

CHAPTER II

ENGLISH VOCABULARY MASTERY AND COMIC STRIPS

A. English Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary is an important aspect in mastering English because vocabulary is the basis for learning a language. This can be known based on the definition of vocabulary according to experts. Based on Jack C. Richards (2001:4), Vocabulary is one of the most important components of language and is one of the things that linguists must pay attention to. Meanwhile, according to Thursan Hakim (2011:1), Vocabulary is a treasury or collection of words in grammar, vocabulary is a vocabulary or collection of words needed to make oral and written sentences. As Jack C. Richards and Willy A. Renandya (2002:255) stated that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. From the above explanation, it can be concluded that vocabulary is a list or collection of words or explanations that a person uses in a language.

Vocabulary mastery is the competence to know the words and meanings of a language. According to Richards (2001:154), the target vocabulary commonly used in English courses generally varies, namely:

1. Basic level: 1000 words
2. Intermediate level: additional 2000 words
3. Upper intermediate level: additional 2000 words
4. Advanced level: additional 2000+ words

Vocabulary mastery will help students to be successful in using English. Vocabulary mastery as a basic unit in learning English will help students to understand how words work in written and spoken form. They will be able to understand what certain words mean, how to pronounce them in a foreign language, how to read them and also how to write them down. Therefore, the first step in learning English is to learn vocabulary.

In learning the four language skills, vocabulary is one of the basic components that must be mastered. This is natural, considering that all four language skills require knowledge of words because they will not get anything without vocabulary. The more vocabulary students master, the better their language skills will be. One of the key elements in learning a foreign language is mastering the vocabulary of the second language, perhaps it can be assumed that vocabulary has been a concern since the beginning of foreign languages being formally studied.

B. Aspect of English Vocabulary in Teaching

In learning vocabulary, there are some vocabulary aspects that teacher should convey to the students. According to Kucan (2012) the aspects of vocabulary can include usage, spelling, meaning and pronunciation. These aspects are very influential in vocabulary mastery.

1. Use

It is not sufficient to learn single words in a separate way. If you want to develop your vocabulary and be able to use words productively, in speaking or writing, you need to understand how they are used. This includes learning the prepositions associated with certain words (such as prepare for, benefit from, skilled in, related to), or the verb forms that can follow the word (such as prepare to do, unwilling to do, consider doing).

2. Spelling

Spelling is crucial if you want to use words in your writing. English is well-known for being difficult, with many words spelled differently from how they sound. This is seen when examining homonyms (words that sound the same but are spelled differently). Almost every phoneme (sound unit) has more than one way to spell it. Some incorrect spellings are even common even among native speakers, such as the confusion between they.

3. Meaning

Many English words have multiple meanings. While some of the meanings of certain words may be similar, others can be quite different. In general, when learning vocabulary, it is best to learn words in context example in a reading or listening text and to learn the meaning as it is used in that context, focusing on one meaning rather than all possible meanings.

4. Pronunciation

Understanding how a word is pronounced is very important if you want to use it in speaking, or understand it when listening. Pronunciation, like spelling, can be a tricky area, with some words spelled the same way being pronounced in different ways. The main difference here is the vowel sounds. English has a very large number of vowels sounds when compared to other languages, and these tend to be compared to other languages, and this tends to be the most difficult area for learners to tackle, with consonants being relatively easy. English vowels differ greatly between dialects, which is another source of difficulty. An additional component to understanding how a word is pronounced is the position of stress in words that have more than one syllable. This can sometimes change across different word forms, a phenomenon known as stress shift, making pronunciation more difficult.

According to Nation (2000), the aspect or component of vocabulary are form, meaning, and use. The aspect or components are presented as follows:

1. Form

In this aspect, form has three components, that are spoken, written, and word part. Firstly, the learners have to know what the word sounds like and how it is spoken (spoken for). Knowing the spoken form of word includes being able to recognize the word it is heard. On the other hand, it also involves being able to receptive or produce in order to express a

meaning. Secondly, the learner has to know how is the word written and spelled. Points out that one aspect of gaining familiarity with the written form of word is spelling.

