USING COOPERATIVE SCRIPT TO IMPROVE THE EIGHT GRADERS’ VOCABULARY MASTERY

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ABSTRACT: This classroom action research is aimed to improve the eight graders’ vocabulary mastery of SMP Negeri 8 Malang. The instruments used for this research were interview guide, questionnaire, field notes, vocabulary tests, and cooperative script chart. The results of the study showed that cooperative script could be used to improve the students’ vocabulary mastery of the eighth graders of SMP N 8 Malang.

Keywords: cooperative script, students’ vocabulary mastery, recount texts

According to Buku Standar Isi SMP (BSNP, 2006: 124), the junior high school students are expected to have linguistic competence. This linguistic competence of the students can be seen, among others, through the students’ ability in using vocabulary. Brown (2001:315) suggests that vocabulary can be taught within a reading section through class activities that focus the students’ attention on vocabulary rather than just learning isolated vocabulary by memorizing a list of words.

In order to identify the problems that the students have, the preliminary study was conducted in SMP N 8 Malang. The interview with the English teachers was done in order to obtain information about the problems that the students have in learning English. From the interview, the researchers obtained the information that the students have a problem in vocabulary mastery. In order to know the students’ level of vocabulary mastery, the researchers conducted a vocabulary test before implementing the action.

After conducting the preliminary study, the researchers found out that the students of class VIII-B had a problem in reading, especially in reading recount text. The result of vocabulary test in the preliminary study showed that all of 36 students who took the test obtained the scores which were below the minimum passing score of 75, with the lowest score of 24 and the highest score of 66. The students’ lack of vocabulary encouraged the researchers to conduct a classroom action research in how to improve the students’ vocabulary mastery.

Some studies in various fields that had been done before by Suminar (2008) and Sari (2009) showed that cooperative script could give good impacts in the learning process and the students’ achievement. The following are two studies dealing with the use of cooperative script in teaching English. The first study by Suminar (2008) was conducted in order to
find out the effectiveness of cooperative script in teaching *Apresiasi Sajak* for the eighth graders of SMPN 1 Bandung. Her study found that students who were taught by using cooperative script had better mastery in understanding *sajak* (poem) than those who were taught without using cooperative script. Second, Sari (2009) conducted a study which aimed at knowing whether there was a significant difference in the students’ ability in *dokkai* (reading comprehension) when they were taught by using cooperative script compared to those who were taught without using cooperative script. The findings showed that the ability in *dokkai* of the students who were taught by using cooperative script was higher than those who were taught without using cooperative script.

In line with the results of the two studies above, Dansereau (1988) in Anon (1995:6) mentioned that Dansereau and his colleagues at Texas Christian University have found in an impressive series of brief studies that college students working on structured "cooperative scripts" could learn technical material or procedures far better than the students working alone. Dansereau and his colleagues found in a series of studies that both the speaker and the listener learned more than the students who worked alone. Pelton (2010) mentioned that students more easily recall and retain words after teaching each other.

Since cooperative script requires the students to work in pairs and teach each other, the researchers chose cooperative script as the solution for the students’ problem in mastering vocabulary. In this research, the researchers tried to solve the students’ problem in vocabulary mastery through reading activities. The researchers planned to modify cooperative script into a technique that could be used to teach vocabulary through reading activities. The original cooperative script was actually used to improve the students’ reading mastery.

**METHOD**

This study implemented a classroom action research in VIII-B Class of SMP Negeri 8 Malang which consisted of 39 students. In conducting the study, the researchers collaborated with the English teacher in preparing lesson plans, determining the criteria of success, observing the teaching and learning process, and correcting the tests before it was given to the students.

The cooperative script technique in teaching vocabulary is implemented by using the 6 main steps as follows. First, the teacher asks the students to work on pairs. Second, the teacher distributes recount texts and asks the students to look for the unfamiliar nouns, adjectives and the verbs from the recount text given. Third, the teacher decides who become the first speaker and the first listener. Fourth, the speaker reads the unfamiliar nouns, adjectives and the verbs from the recount text given while the listener listens and gives the meaning to the nouns, adjectives and the
verbs. Fifth, exchange roles, the speaker becomes the listener and vice versa. Sixth, the students and the teacher conclude the lesson together. The first and the second steps are interchangeable. Therefore, the second step could be implemented as the first step. The first step could not be omitted in the first meeting, but could be omitted in the next meetings since the students have known already that they must work in pairs.

**Planning**

In this stage, the researchers prepared the materials, the research instruments, the lesson plans, and determined the criteria of success. The researchers decided that the criteria of success was 80% of the students obtain the score 75 and above in vocabulary test. The recount texts used in this study were personal recount. The topics of those recount texts were entertainment, disaster, hobby, and health.

