and asking them to write down a list of these words.
- g. After the list of words was completed, every group discuss to search to solve the problem of difficult word of noun and verb.

## 3. Observation

The observation at the cycle 2 is same with the observation at the cycle 1

## 4. Reflection

After collecting the data, the researcher evaluated the teaching learning process.

Then, the researcher did reflection by seeing the result of the observation whether the teaching learning process reached success criteria based on the test result of the second action.

## **FINDINGS**

The findings of classroom action research (CAR) deal with the answer of the problem statement. How to improve students' achievement of vocabulary through short story. The findings consisted of students' vocabulary achievement and observation result. The data of vocabulary achievement consists of three items, namely: form, function, and meaning in diagnostic test or pre-cycle, cycle I and cycle II. At the first time the researcher gave the material to the students and asked to them to read silent the short story that given from the researcher, after that the students asked to identify the words that given by the researcher and the students identify between noun and verb. And then the students asked to look the meaning of the word. Finally, the students have to make the sentence by using the word noun and verb. While the activity the students show significant improvement by seeing the students result. In cycle two the researcher made the activity more fun by choosing the more interesting and funnier short story because to see the students' improvement when giving the material about short story.

In Diagnostic Test the researcher entered the class with greeting and then introduced him self. The researcher talked them about the English learning especially about vocabulary that they would be learned. Then the researcher gave them the test to get

their score of vocabulary achievement. Based on the result of pre-cycle test, the data showed that the mean score of tests was 49.66. There was no student who got the score passed the KKM. Based on the pre-cycle test result, the students' vocabulary achievement was poor where the target of the KKM is 75%. Although the average of vocabulary achievement of the students at the eighth grade in exact class was poor (49.66) but it took serious problem when the class percentage passed no one student, it means the students' vocabulary achievement still far from the expectation, and as the result they still lack vocabulary.

### **Cycle 1**

In cycle 1 the students result is not significant although the result different with diagnostic test, the students result did not pass the target of KKM. We can see from the result that from the form, function and meaning, only a few students or seven student that passed the KKM. So, this indicated the students should learn more about vocabulary. The process teaching in cycles 1 the students difficult to identify the vocabulary between noun and verb. The students' not attention the material that given by the researcher. The third and the fourth meeting the researcher clarified if the short story can help them to improve their vocabulary. And finally, the students aware the important of vocabulary by studying short story.

#### **The Students' vocabulary Score in Cycle 1**

	VOCABULARY			MEAN SCORE
	FORM	FUNCTION	MEANING	
<b>Total Score</b>	2680	2000	2880	2520
<b>Mean Score</b>	67	50	72	63

Based on the data above, the researcher highlighted the students who passed KKM (75%) and to get the result of the test, firstly, the researcher calculated the mean score by employing the formula that has already been previously pointed out.

The result of cycle I test, the data showed that the mean score of tests was 63. There were only 10 students or 25% who got the score passed the KKM (75%). Based the cycle I test result, it could be seen that students' class percentage improved to 25% but could not passed the target of the KKM (75%). It means that most the students at the fifth semester in exact class still have less participation in English language. Hence, the researcher decided to conduct the next cycle and intended to give better result.

### **CYCLE 2**

In cycle II the students result was significant, the students result passed the target of KKM 75%. At the first meeting of cycle II learning process the researcher gave the

intruccion to the students about attention to the lesson before giving them the material about short story. In addition, the researcher gave the students the more interesting material and funny material of short story. The students gave their attention to the material that given by the researcher. In the third and the fourth meeting of this cycle the researcher clarified if the short story can help them to improve their vocabulary. And finally, the students' vocabulary scores in cycle II passed the target of KKM 75 %. Moreover, their scores were higher than the target. So, the students' vocabulary achievement was improved through short story.

### The Students' vocabulary Score in Cycle 2

	VOCABULARY			MEAN SCORE
	FORM	FUNCTION	MEANING	
<b>Total Score</b>	3190	3030	3380	3200
<b>Mean Score</b>	80	75.75	84.5	80

Based on the data above, the researcher highlighted the students who passed KKM (75%) and to get the result of the test, firstly, the researcher calculated the mean score by employing the formula that has already been previously pointed out.