Spelling is the ability to describe a word by writing or saying it letter by letter. Thirdly, the learner should also know every part of the word that makes up this particular items (such as prefix, root, infix and suffix). Prefix is an affix that is at the beginning of a word to form a new word and with a new meaning. Meanwhile, root is the base form of a word. An example is the word "Untouchable". The root or base form of the word "Untouchable" is "touch", the prefix is "Un", and the suffix is "able". In the word "Untouchable" there is a suffix, prefix and root. Infix is the affix inserted into the root itself (in the middle).

2. Meaning

Meaning encompasses the way that form and meaning work together other words, the concept and that items it refers to, and the association that come to mind when people think about a specific word or expression. The meaning of vocabulary often has multiple meanings. For one word sometimes means more than one and has opposite meanings. The meaning of the word can also be understood in terms of its relationship items with other words in the language.

3. Use

There are some ways to draw the attentions to the use of words by quickly showing the grammatical pattern the word fits into (countable/uncountable, transitive/intransitive, etc.), giving a few similar collocates, mentioning any restrictions on the use of the word (formal, informal, impolite, only used with children, etc.), and giving a well-known opposite or a well-known word describing the group or lexical set it fits into. Here, nation involves the grammatical function of the use of words, phrases, collocations that usually occur with language usage, and any constraints used (in terms of frequency, level, etc.).

According to Brewster in Nurhalimah et al (2020) the aspects of vocabulary mastery are form, pronunciation, word meaning and usage. The aspects of vocabulary mastery assessment as follows:

1. Form

In the form section include those related to listening and repeating what is heard, listening to specific phonological information, vocal and consonant sounds, the number of syllables and sound pressure patterns. Observing written form (first and last letters), spelling sets, paying attention to grammatical information and copying and organizing related vocabulary.

2. Pronunciation

In the pronunciation section, the emphasis is on pronunciation so that a person's vocabulary mastery is said to be good if they are able to pronounce the vocabulary correctly

3. Word Meaning

The meaning of the word relates to the meaning of the vocabulary and its relationship with other vocabulary concepts so that they can understand the meaning of the vocabulary.

4. Usage

The part of usage focuses on the use of related vocabulary and is an indicator that complements the previous indicator. If a student is able to pronounce and mention the meaning of a vocabulary, but is not able to organize the vocabulary in the right use, then his/her vocabulary mastery is still lacking, therefore usage is said to be a complementary indicator in vocabulary mastery.

From the explanation above, in this study the researcher only focused on three aspects, namely usage, meaning, and spelling. This is based on what the researcher noticed when teaching in the English village of Parit Baru.

C. **Comic Strips in Teaching English Vocabulary**

In the learning process, media has a function as a carrier of information and processing information from learning sources to students and teachers in order to achieve learning objectives. Therefore, it is very important to choose interesting learning media so that it can attract students' interest in learning, especially in learning English vocabulary. According to Luh Putri Maharani (2021:31) that "Students' enthusiasm in learning can be increased by using the right media in teaching English". One of the media that can be used in learning English is comic strips. Comic strips are a series of images that contain a story and are a type of comic that only consists of several sheets of image column frames making it easier for students to understand the message conveyed. Based on Lisa Darsalina et al (2016:139) it is said that "Comic strips have characteristics consisting of a series of images and these images allow students to easily get ideas through the chronological order of the story".

Comic strips as learning media are simple, clear, easy to understand so that they can convey learning messages well. This is because comics combine the power of images and writing assembled in an image storyline that makes the message to be conveyed easier to absorb. According to Eka Anastasia Wijaya(2021:231) that "Comic strips have been suggested to be suitable for language teaching and learning and will make students learn English in a more fun and interesting way". Comic strips that have colorful and entertaining images can attract students' attention to reading. So that it becomes one of the supporters of student success in learning.

Based on the explanation above, it can be interpreted that comic strips can be used as a medium for learning English, especially in learning vocabulary. The fun and easy-to-understand nature of comic strips makes them easily accepted by students. In a journal written by Sherliane Trisye Poai (2018:56), it is said that "comic strips can help students memorize vocabulary because there are pictures and can be used to increase attention to classroom instructions and explanations, activeness in doing exercise

questions, independence, and enthusiasm during activities. In this case, comic strips can also be made according to the topic determined by the teacher and make the teacher more creative.