**Implementing**

The action was conducted in 1 cycle that consisted of 3 meetings. The test was a vocabulary test consisting of 40 items in the form of multiple choices. In this stage, one of the researchers acted as the teacher while the English teacher observed the teaching and learning process.

**Observing**

In the observation stage, the researchers collected the data related to the implementation of the action in the teaching and learning process. The data related to the students’ performance were obtained from the students’ score in vocabulary test while the data related to the implementation of cooperative script in the teaching learning process were obtained from the video and the field notes.

**Reflecting**

In this stage, the data obtained from the observation stage were interpreted to see whether the criteria of success was met or not and whether it was necessary to conduct the next cycle or not.

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FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Students’ Vocabulary Mastery

The researchers compared the result of the vocabulary test given at the end of the third meeting of the cycle with the criteria of success. The result of the vocabulary test showed that 38 out of 39 students (97%) scored above the criteria of success (75). The criteria of success was reached. Therefore, the research was stopped. There was no need to go to cycle 2.

The Students’ Responses towards the Implementation of Cooperative Script

The results of the questionnaire showed that 36 students (92%) liked cooperative script method which was used by the researchers in teaching English. Most of the students were actively involved in teaching and learning process. Thirty two students (82%) said that cooperative script method could be carried out easily. Thirty six students (92%) said that they knew more vocabulary after practicing cooperative script method which was used by the researchers.

Discussions
The Use of Cooperative Script

In every meeting, the researchers used cooperative script as the teaching technique. The implementation of cooperative script is in line with Brown (2001:315) who states that vocabulary can be taught within a reading section through class activities that focus the students’ attention on vocabulary rather than just learning isolated vocabulary by memorizing a list of words. The result of this research supported Brown’s statement above. The students’ vocabulary mastery was improved after the implementation of cooperative script technique.

The Students’ Vocabulary Mastery

In this research, the researchers successfully used cooperative script as the teaching technique to motivate the students to learn new vocabulary. This finding is in line with the result of the previous researches done by Suminar (2007) which shows that the students who were taught by using cooperative script had better mastery in understanding sajak (poem) than those who were taught without using cooperative script and by Sari (2009) which shows that the ability in dokkai (reading comprehension) of the students who were taught by using cooperative script was higher than the students who were taught without using cooperative
script. The results of the vocabulary test showed that the use of cooperative script can improve the students’ vocabulary mastery. This increase was possible because by means of cooperative script technique the students were encouraged to open the dictionary and look for the meanings of the unfamiliar words.

The Weaknesses and the Strengths of Cooperative Script

One weakness of cooperative script is that the teaching using cooperative script gives a chance to students to play around instead of doing the assignment with their partners. Therefore, the teacher must monitor whether the students’ really do their assignment or not.

Cooperative script also has some strength. One of the strengths is that the students are encouraged to open the dictionary and look for the meaning of the unfamiliar words. This activity could encourage the students to use dictionary. Another strength of cooperative script is that the use of this technique can improve the vocabulary mastery of the students.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

The results of the study showed that cooperative script could be used to improve the students’ vocabulary mastery of the eighth graders of SMP N 8 Malang.

The scores showed that almost all of the students reached the criteria of success. The vocabulary test in the end of cycle 1 shows that 38 out of 39 students scored more than 75. The students showed much improvement in their vocabulary mastery.

Suggestions

There are some suggestions addressed to English teachers in general and for the future researchers in the use of cooperative script in teaching vocabulary through reading activities.

English teachers of junior high schools are suggested to use cooperative script as their teaching technique because cooperative script is proven to be able to improve the students’ vocabulary mastery. The English teachers are also recommended to select interesting topics for the recount text used and to ask the students to bring dictionary in every meeting. The dictionary will be useful for them in finding the meanings of the unfamiliar words. What is more it is hoped that in the future the learners could develop a habit of always using dictionary to check the meaning of words they do not know.

The researchers suggest the future researchers to conduct studies on the use of
cooperative script in teaching other skills and language components. Cooperative script is usually used as the teaching technique in teaching reading. The researchers suggest that future researchers who conduct similar studies can vary the use of cooperative script. Some weaknesses in the implementation of cooperative script in this research were that most of the students did not understand the meaning of the unfamiliar words. Besides that, the students tend to play around instead of doing the assignment with their partners. Therefore, the researchers suggest the future researchers who conduct similar studies to always remind the students to bring dictionaries. What is more, they should be active in monitoring whether the students really do their assignment or not.

REFERENCES

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