

Authentic Materials in English for Vocational High School in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This present study attempts to determine whether the using of authentic materials in teaching English for Vocational High School help students increase their English Accounting Vocabulary mastery. For this study, thirty-five of tenth-grade Accounting Department students were taught English Accounting vocabulary once a week for one month at a Vocational High School in Makassar, Indonesia. The students were taught English Accounting vocabulary by using authentic materials. The materials were taken from the real life situation of work such as a financial report of a company in and deposit and withdrawal forms of a bank. They were tested on their vocabulary mastery of English Accounting at the beginning and at the end of the treatment period, so pre-test and post-test were the instruments used for the research. The result indicates that using authentic materials in teaching English for Vocational High School, develops students English Accounting vocabulary mastery.

Keywords: authentic materials, teaching vocabulary, ESP

Introduction

In Indonesia, vocational education is considered as typical education where the system of education is different from the general school. The program of learning in Vocational high School is focused on developing students' practical skills in various fields of study in accordance with the field of jobs available in society. Indonesian curriculum document, 2004 edition, states that as one of the institutions preparing workforces, vocational high schools are demanded to be able to produce graduates expected by industries or the world employment. The workforces who are needed by industries are the skillful human resource in any field of jobs.

English instructional materials in Vocational High School should difference from the general school in order to provide specific English based on students' department. Therefore, English for Vocational High School is a kind of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). According to Wello and Dollah (2008: 36), the important issue in ESP is authenticity. The language in ESP should be as authentic as possible. Authentic texts include the types of language which the learner may need to be exposed to, to develop skills for understanding, and possibly even to produce. The materials may provide information about the real-life situations or events. In this case, it is the content of material rather than the language which is useful for the teacher or for the learner. The information conveyed is likely to be more accurate and have high credibility, and will probably be more up-to-date than other materials. The same piece of material can be used under different circumstances if the task is different.

In line with preparing students to be skillful forces, authentic materials in English teaching will expose students the real life situation of work in any field.

The fact shows that most of English teachers of Vocational High School in Indonesia, especially in the writer's school, still use the textbook materials only in the classroom. On the other hand, the commercial textbooks often do not include incidental or improper English. It lacks focus on students' needs that focus on general needs and lack of local content, consider culture geographical diversity. As the result, the graduate students do not have specific skills of English related to their major and they are not difference from the general school graduates. Even though they are vocational school graduates, they still difficult to get a job in the real life or any industries.

Referring to the explanation above, the writer is interested in conducting a research by teaching English for Vocational High School by using authentic materials. The focus of the research is the vocabulary mastery of students especially English Accounting vocabulary. The selected authentic materials are used by the teachers as teaching materials in the classroom. The writer assumes that these materials will be interesting because the students will be exposed the real condition of English vocabulary use in society, so students will be active in learning English.

Research Objective

The objective of the research is to find out the effectiveness of using authentic materials in teaching English Vocabulary to the Accounting Department students of SMK Negeri 7 Makassar.

Research Question

Based on the previous background, the writer formulates a research question: "Is the use of authentic materials effective in teaching English Vocabulary to the Accounting Department students of SMK Negeri 7 Makassar?"

Literature Review

A number of studies have been done to find out the using of authentic materials helps the students in developing their English vocabulary. The important factor in using authentic materials is that students can touch real life with words and learn the beauty of words byways, acquisition and methodical teaching of the professor, student become interesting when they experience language in a lively and realistic ways, also students become familiar with the culture of target language (Zoghi, et al. 2014). In the listening skill aspect, Rodngam (2011) argues that authentic materials can somehow help students increase vocabulary in order for them to achieve their listening tasks more effectively. Once they accomplish their listening tasks, students feel more comfortable and are likely to have positive attitudes towards learning vocabulary for listening comprehension through authentic materials.