According to Eka Anastasia Wijaya et al (2021:231) there are several benefits, namely it can stimulate students' competence in language learning and increase students' attention and positive attitude in the learning process. Not only that, comic strips are very helpful in language learning, especially vocabulary and expression, grammar, and composition. Comic strips can also be used to develop students' visual literacy. In addition, comic strips can improve students' understanding of language use as it allows them to learn language easily. Then, comic strips can improve students' English learning as an effective medium in teaching English vocabulary. So, it can be concluded that the use of comic strips as a learning media can make students improve their English vocabulary skills and students become more excited in learning. Below is an example of a comic strip as a medium for learning English vocabulary, especially adjectives.



Adopted from : <https://pin.it/4ny3Srt>

Figure 1 Example of Comic Strips in Teaching English Vocabulary

D. The Procedure of Comic Strips media in Teaching English Vocabulary

The purpose of the procedure type is to explain how something can be done such as instructions, recipes, guidebooks, and lesson plans especially in students' English vocabulary. According to Sherliane Trisye Poai (2018:52-53) explains the comic strips procedure as follows:

1. The teacher read the comic strips and the students listen carefully to the teacher. After that the teacher ask the students to repeat after the teacher read the sentence by sentence on the comic strip.
2. The teacher gave them another comic strip and explain clearly to increase their understanding about the material.
3. The teacher then re-explained the material by telling loudly the difficult word one by one and asked the students to repeat the words.
4. The teacher made the students memorize the word by read the comic strip again. The teacher then read the words in English and ask the students read the word in Indonesia.
5. The teacher then chosen the comic strip and asked the students the meaning of the word.
6. The students read the comic strip in pair in front of the class.
7. Next, exercise was distributed to the students, which was fill the blanks with the suitable word on the comic strip.
8. After that the teacher then give the feedback to the students and repeat the word together.

E. Advantages and Disadvantages of Comic Strips as Learning Media in Teaching English Vocabulary

Good learning media is media that can help teachers and students to follow the learning process to achieve learning goals. There are some Advantages of comic strips in learning English (Eka Anastasia Wijaya et al, 2021:231) namely:

1. Comic strips could stimulate the students' competence in language learning and increase the students' attention and positive attitudes in the learning process.
2. Comic strips are helpful in language learning, especially vocabulary and expressions, grammar, and compositions and also be used to develop the students' visual literacy.
3. Comic strips could increase the students' understanding of language usage because it enables them to pursue the language at ease.
4. Comic strips can improving students' English learning as effective media in language teaching.

Comics as a learning media are also inseparable from weaknesses. The weaknesses of the comic include:

1. Comics are a visual medium consisting of graphic designs and characters so that for pronunciation students rely on examples from the teacher. This is because comics are not media that can listen to audio conversations with native speakers (Atik Rokhayani Utari and Aisyah Ririn Perwikasih, 2014:148-149).

Based on the description above, the preparation of teaching materials in the form of comics needs to be done properly, namely the pictures in comics are not presented excessively so that there is no dulling of the brain's imagination, even though complex material is still presented.

F. Related Research

Research relevant to this study was found by researcher after reading references from several previous journals. One of the journals related to this research is "Teaching English Vocabulary Using Comic Strips" conducted by Sherline Trisye Poai in 2018 which was published by Sintuwu Maroso Journal of English Teaching. This study proves that the use of comic strips in teaching English makes it easier for students to learn English and the teacher does not find it difficult to use comic strips. Although this research is the same as the research that will be conducted by researcher, there is a difference, namely the

research conducted by Sherline Trisye Poai at the junior high school level, while researcher will use it for the level of children around the age of 5 to 10 years. As for other journal related to this research is research conducted by Jun Liu entitled “Effects of Comic Strips on L2 Learners' Reading Comprehension” which was published by Teacher of English to Speaker of Other Language, TESOL Quarterly in 2004. Jun Liu also uses the same media as the researcher, namely comic strips but Jun Liu focuses on Reading Comprehension while the researcher will use it for teaching Vocabulary.