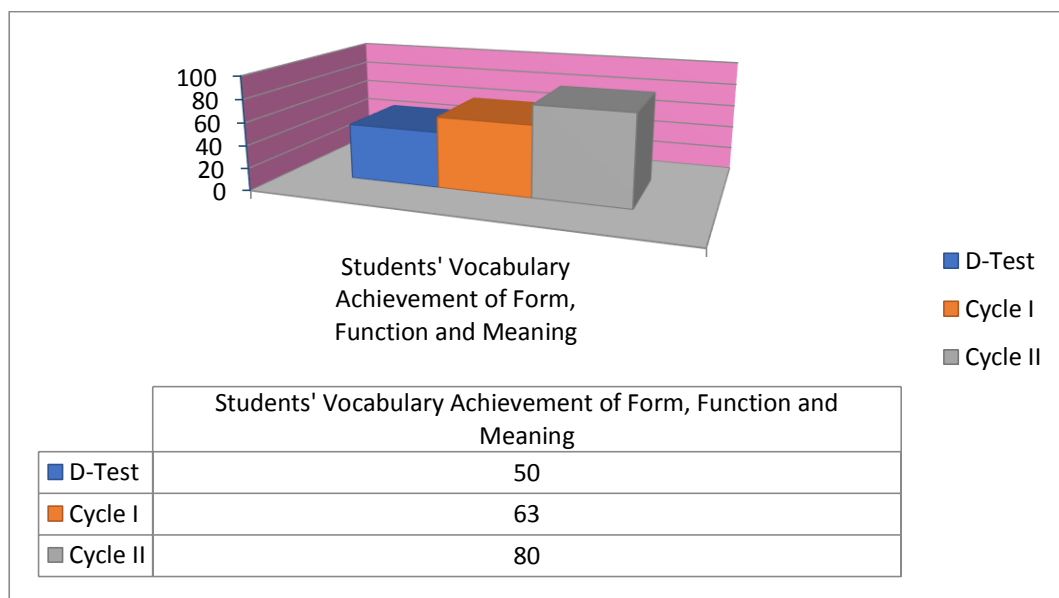
The result of cycle II test, the data showed that the mean score of tests was 81.875. There were 34 students or 85% who got the score passed the KKM. Based the cycle II test result, it could be seen that the students' class percentage was improved. It pass and greater than the target of the KKM (75%).

### The improvement of vocabulary achievement

Variable	Scores (%)			Improvements (%)		
	D-Test	Cycle I	Cycle II	DT → CI	CI → CII	DT → CII
Form	50	67	79.75	17	12.75	29.75
function	43.75	50	75.75	6.25	25.75	32
Meaning	55.25	72	84.5	16.75	12.5	29.25
$\Sigma X$	149	189	240	40	51	91
X	49.66	63	80	13.33	17	30.33



The table above showed that short story improved the students vocabulary achievement of form, function and meaning from diagnostic test to cycle I and cycle II in which cycle II was greater than cycle I and diagnostic test. About the mean score of form, function and meaning in cycle II was 80, then in cycle I was 63 and diagnostic test where the students got 49.66. The improvement of the students' vocabulary achievement through short story. It showed the significant improvement of form, function and meaning from diagnostic test to cycle I, then to cycle II. The improvement of the students' vocabulary achievement from diagnostic test to cycle I was 13.33% and from diagnostic test to cycle II was 30.33%. To see clearly the improvement of the students covers the following graphic is presented:



The improvement of the students' vocabulary achievement had affected. Where, the researcher found in data source of form that the students only got 50 in diagnostic test, it means that it is far from the target, because the target of the KKM is 75%. But after giving material through short story the students got the indicator score that was 63 in cycle I and 80 in cycle II. It indicated that after giving them the material of short story in cycle II the target reached even the result of cycle II was greater than the target.

The researcher taught about vocabulary in learning process of cycle I by using material of short story in the class. The researcher had found that the students felt difficult in learning vocabulary. The difficulty of the students in learning vocabulary had been analyzed, so the researcher must think the solution of the problem. So, the researcher decided to do the cycle II by doing revision in the lesson plan which was preparing in revision planning of cycle II.

The result of revision planning to resolve the students' difficulty in getting the form of the words is in learning activity the researcher gives more explanations about how to identify the form of the words and result in better achievements. This argument was also aligned with Moore, Hammond, and Fetherston (2014) who found that increased intensity of instruction resulted in better learning for individual words. The researcher also gave them some guides before learning and giving pictures about the topic such as short story of animals and giving the game. It is done to avoid the reception in learning and teaching process, so they can get better understanding on the form of vocabulary.

## **CONCLUSION**

The improvement of the students' vocabulary achievement through short story material at the eighth grade of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar on the students scores of all item form, function and meaning in pre-cycle is (50), in cycle 1 is (63) and in cycle II is (80). The use of short story material can improve the students' vocabulary achievement. This leads to the conclusion that the implementation of this material is needed in the English language teaching and learning especially in English vocabulary process to improve students' vocabulary achievement.

Short story can be implemented in vocabulary activity, especially the effort to improve the students' nouns and verb. Being aware that vocabulary has an important part in English.

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