Definitions of vocabulary have been stated by some authors. According to Hornby (1974), the definitions of vocabulary are (1) the total number of words which (rules for combining them) make up a language; (2) words known to, or used by, a person, in a trade profession, etc.; (3) book containing a list of words; list of words used in a book, etc, usually with definitions or translations. Also Quirk (1998) pointed out that vocabulary is (1) words known, learnt, used, etc.; (2) a list of words usually in alphabetical order and with explanations of their meanings, less complete than a dictionary; (3) a list of codes or terms provided for use in a computer system. Brown (1994: 366) views vocabulary in two ideas;

first, is the content and function words of language which are learned thoroughly so that they become part of a child's understanding, speaking and later reading and writing, and second, is a word having meaning when heard or seen even through the individual products it with communicating with others. In line with the vocabulary teaching in ESP, Paltridge and Starfield (2013: 116) state that it is a specialized word would have a narrow range of use within a particular subject area. Therefore, the English Accounting vocabulary is the specialized word would have a narrow range of use within the area of the accounting department.

Several definitions of the term authenticity and authentic materials have been given in the field of language teaching. Ellis and Johnson in Wello and Dollah (2008:36) argued that authentic material is kind of material taken from the real world and not specifically create for the purpose of language teaching. It can be text, visuals or audio materials; it can be realia such as tickets, maps, and timetable; or it can be objects such as products, equipment, or models. Kilickaya (2004), has indicated that something in common in all definitions of authentic materials is "exposure to real language and its use in its own community". This term is directly related to the students' real life and prepares them to face and deal with real world situations. It may be concluded that authentic materials kind of material taken from the real world and not specifically create for the language teaching purpose, exposure to real language and its use in its own community in order to prepare the students to face and deal with a situation.

There are many types of authentic materials. McGrath (2002) explained that one reason for teachers to go outside a course book for texts is that they wish to expose their students to more example of a particular text-type, and to illustrate the variations within this, or to provide exposure to greater range of text-type such as (1) novels, plays, cartoons, (2) letters, notes, postcards, e-mails, SMS, (3) newspapers and magazines (advertisements or letters to editors), (4) reports, statistics, diagrams, (5) travel brochures, guidebooks, timetables, (6) instructions, road signs, (7) telephone directories, dictionaries.

In selecting the materials there many criteria that need to be considered by the teachers. According to McGrath (2002), there are eight criteria to be considered when choosing appropriate authentic texts. These are (1) relevance to course book and learners' needs, (2) topic interest, (3) cultural fitness, (4) logistical considerations, (5) cognitive demands, (6) linguistic demands, (7) quality and (8) exploitability. There are three main criteria used to choose and access texts to be used in the classroom: "suitability of the content, exploitability, and readability". Suitability is regarded as the most important one, because it means that reading materials must arouse the learners' interest, meet their needs and motivate them. Exploitability stands for the way in which the text is used to develop the reading competence of learners, while readability refers to the difficulty and complexity of a text. The reading text must not contain too difficult or demanding words and structures. It must also suit the learners' level of English.

Vocational High School in Indonesia consists of many study programs. All of the study programs categorize English subject into a compulsory lesson. The goal of English teaching in Vocational High School is to develop the students' communicative competence based on their field. According to the basic competencies in *Permendikbud* No. 68, 69, 70 (2013), English teaching in Vocational High School aims to develop the students' ability to communicate in the target language both orally and in writing appropriately. The students are expected to improve their language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in a variety of context for varied purposes using a range of text types and language functions. Robinson in Wello and Dollah (2008:15) stated that more frequently the students on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course in post-secondary education, tertiary education or are

experienced members of a workplace. However, in some countries like Indonesia, ESP course are taught in vocational high school at the secondary level such as English for Business and English for Technology. Accounting department students are prepared for work purposes. Of course, they need materials in the classroom that involved in the same kind of work or specialist studies. Therefore, ESP becomes an issue of this research.

Methodology

This research employed the pre-experimental method with one group pre-test and post-test design. Treatments were given between the pre-test and post-test. This research consisted of two variables. They were dependent and independent variables. The independent variable was the use of authentic materials in teaching English Accounting vocabulary, while the dependent variable was the students' English Accounting vocabulary achievement in learning English by using authentic materials.

Participants

This study was carried out at State Vocational High School 7 Makassar (SMK Negeri 7 Makassar). The participants of the study were thirty-five of the tenth-grade Accounting Department students. They were selected based on the basic consideration that in order to conduct research on increasing English Accounting vocabulary through authentic materials it is needed not only the active and serious students but also they are who considered as chosen students.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was a vocabulary test which is related to the English Accounting terms. The test consists of twenty matching test, fifteen multiple choice test, and fifteen rearranging words test. The test was given to participant and used in the pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was used to see the students' prior knowledge on English Accounting vocabulary before giving treatments, while the post-test was used to know the student's achievement on English Accounting vocabulary mastery after giving a treatment.

Procedure of Collecting Data

The pre-test contains English Accounting vocabulary. It was given before giving the treatment to find out the students' prior knowledge. The test was last about ninety minutes. The procedures are (1) the researcher distributed the test to the students, (2) gave the direction of the test to the students, (3) controlled the students when they do the test, and (4) collected worksheet of the students after the test. The posttest procedures are similar to the pre-test's procedures.

The treatment was conducted for one month by teaching English vocabulary. It consisted of four meetings. Each meeting consisted of ninety minutes. The treatment was teaching English using authentic materials. It has been mention that authentic materials are kinds of materials applied in teaching English Accounting vocabulary in the classroom. They derived from English text designed for a particular profession, but the writer took them as teaching materials.

The step of teaching is divided into two steps, before class, and during the class. In before class step, the writer prepared a variety of English Accounting text materials, they were the financial report taken from a company and withdrawal and deposit forms that taken from a bank. The materials were selected based on the consideration of Vocational High School syllabus. The writer prepared enough copies of the text to distribute sets to each student. Next, the writer reviewed with students' already familiar English Accounting

vocabulary. After that, the writer divided students into groups of four. The writer gave each member of the group a different text. Then the writer asked the students evenly to discuss the text and mark if they find unfamiliar words. Students are asked to present their unfamiliar words and then ask the volunteers to share what they know about the words. Finally, the writer explained the unfamiliar words of each group.

Technique of Data Analysis

The data obtained from the test was analyzed by using the procedures as follows:

Scoring the student's correct answer at pre-test and post-test by using this formula:

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\text{Student's Correct Answer Score}}{\text{The total number of items}} \times 10$$

Classifying the students score into seven classifications:

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| Score: 9.6 – 10 | = excellent |
| Score: 8.6 – 9.5 | = very good |
| Score: 7.6 – 8.5 | = good |
| Score: 6.6 – 7.5 | = fairly good |
| Score: 5.6 - 6.5 | = fair |
| Score: 3.6 - 5.5 | = poor |
| Score: 0 - 3.5 | = very poor |

The quantitatively collected data submitted to SPSS software package with paired sampel t-test for the analysis of data.

Result and Discussion

The paired sample t-test was incorporated in the present study as there was one group of thirty-five students, and the data were collected at two different times, at the beginning and at the end of the treatment period. The result was to answer the research question in the present study. The classification of students' scores before and after they were given treatment are presented in the following table:

Table 1

The percentage of students' pretest and posttest scores

| Classification | Score | Pre-test | | Post-test | |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| | | Frequency | Percentage (%) | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
| Excellent | 9.6 - 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Very good | 8.6 - 9.5 | 0 | 0 | 23 | 65.71 |
| Good | 7.6 - 8.5 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 34.29 |
| Fairly good | 6.6 - 7.5 | 7 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| Fair | 5.6 - 6.5 | 19 | 54.29 | 0 | 0 |
| Poor | 4.6 - 5.5 | 9 | 25.71 | 0 | 0 |
| Very Poor | 0.0 - 3.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | | 35 | 100 | 35 | 100 |

The data were analyzed and interpreted as follows, using Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS):

Table 2
Paired Samples Statistics

| | | Mean | N | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|--------|-----------|--------|----|----------------|-----------------|
| Pair 1 | Pre-test | 5.9771 | 35 | .55045 | .09304 |
| | Post-test | 8.6000 | 35 | .47774 | .08075 |

Table 3
Paired Samples Correlations

| | | N | Correlation | Sig. |
|--------|----------------------|----|-------------|------|
| Pair 1 | Pre-test & Post-test | 35 | .188 | .280 |

Table 4
Paired Samples Test

| | | Paired Differences | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|--------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|---|----------|---------|----|-----------------|
| | | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | Lower | Upper | | | |
| Pair 1 | Pre-test – Post-test | -2.62286 | .65757 | .11115 | -2.84874 | -2.39697 | -23.597 | 34 | .000 |

The description of the data collected through vocabulary test as explained in the previous section shows the student's vocabulary mastery was developed. It was supported by the frequency and rate percentage of the result of the students' pre-test and post-test. Students' score after giving authentic materials is better than before the treatment given to the students.

Table 1 above shows that in the pre-test, none of the students got excellent, very good, good, and very poor scores. There were 7 students (20%) got fairly good, 19 students (54.29%) got fair, and 9 students (25.71%) got scores. In the post-test, none of the students got excellent, fairly good, fair, poor, and very poor scores. There were 23 students (65.71%) got very good and 12 students (34.29%) got good scores.

The result of the SPSS (table 2 - 4) analysis shows that the mean score of students' pre-test was 5.9771 and the mean score of post-test was 8.6000. The standard deviation of the pre-test was 0.55045 and the standard deviation of the post-test were 0.47774. The mean score of the students' post-test was higher than the students' pre-test. There was a significant difference, $t(35) = -23.597$, $p = .000$. Thus the findings supported that the using of Authentic materials in teaching English for vocational high school help students increase their English Accounting vocabulary mastery.

In conclusion, the average scores from the students' post-test were higher than that of the pre-test. Furthermore, in this research, the use of authentic assessment in teaching English also makes students more interested and enthusiastic of learning English. The writer reflects the students had positive attitudes towards the use of authentic materials to enhance English accounting vocabulary.

Conclusion and Suggestion

This research aimed at finding out the effectiveness of using authentic materials in teaching English vocabulary to the Accounting Department students of SMK Negeri 7 Makassar. There have been some studies of using authentic materials in the EFL classroom. Kılıç and İter (2015) state “the use of authentic materials in an interpreting classroom is now becoming more important because we are more conscious of the close relationship between classroom interpretation and real-life interpretation”. The ESP students, who are prepared for the finding jobs after finishing their study, are needed to be exposed the language used in the society or in a field of the jobs. Thus, the use of authentic text (company financial reports and bank withdrawal for accounting students), can facilitate them to be familiar with the job’s situation.

In the case of vocabulary development, the result of this research is consistent with Zoghi, et al. (2014) who state that using authentic material is a very good way to the acquisition of vocabulary and it plays an important role in teaching a second language. Students can touch real life with words and learn the beauty of words byways. The student becomes interesting when they experience language in a lively and realistic ways. Also, students become familiar with the culture of the target language. Awareness of cultural background is important in learning a language. In this case, the language style of the company financial report and bank withdrawal can be familiar to the students.

This research result was also supported by Wello and Dollah (2008:37) who state that authentic texts, audio or written, will have a number of written, will have a number of features that are often lacking in texts and dialogues created for learning English. They will exemplify the particular register to which they belong and will often contain specific terminology and jargon and sometimes typical organization features and sentence patterns. The language used will reflect the genuine purpose for which the material was created and will also target the expert reader or listener for whom it was intended. In short, the authentic text will include the type of language which the learner may need to be exposed to, develop the skill for understanding, and possibly even to produce.

The material may provide information about real-life situations or events. In this case, it is the content of the material rather than the language which is useful for the teacher or for the learner. The information conveyed is likely to be more accurate and to have high credibility, and will probably be more up-to-date than other materials. It may also be very relevant to the learner's special interests and can thus be used to fill gaps in materials published for learners of English.

After teaching English Accounting vocabulary to the accounting department students of vocational high school by using authentic materials, the researcher found some advantages such as (1) the students become more active in the classroom because the materials relate more closely to learners ' needs, (2) the students will keep the words in their mind easily because they provide exposure to real language, (3) the students are exposed real life situation. By seeing the students’ vocabulary achievement, it can be concluded that using authentic materials in teaching English vocabulary was very effective and supported by some theories and previous findings.

In relation to the conclusion above, the researcher would like to suggest that the teacher should use authentic materials in teaching English as an alternative material among others materials to improve students’ vocabulary mastery especially English Accounting vocabulary and they should be creative in selecting materials in order to make the students interest in learning English.

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